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US Acknowledges 'Armed Conflict' Against 'Terrorist' Drug Cartels



Picture courtesy: CNN

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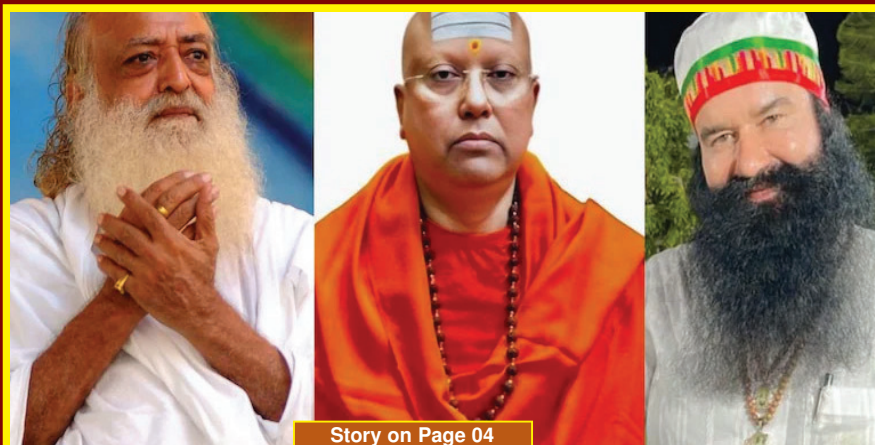
US-India Diplomacy in Focus: Modi-Trump Meeting Eyed Ahead of Quad Summit



Picture courtesy: MINT

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India's Enduring Fascination: From Delhi 'Baba' to Ram Rahim and Asaram, The Saga of Godmen



Picture courtesy: NDTV.com

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From Prison Walls to Murders

The Terrifying Reach of Terrorist Lawrence Bishnoi's Mobile-Operated Gang



Picture courtesy: Lagatar24.com

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Meet India's Youngest Billionaire. His Net Worth Is Rs 21,190 Crore



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Awesome TV Bridges South Asian and Western Entertainment With Global Streaming Expansion

(By our staff reporter) Unlike region-specific services, Awesome TV Wins Insider Weekly Award as It Expands Global Streaming Reach, Connecting South Asian and Western Entertainment (By our staff reporter) New York - Awesome TV, the first independent South Asian streaming network from the United States, is making global waves with its mission to bridge cultures through entertainment. Founded in 2013 by Ritesh Parikh, the platform offers a mix of Bollywood productions, Hollywood titles, and original programming, creating a destination where diverse audiences can come together.

Unlike region-specific services, Awesome TV is available worldwide, giving viewers from any location the ability to stream seamlessly across devices. Its curated lineup spans celebrity news, exclusive interviews, music, fashion, and original shows — capturing the pulse of both South Asian communities and international audiences. A Platform Rooted in Entertainment, Information, and Inspiration Awesome TV was built on three core pillars: entertainment, information, and inspiration. This approach reflects the growing demand for streaming platforms that celebrate cultural diversity while keeping pace with global entertainment trends. "We wanted to create something that connects cultures and communities on one platform," said founder Ritesh Parikh. "Our goal has always been to showcase South Asian talent while opening the door for global audiences to discover it." Industry Recognition The platform's unique positioning has earned it industry acclaim. Awesome TV was recently honored by Insider Weekly as one of the best apps for South Asian and global entertainment. This recognition highlights the network's role as more than just a streaming service — it is a cultural bridge for the diaspora and beyond.

INSIDERWEEKLY 2025 REVIEW OF THE YEAR AWARDS BEST APP



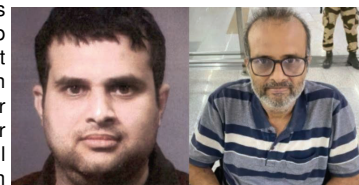
New York-based streaming network Awesome TV has been recognized with the Best App award from Insider Weekly, marking a significant achievement for the South Asian entertainment platform.

Building a Global Digital social-driven audiences engaged. Community Alongside streaming, Download the App With streaming Awesome TV extends its reach demand at an all-time high, through its social handle Awesome TV is positioning itself @awesomeitv, where it shares as a must-have app for audiences updates, clips, and behind-the-scenes content to keep younger, informs, and inspires.

Fugitive Ganesh Shenoy, Brought Back from India to the United States:

(By our staff reporter) District Attorney Anne Hicksville, Long Island : Donnelly told media. Justice could soon be coming Mastropolo - a husband and father of two - was killed. who lost a loved one to a high-speed crash 20 years ago.

Philip Mastropolo was just 44 years old when another driver slammed into his car and killed him in April 2005. The person allegedly behind the wheel, Ganesh Shenoy, fled to India two weeks later where he had stayed ever since -- until he was extradited back to America last week. Mastropolo was heading to work at the intersection of Levittown Parkway and Old Country Road in Hicksville when prosecutors say to the U.S. But on September 25, Shenoy was finally returned to Nassau County - the first extradition from India to the U.S. since 2017. "We got him, and he's not getting away from us front of a freightliner box truck," Nassau County



investigators, telling them he had a green light. And just 14 days later, he boarded a flight to India. "He wanted a quick clear why," Donnelly told media. For the next 18 years, Shenoy fought extradition when prosecutors say to the U.S. But on September 25, Shenoy was finally returned to Nassau County - the first extradition from India to the U.S. since 2017. "We got him, and he's not getting away from us front of a freightliner box truck," Nassau County

Picture: Nassau DA Office



The Association of Indians in America - NY Chapter

38th Deepavali Festival – Live Fireworks

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AIA announces fireworks and bigger attractions at Deepavali Festival on Long Island

Moving to Long Island from Manhattan, the AIA-NY's iconic Deepavali Festival on October 11 promises to be bigger and grander.

(Press Release by Parveen Chopra) Hicksville, NY: Organized by the Association of Indians in America (AIA), New York chapter, at Overlook Beach in Babylon, the day-long celebration is chock-a-bloc with dance, drama, devotion, and many firsts. On October 1, at the Asa Mai Temple in Hicksville, the organizers of the mega event provided details to the press and their 150+ supporters. They announced that, in addition to fireworks, new attractions this time include a recreation of an illuminated Ayodhya with Ram Darbar, a Kirtan Concert, and a Cultural Fashion Show.

Beena Kothari, President of AIA-NY, said, "Our 38th Deepavali Festival's move from Manhattan's South Street Seaport to Long Island's shores represents not just a change of venue but a wave of cultural expansion. Together with our team, our partners, and the entire community, we're building a bridge of light, unity, and joy that connects every generation of Indians in America."



Celebration of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti



(By our staff reporter) "Gandhi's life and Message". She Washington DC- On the occasion shared anecdotes from Mahatma of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti, Gandhi Ji's life, his inspirations Ambassador Shri Vinay Kwatra and other embassy officials paid floral tributes to the Father of the Nation in Washington D.C. The Embassy also organized an event on 30th September, 2025 to celebrate



Mahatma Gandhi Ji's legacy with the participation of Indian diaspora, students, professionals, and friends of India. At the event Srimati Karuna, Director of the Gandhi Memorial Center, Bethesda, Maryland (USA) delivered a talk on

and his vision for the world. The talk was followed by rendition of beautiful bhajan and songs that Babu was fond of, by differently abled young Indian artists- Ms. Anusha Manjunath and Ms. Vasundhara Raturi.





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Delhi 'Baba' To Ram Rahim, Asaram, India's Endless Obsession With Godmen

It is both disconcerting and revealing that in 2025, nearly a decade after self-styled godman Asumal Sirumalani Harpalani, aka Asaram Babu, was convicted for raping a minor, a couple of staff at the Surat New Civil Hospital in Gujarat were seen offering prayers to him. The video footage of the event went viral on social media, forcing authorities to remove a security guard and a Class 1 officer from their positions. Similarly, in Delhi, the police are in search of Chaitanyananda Saraswati, another 'godman' accused of sexually harassing female students at a management institute. Only a string of complaints from the victims and a letter from the IAF brought the matter to light, post which Chaitanyananda has been on the run. These cases merit the question: what does it say about our society when criminals, under the garb of religion or spirituality, continue to command such blind loyalty not only from

normal people but also from government institutions? 'Revered Convicts' Asaram has been in jail since August 2013, following allegations of raping a 16-year-old schoolgirl from Uttar Pradesh. Two months later, in October 2013, Asaram and his son, Narayan Sai, were accused of raping two sisters at their ashram in Surat. The conviction followed credible evidence, survivor testimony, and years of legal battle. Yet, despite being a convicted criminal, the devotion for Asaram hasn't waned in parts of the country - especially in Gujarat, his home state. Such was the power and influence of Asaram that many key witnesses in the case were attacked or went missing even when he was in jail. His 'faithful' followers did not spare the policemen. The police officer who was investigating the case faced regular threats. Both he and his son Narayan Sai - also serving a life term for rape - evaded conviction for a long time due to

political protection. Similarly, jailed Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, serving a 20-year jail term for raping two of his disciples, has become a master of parole leaves. Most recently, he was granted a 40-day parole, on August 5. Godmen like Asaram and Ram Rahim have lakhs of followers and financial power. The unwavering trust placed by followers in these so-called spiritual leaders grants them substantial moral and social authority, which becomes more impactful with the political support they receive. In fact, the political backing they receive is due to their mass following. Religious belief is an individual right. However, when such beliefs cloud one's judgment of truth and justice, it becomes hazardous. When healthcare professionals - who are expected to hold on to principles of science, ethics, and public service - publicly venerate a convicted rapist, it indicates a disturbing disconnect from both

moral and civic duties. Respect The Law This isn't merely about faith. When we let public servants worship a criminal in religious robes, we normalise the idea that power, especially spiritual or political, puts one above the law. The Surat Civil Hospital, where this incident occurred, has much to answer for. The Resident Medical Officer has condemned the incident and said it shouldn't have happened. "One of our staff members had called me and sought permission for distributing fruits to patients by Asaram's followers, to which we agreed. However, no permission was taken for putting up the photo and pooja in the hospital premises," he said. However, no inquiry has been initiated into the incident. Didn't the case require some exemplary disciplinary action? A

point to note: would the reaction of the public and authorities have been the same had the hospital staff praised a terrorist or a common murderer? Unlikely. So why the selective sympathy when the person in question is a so-called 'godman'? The sustained public appeal of controversial figures like Asaram reflects a deeper malaise in society - the followers' refusal to challenge and discard their beliefs even when they become destructive. The Surat Civil Hospital staff's actions may seem like a local incident, but they also reflect a much bigger problem India faces. This isn't just a lapse in judgment - it's a failure of institutional ethics. Silence from authorities will further normalise such acts.

US Official Hints At PM Modi-Trump Meet As India Prepares For Quad Summit

US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi share a "very, very positive" relationship and will meet, a senior State Department official has said, while underlining that planning is underway for the next Quad Summit, expected either later this year or in early 2026. India is slated to host leaders from the US, Australia, and Japan for the Quad summit. The 2024 edition of the summit was held in the US at Wilmington, Delaware.

"In terms of meetings coming soon, I certainly don't want to get ahead of announcing anything for the President, but I'm sure you'll see the two (PM Modi and President Trump) meet," the State Department official here told PTI.

"They have a very, very positive relationship. We've got a Quad Summit, we're working on planning, so at some point that will happen, if not this year, early next year. Working on the dates of that," the official said.

Describing the ongoing US-India engagements as "incredibly productive", the official said "continuous positive developments" are expected in the coming months.

"We have differences. It's been clear over the last few weeks that we've been working through some differences, particularly when it comes to trade and the purchase of Russian oil. We're working through those," the official said.

The official also referred to Trump's recent phone call to Modi to wish him on his 75th birthday, describing the exchange as "incredibly positive". On the diplomatic front, the official said US Ambassador nominee to India and Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor is one of the closest people to the President. He will be confirmed very soon and will be the US representative in New Delhi. "I think that shows the importance the President puts on this (US-India relationship)," the official said.

The official further underlined that US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's first meeting on the margins of the 80th UN General Assembly session was with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Describing the hour-long meeting on Monday as "incredibly productive", the official said talks covered a wide range of issues, including trade, defence, and technology.

While acknowledging that there has been "a bit of turbulence" in ties, the official in the briefing, underlined that President Trump is candid about his views and "not shy when he is frustrated with countries," which offers a transparent view of US positions. "We're frank with our friends and we see India as a good friend and as a partner, and as really a partner of the future," the official said.

Murders and Mobile Phones: All About Terrorist Lawrence Bishnoi And His Gang

Mob boss Lawrence Bishnoi and his cohort of criminals - linked to murders, extortion, and drugs and weapon trafficking - were branded as terrorists by Canada Monday evening. "Acts of violence and terror have no place in Canada, especially those that target specific communities to create a climate of fear and intimidation," Prime Minister Mark Carney's administration said. The notification is overdue; the gang has been linked to killings and acts of intimidation, including the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Nijjar in Canada in June 2023, which caused a diplomatic storm, and the shooting outside Bollywood superstar Salman Khan's Mumbai home in April last year. That list also includes the December 2023 murder of Rajput leader Sukhdev Gogamedi and the October 2024 killing of Maharashtra politician Baba Siddique, as well as the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moose Wala in May 2022, which catapulted his gang to 'international stardom'. Canada's crackdown means any Bishnoi gang asset in that country, from cash to vehicles and property, can be frozen or seized, giving Canadian law enforcement more (and sharper) teeth to prosecute gang members for various offences, including those related to financing of terrorist activities. It also means immigration officials can deny suspected members entry into Canada. So who is Lawrence Bishnoi? Born in 1993 in a village near Punjab's Abohar, Bishnoi's life could (and probably will, at some point) make for quite the dramatic Bollywood movie. His father was reportedly a constable in the Haryana Police and also owned land - over 100 acres, some reports say, of agricultural land. Young Bishnoi seemed destined for a life of relative ease. But that began to change sometime around 2010, when he

was studying at Chandigarh's Panjab University. Drawn into the murky world of student politics, he met Goldy Brar - who would go on to become his long-time confidante and manage his Canada operations - in 2011 and a criminal partnership developed. The duo, sources told NDTV in June, has since been linked to multiple murders, including that of Moose Wala, Siddique, and Gogamedi, and these and other nefarious activities, like liquor smuggling, mean over two dozen criminal cases have been filed against Lawrence Bishnoi. Perhaps the most amazing part of this story (Bollywood script writers, take note) is that Bishnoi is not actually on the run. He is in police custody. He is, in fact, in jail. But his gang thrives, receiving orders to kill, threaten, and steal from behind bars since his arrest in August 2023. 'Milky', reports indicate, is the moniker his prison mates have bestowed on Bishnoi - now in a Delhi prison - after he was arrested by Gujarat Police for in a Rs 195 crore drug smuggling case.

And how does Bishnoi's gang work?

In October last year sources told NDTV choice details of the inner workings of Lawrence Bishnoi's gang, including the staggering reality that he has nearly 700 assassins on call. The first truth is the Bishnoi gang is a bonafide international crime syndicate. It has a presence across the country and a base in Canada, which was led by Goldy Brar till he fell out with Bishnoi.

The 'break-up' was over the arrest of Bishnoi's younger brother, Anmol, in the United States in November last year. Anmol was arrested for entering the country illegally. Sources said Bishnoi was upset because he felt his brother did not receive support from Brar.

Should TVK Chief Vijay Be Made Accused In Karur Stampede Case?

Three days since that enormous human tragedy at Velusampuram in Karur, in which 41 people lost their lives, and what we have witnessed is a fierce exchange of accusations, allegations, ostensible show of grief to sustain political optics, a judicial commission, a series of FIRs and court cases. TVK's top leadership, like its leader Vijay, have remained unavailable to journalists and to the public. They have instead moved courts seeking a CBI probe, accusing a conspiracy. FIRs have been filed on serious charges against his party's top functionaries, a district secretary and another worker have been arrested, but Vijay and the rest of his leadership remain cocooned from public glare. It's time Vijay acts like a political

leader and addresses a press conference, or at least gives a point-by-point rebuttal to the allegations made against him and his party. If not him, another leader from his party, if there is one. What was his role in the planning and execution of the rallies, especially the rally at Velusampuram? Why was he delayed in reaching the spot? Did he consciously leave for the events late? Did he proceed to the venue despite senior police officers asking him and his convoy not to proceed and stop about a hundred meters from the spot? Isn't he, as the leader of the party, morally responsible for the events that unfolded? If they suspect a conspiracy of this brutal, inhuman scale, what prima facie evidence do they have to make that

allegation? Most importantly, should he face criminal responsibility? These are all important questions Vijay and his TVK need to answer. In fact, TVK leaders admit that there are very tough questions and are apprehensive that they may not have the answers in a press conference. The question the law-and-order machinery and the State government need to answer is this. While they make such startling allegations of flouting conditions against the TVK, why have they not booked a criminal case against Vijay himself directly? Why is it that senior leaders of the TVK, including two general secretaries, have been booked, and a district secretary has been arrested, but no legal responsibility has been

placed on Vijay himself? The fact is that while it is easy to make political allegations against Vijay, action against him by the police runs the risk of turning the entire narrative into Vijay being victimised and targeted by the DMK. While every political party has made allegations against Vijay, they've all soft-pedalled in demanding action against Vijay directly. In fact, any action against him directly could turn into a political misadventure for the DMK. The Congress, a DMK ally for the last two decades, has even sent the optics of warning up to Vijay with a call from Rahul Gandhi to the actor-politician. The AIADMK, which has demanded a CBI probe, has not demanded action against Vijay directly or his arrest. Smaller political parties have

issued statements suiting their political needs. Every political force is defining its equation with Vijay, including the DMK and the BJP, and action in this case will depend on political calculations over legal considerations. It's sadly the reality of how the system works. The law is never really applied equally to all concerned; politicians, almost always, receive preferential treatment and the decision to file a case against them or not is a political one and not a legal, procedural one. While a star like Allu Arjun was booked in the Hyderabad stampede, the top of the political establishment exonerated itself in the Bengaluru RCB celebrations stampede, where 11 people died. This is not just about a politician and a star.

Meet India's Youngest Billionaire. His Net Worth Is Rs 21,190 Crore

Aravind Srinivas, the 31-year-old Chennai-born AI entrepreneur, has entered the M3M Hurun India Rich List 2025 as the country's youngest billionaire. With an estimated net worth of Rs 21,190 crore, Srinivas, the founder and CEO of the AI startup Perplexity, is now a prominent name in the tech world, especially in generative AI. Born on June 7, 1994, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Srinivas developed an interest in science. While studying at IIT Madras, he also taught courses

on reinforcement learning and advanced reinforcement learning. He then pursued a PhD in Computer Science at the University of California, Berkeley, completing it in 2021. His research spanned contrastive learning for computer vision, reinforcement learning, transformer-based models for image generation, image recognition and video generation. He also taught Deep Unsupervised Learning during the Spring semesters of 2020 and 2021, according to his

LinkedIn profile. Srinivas gained industry experience at some of the world's leading tech giants. He worked at OpenAI on reinforcement learning and later joined DeepMind in London, where he focused on contrastive learning. Following this, he spent time at Google developing vision models such as HaloNet and ResNet-RS. He then returned to OpenAI as a research scientist, contributing to DALL-E 2, a text-to-image generation model.

Entrepreneurship

In August 2022, Srinivas co-

founded Perplexity AI with Denis Yarats and Andy Konwinski. The company's AI-powered chat-based search engine aims to provide fast, accurate and trustworthy answers to user queries, using models such as GPT-3. Since January 2023, Srinivas has also been an angel investor in promising AI startups, including ElevenLabs, a text-to-speech platform, and Suno, which develops text-to-music tools.

Tapping India

As Perplexity's user base in

India grew to become its largest globally, Srinivas identified the country as central to the company's growth strategy. This traction has prompted him to explore initiatives beyond product development, including setting up a Perplexity fund for strategic investments. According to a report in ET, he is also considering establishing an engineering team in India, either in Bengaluru or Hyderabad, while being open to partnerships in travel, shopping, education and healthcare.

SRK Enters Billionaire Club For First Time. See Bollywood's Top 5 Richest

Shah Rukh Khan has entered the billionaire club. Boasting a career spanning more than three decades, Shah Rukh Khan retained his first position in the Hurun India Rich List 2025, which was released on October 1. This is an annual list published by the Hurun Research Institute, assessing the wealth of celebrities

across different fields in India. Citing Shah Rukh's wealth growth, the list mentioned: "Bollywood's Badshah, Shah Rukh Khan (59), joins the billionaire club for the first time with a wealth of INR 12,490 crore." As per the report, Shah Rukh Khan has emerged as the wealthiest Bollywood icon in 2025. As per the list, Juhi Chawla

and her family are next, with a net worth of Rs 7,790 crore. Hrithik Roshan ranks third, with a wealth of Rs 2,160 crore. Karan Johar and Amitabh Bachchan have bagged the fourth and fifth spots respectively. Shah Rukh Khan made an impressive debut on the 2024 Hurun India Rich List, boasting a wealth of Rs 7,300

crore at the age of 58. Apart from being an actor, Shah Rukh Khan is the co-owner of the production house Red Chillies Entertainment. He is also the co-owner of the IPL team Kolkata Knight Riders. He boasts 43.9 million followers on X (formerly Twitter) and 48.6 million on Instagram, making him one of the most followed Indian

celebrities. This year, Shah Rukh Khan received the Best Actor National Award for his performance in Jawan. This is his first National Award in a film career. Jawan, released in 2023, emerged as one of the biggest hits in the history of Indian cinema, minting Rs 1,000 crore at the domestic box office.

Trump admin tells Congress it determined US engaged in formal 'armed conflict' with 'terrorist' drug cartels

The Trump administration sent a memo to Congress on Thursday saying that the United States is now "in a non-international armed conflict" with drug cartels, which administration officials have designated as "terrorist organizations." The President directed these actions consistent with his responsibility to protect

Americans and United States interests abroad and in furtherance of United States national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive to conduct foreign relations," the memo states. The White House said that the report

was issued to Congress following the Sept. 15 strike against "a Designated Terrorist Organization" and "does not convey any new information." In a statement to Fox News, White House Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly said that Trump has acted "in line with the law of armed conflict to protect our

country from those trying to bring deadly poison to our shores, and he is delivering on his promise to take on the cartels and eliminate these national security threats from murdering more Americans." The notification to congressional lawmakers came as Democrats on key committees have accused the administration of

exceeding its powers to use the military against the cartels, particularly in the wake of recent strikes on what the administration said were drug-smuggling vessels in the Caribbean. "The cartels involved have grown more armed, well-organized, and violent," the memo said.

Viable pathway to long-term peace: PM Modi welcomes Trump's Gaza plan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday welcomed US President Donald Trump's 20-point proposal to end the war in Gaza, describing it as a "viable pathway to long term and sustainable peace, security and development" in the region.

In a post on X, the Prime Minister also expressed hope that "all concerned will come together behind President Trump's initiative and support this effort to end conflict and secure peace". On Monday, the White House released a 20-point document that called for an immediate ceasefire, an exchange of hostages held by Hamas for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, a staged Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, Hamas disarmament and a transitional government led by an international body.

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disarmament and a transitional government led by an international body. The proposal was released following a meeting between Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in

the Oval Office earlier in the day. This was the Israeli leader's fourth visit to the White House since Trump assumed office in January this year. Speaking alongside Netanyahu at the White House,

Trump said they were beyond very close to an elusive deal but warned that Israel would have "full US support" to act if Hamas rejected the plan. On his part, Netanyahu praised Trump as a friend of Israel, but also put some distance between himself and some items in the US leader's plan, including the reforms being demanded of the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority and the prospects for eventual, Palestinian statehood. While Hamas said that it was yet to receive Trump's proposal, the Palestinian Authority welcomed the President's efforts and

reiterated its commitment to work with the US and partners to reach a comprehensive deal, news agency WAFA reported. At the UN General Assembly last week, the US unveiled a 21-point Middle East peace plan to end the nearly two-year-long war in Gaza. It called for the return of all hostages, living and dead, no further Israeli attacks on Qatar and a new dialogue between Israel and Palestinians for "peaceful coexistence".

WORLD REACTS TO TRUMP'S PLAN

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the proposal, praised Trump's "leadership" and said that Islamabad will support a two-state solution.

YouTuber Felix Gerald arrested for allegedly spreading fake news on Karur stampede

Tamil Nadu YouTuber Felix Gerald has been arrested by the Cyber Crime Police for allegedly spreading fake news in connection with the Karur stampede that claimed 41 lives during the campaign of actor-politician Vijay, chief of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK).

Gerald, who operates the RedPix YouTube channel, was taken into custody after police

said he had uploaded fake content linked to the incident.

On Monday, the Chennai Police registered cases against 25 individuals for allegedly posting inflammatory content on social media related to the Karur stampede that claimed 41 lives during the campaign of actor-turned-politician Vijay, chief of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK). The individuals are expected to be

arrested in connection with the posts.

Officials said the action was taken because the content was shared in a manner that could disrupt public peace and potentially inflame tensions.

Tamil Nadu Police on Monday arrested Mathiazhagan, the district secretary of Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam's (TVK), in connection with the stampede that occurred

at the rally addressed by actor Vijay on Saturday night that claimed 41 lives and injured 60 others. Mathiazhagan has been named as the prime accused in the First Information Report (FIR) registered following the incident. The rally was organised by TVK, the political party launched by actor Vijay. Further details regarding the charges are awaited. Although the FIR did not

name the TVK chief Vijay, it named three party office-bearers: Mathiyalagan (Karur district secretary), Bussy N Anand (state general secretary) and CTR Nirmal Kumar (state joint secretary), and stated that Vijay conducted unauthorised roadshows before arriving at Velusampuram, where his vehicle stopped amid a large crowd.



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Elgar Parishad case: Anti-terror agency seeks to seize Anand Teltumbde's passport

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed an application before a special court in Mumbai, seeking directions to impound the passports of Anand Teltumbde, Rona Wilson, Mahesh Raut, Gautam Navlakha, and Hany Babu -- the five accused in the 2018 Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case. The Special Public Prosecutor filed the application under section 51 of the UA (P) Act, seeking directions for impounding the passports of the accused in the case, till such further order or orders as it deems fit and proper in the interest of further investigation. This period has to be decided by the court. Section 51 deals with the impounding of passports of persons chargesheeted under the Act. The section says that the passport of a person who is chargesheeted for having committed any offence under this Act shall be deemed to have been impounded for such period as the court may deem fit. Teltumbde, activists Navlakha and Wilson are already on bail, while Raut

had been granted bail by the Bombay High Court which, however, on the request of the NIA had stayed its own order and the Supreme Court is yet to hear the appeal. The top court recently granted Raut interim medical bail for six weeks. Former Delhi University professor Hany Babu is the only one whose bail plea is still being heard by the High Court after a direction from the Supreme Court to move either the High Court or a trial court for bail.

Babu has moved the High Court.

Teltumbde had moved a plea seeking permission to travel abroad for some lecture invitations that he had received from some educational institutions abroad. He is yet to get permission. A total of 16 people were arrested in the Elgar Parishad case, which pertained to an event organised at Shaniwar Wada in Pune on the eve of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Koregaon Bhima on December 31, 2017.

Probe ordered after 6 child deaths in a month in Chhindwara; 2 syrups banned

Six children have died of suspected kidney infections in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district over the past month, prompting authorities to ban the use of two syrups and order strict monitoring. Acting Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO) Dr N a r e s h Gunnade said the first suspected case was

away, he said, adding that the state government's air ambulance service will be used if urgent transfers are needed.



reported on August 24 and the first death occurred on September 7. Initial symptoms included high fever and difficulty in urination, he said. A team from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, has surveyed the affected areas and collected samples for testing. Chhindwara Collector Shailendra Singh said doctors have been directed to remain fully proactive and provide the best possible treatment. Children requiring advanced care will be referred to AIIMS Nagpur, about 150 kilometres

Singh also ordered that the syrups Coldrif and Nextro-DS, reportedly being administered to children, be stopped with immediate effect. Medical store operators were instructed not to sell any combination syrups for children and to provide only plain syrups. At a meeting with health officials, Singh stressed on timely intervention and warned doctors against negligence. He appealed to parents not to seek treatment from unlicensed practitioners, noting that incorrect medications were worsening conditions in some cases.

India Rebukes Erdogan Over UN Speech on Kashmir

India has strongly rejected comments made by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the United Nations General Assembly, where he once again raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. New Delhi called the remarks "objectionable" and emphasized that Kashmir remains a

sovereignty and territorial integrity. He added that the real challenge in Jammu and Kashmir stems from Pakistan's continued support for cross-border terrorism, a fact that should have been highlighted instead. The statement is the latest in a series of disagreements between New Delhi and Ankara, with

Turkey repeatedly voicing support for Pakistan on Kashmir. India has consistently dismissed these interventions, viewing them as interference in its internal affairs. Erdogan's stance has often mirrored his earlier statements during visits to Islamabad,



which also drew criticism from India. On the sidelines of UNGA, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held separate meetings with international leaders, including his Cypriot counterpart, where India reaffirmed support for a UN-based solution in North Cyprus. He also met U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, discussing deeper cooperation on trade, energy, and critical minerals, along with efforts to promote a free and inclusive Indo-Pacific through the Quad.

Speaking in New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal reiterated India's unchanged position. He clarified that there is "no need for mediation" and that bilateral issues must be handled directly by the two countries concerned. Jaiswal's remarks came after Erdogan, addressing the 80th session of the UNGA, claimed that Turkey was pleased with the India-Pakistan ceasefire and urged resolution "on the basis of UN resolutions." India responded sharply by summoning the Turkish ambassador to lodge a formal protest. Jaiswal stressed that such comments undermine India's

sovereignty and territorial integrity. He added that the real challenge in Jammu and Kashmir stems from Pakistan's continued support for cross-border terrorism, a fact that should have been highlighted instead. The statement is the latest in a series of disagreements between New Delhi and Ankara, with

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Immigration judge denies Kilmar Abrego Garcia's bid for asylum, but he has 30 days to appeal

A U.S. immigration judge on Wednesday denied a bid for asylum from Kilmar Abrego Garcia, whose case has become a proxy

but was not eligible because he had been in the country for more than a year. However, the judge ruled that he could not be deported to El Salvador, where he faced danger from a gang that targeted his family. When he was mistakenly deported to El Salvador in March and kept in a notorious prison, his case became a rallying point for those who opposed President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown. Facing a ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court,

for the partisan power struggle over immigration policy. The judge in the Baltimore immigration court denied an application to reopen Abrego Garcia's 2019 asylum case, but that is not the final word. Abrego Garcia has 30 days to appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals. The Salvadoran national has an American wife and children and has lived in Maryland for years, but he originally immigrated to the U.S. illegally as a teenager. In 2019, he was arrested by immigration agents. He requested asylum

Trump's Republican administration returned Abrego Garcia to the U.S. in June, only to immediately charge him with human smuggling. While he faces those criminal charges in Tennessee, based on a 2022 traffic stop, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is also seeking to deport him to a third country, proposing Uganda first and then Eswatini. His attorneys have denounced the criminal charges and the deportation efforts, saying they are an attempt to punish him for standing up to the administration.



Colorado woman's stalker turns out to be husband in shocking murder case

In a chilling case of deception and domestic violence, what appeared to be months of stalking by an ex-boyfriend turned out to be an elaborate scheme orchestrated by a Colorado woman's own husband, culminating in her murder just days before Christmas. Kristil Krug, a 44-year-old chemical engineer and mother of three from Broomfield, was discovered dead in her garage by an officer on Dec. 14, 2023, after responding to a welfare check requested by her husband Daniel Krug. According to police recordings, Daniel called the non-emergency line saying, "I don't think this is an emergency, but this feels really weird... my wife isn't responding to text messages or phone calls." In his police interview, Daniel told detectives that his marriage had been deteriorating, admitting they were sleeping in separate bedrooms and claiming that he had asked for a divorce. "Daniel Krug was losing control and his marriage was

falling apart. Kristil wanted out, but Daniel Krug was in denial," Deputy District Attorney Kate Armstrong told jurors during the trial. disturbing truth that Daniel had been impersonating a boyfriend Kristil had



as a teenager for months, terrorizing his own family before ultimately killing his wife. The case, which initially appeared to be the tragic end to a stalking situation, revealed how Daniel thoroughly created a false narrative using burner phones and carefully planned digital deception, all while playing the role of a concerned husband.

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Green Card Holder of Nearly 40 Years Detained by ICE After Trip to Europe

A longtime U.S. resident who has held a green card for nearly four decades is facing possible deportation after being detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) upon returning from a trip to Europe. Owen Ramsingh, who immigrated to Missouri from the Netherlands in 1986 and has been a permanent resident since then, was arrested on September 27 due to previous convictions for cocaine and marijuana possession, according to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin. "This criminal alien is in ICE custody pending removal proceedings," McLaughlin told Newsweek. "A green card is a privilege, not a right, and under our nation's laws, our government has the authority to revoke a green card if our laws are broken and abused." Ramsingh's family say the convictions are from nearly 30 years ago, and that he has "never broken any immigration laws." The Trump administration has pledged to carry out the largest

mass deportation in U.S. history and has conducted numerous ICE raids. ICE reported more than 66,000 arrests and 65,000 removals in the administration's first 100 days, with the daily

widespread protests, especially in Los Angeles, where Trump authorized the deployment of 2,000 National Guard troops to the city after reported violence against law enforcement,



detention population swelling to 55,000 people, well above pre-inauguration levels. While officials have stressed that dangerous criminals are being targeted, federal data show that many detainees have no criminal record at all. Trump's aggressive stance on immigration has resulted in

specifically ICE agents carrying out deportation raids.

What To Know

In a post on Facebook, Samantha Gage who set up a GoFundMe page for Ramsingh's family, said his detention stems from "a charge nearly 30 years ago," when at just 16 he was "tried

as an adult and found guilty" despite having "no representation, no guidance, and no support." She called it "another devastating example of the system failing him," emphasizing that the conviction had never affected his past green card renewals and that "Owen has never broken any immigration laws." Ramsingh was stopped by ICE officers at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport late Tuesday night. He had traveled to Europe, as he has annually for the past five years, to visit relatives. Ramsingh's family told ABC17 he was initially held in a temporary facility near Chicago for 80 hours before being transferred to a detention center in Texas. They described crowded conditions in detention, noting he has been restricted from using his CPAP machine despite being allowed access to daily medication. The GoFundMe page set up to support his family also claims that there is "little space" in his detention facility, and there are "no real beds." "Phone calls

are limited, with 15-minute calls costing more than \$50," a post on the page added. Documents provided to KBIA by his family indicate that Ramsingh, who works as head of security at two Columbia music venues and as a property manager, applied to renew his green card—which grants lawful permanent residency—before it expired in March. By filing the renewal application on time, his status was automatically extended for 36 months. Records from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services confirm receipt also note that his "work and travel" privileges remain valid while the new card is being processed, according to KBIA. Newsweek has not reviewed these documents. Gage said that Ramsingh's mother brought him to the U.S. at age 5, separating him from his father, who eventually located him during that case in the 1990s and has since built "an unbreakable bond" with him.



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New York issued driver's license to migrant — but didn't require first name

The revelation came as Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt said a man caught up in a raid that ensnared 125 illegal immigrants in his state had a New York commercial driver's license with "No Name Given" in the place of his first and middle monikers. "If New York wants to hand out CDLs to illegal immigrants with 'No Name Given,' that's on them. The moment they cross into Oklahoma, they answer to our laws," the Republican wrote in a social media post Monday, along with a picture of the license. The New York Department of Motor Vehicles confirmed to The Post that the license, issued on April 14 and set to expire May 26, 2028, was real. "This commercial driver's license was issued in accordance



with all proper procedures, including verification of the individual's identity through federally issued documentation," DMV spokesman Walter McLure said in a statement. The spokesman said the individual in question had "lawful status" to be in the US "through a federal employment authorization and was issued a license consistent with federal guidelines." He did not specify which program and what

"federal issued documentation" was provided to the DMV to verify the man's identity. "It is not uncommon for individuals from other countries to have only one name," the statement added. It wasn't immediately known how many similar licenses have been issued. Asked how the DMV knew whom Stitt's post was referencing, the spokesman said, "We know who this person is based solely on the information in the picture of the tweet." McLure declined to say whether the agency was cooperating with Oklahoma's investigation. "During the operation, OHP (Oklahoma Highway Patrol) encountered numerous commercial truck drivers operating with licenses issued by sanctuary states, including one

license listing 'No Name Given,'" Stitt's office said in a statement, noting that 125 illegal immigrants were arrested in the sweep. "These individuals posed a public safety risk by operating 80,000-pound commercial vehicles without proper verification," the statement said. Stitt's office didn't reply to questions from The Post and it was unclear if the individual with the "no name given" license was in custody or facing any charges. Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), who has said she'll run against Gov. Kathy Hochul in next year's gubernatorial election, put her on blast over the revelation. "At every opportunity, Kathy Hochul has turned her back on New Yorkers to bend the knee to the radical Far Left of the Democrat Party that puts illegals and criminals first and hardworking law

abiding New Yorkers last," the North Country congresswoman said in a statement. Hochul was sued by President Trump's Department of Justice earlier this year over New York state's "green light law," which allows non-citizens to obtain driver's licenses. The feds argued the law was a "frontal assault" on federal immigration enforcement, and the case is playing out in court. The New York DMV website clearly states that individuals can't receive a CDL under the green light law. Hochul's office declined to comment and referred The Post to the DMV's statement. When she was a county clerk running for Congress, Hochul vehemently opposed giving driver's licenses to illegal immigrants. "I led the fight against giving illegal immigrants driver's licenses," Hochul once said in a campaign ad.

New York issued driver's license to migrant — but didn't require first name

(By our staff reporter) New York AIPAC (America Israel Political Action Committee) in a press release said that, "We welcome the announcement today of a plan to end the conflict in Gaza, disarm Hamas, and free the hostages. We appreciate the determined efforts of President Donald Trump and Special Envoy Steve Witkoff to help negotiate this plan together with Israel". This peace plan has the wide support of the United States, Israel and several Arab countries. Now the onus is on Hamas to agree to the plan, disarm, and free the hostages who have been brutally held captive in violation of law and basic morality. If Hamas agrees to the implementation of this plan, aid will further surge to Gazan civilians to help ameliorate the humanitarian situation. This

plan is a direct byproduct of the tremendous progress of Israel's military operation in Gaza to degrade Hamas' capabilities. Congressional support for our democratic ally has been instrumental throughout this war, including by passing the largest military aid package in Israel's history, and we applaud the Democrats and Republicans who have been consistent and unequivocal in their demands for Hamas to free the hostages and give up power in Gaza. Hamas started this war on October 7 with one of the most barbaric assaults imaginable. Since then, the Iranian-backed terror group has proceeded to use Palestinians in Gaza as human shields for its maniacal war against the Jewish state, bringing terrible death, destruction and humanitarian crises to Gaza.

AIPAC Statement on Unilateral Recognition of Palestinian State

(By our staff reporter) New York AIPAC (America Israel Political Action Committee) in a press release said that, "The unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state today by the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia will make peace and reconciliation even more elusive by rewarding and emboldening Hamas, and those who have done so are now responsible for the repercussions of this irresponsible and malicious action". Press release further says that, It is a moral stain on the countries which "recognized" a Palestinian state and thereby rewarded Hamas for its barbaric slaughter of October 7. As the Jewish state observes the holiest days of the year, these countries obscenely capitulate to evil terrorist forces that re-

ject civilized norms. The path to a permanent peace is through direct, bilateral talks between Israel and Palestinians who reject Hamas' eliminationist ideology.

The primary impediment to peace and an end to the humanitarian tragedy is the refusal of Hamas to lay down its arms and release the hostages.

All nations who seek an end to the conflict should support Israel's just and moral battle against the Iranian terrorist proxies and demand that Hamas release the hostages. In reality, these countries have not "recognized" a state but rather have given sanction to terror. America must stand with our democratic ally and reject performative posturing.

Gaza peace deal in final stages: Trump ahead of meeting with Netanyahu

US President Donald Trump has suggested that negotiations for a peace agreement aimed at ending the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip were at their "final stages", with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as the Arab nations and Hamas, all on board, according to Axios. The two leaders are scheduled to meet at the White House on Monday. The President made the remarks to the news website on Sunday, just hours after he hinted in a Truth Social post about "something special" in the Middle East. "We have a real chance for greatness in the Middle East. All are on board for something special, the first time ever. We will get it done," he posted on Saturday night.

Speaking to Axios, Trump said, "Everybody has come together to get a deal, but we still have to get it done. The Arab countries were fantastic to work with on this. Hamas is coming with them... The Arab world wants peace, Israel wants peace and Bibi wants peace." Bibi is Netanyahu's nickname. Trump further suggested that the Gaza agreement "will be the first chance for real peace in the Middle East", adding that if it comes to fruition, it would be "a great day for Israel and the Middle East". Trump is scheduled to meet Netanyahu at the White House on Monday, a day after US special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the President's son-in-law, spoke to the Israeli leader in New York.



A Non-Negotiable Path to Peace in Gaza: Why the Trump Plan Must Succeed



For decades, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been defined by the tragedy of failed negotiations and the devastating cycle of violence. Today, a new and necessary framework—President Trump's recent 20-point peace proposal for Gaza—presents the only viable off-ramp to end the hostilities, restore security, and inject desperately needed hope and prosperity into the devastated Strip. It is a bold, realistic blueprint that is not just important, but an absolute imperative for Israel, Palestine, and global stability.

The foundational importance of this plan lies in its uncompromising structure, which balances Israel's core security demands with a pathway for Palestinian self-governance and economic renewal. For Israel, the plan provides non-negotiable guarantees: the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and the mandatory, comprehensive demilitarization of Gaza. The deployment of an International Stabilization Force (ISF), coupled with the destruction of all terror infrastructure, ensures that the trauma of the past cannot be repeated. This is a framework for enduring security, not temporary quiet.

For the Palestinian people, the plan offers a colossal lifeline. It immediately dictates a massive surge of humanitarian aid and proposes a massive international economic development scheme overseen by a temporary technocratic Palestinian committee and a high-level "Board of Peace." The commitment to rebuild infrastructure, hospitals, and homes is twinned with a promise to foster a new, vibrant economic environment, creating jobs and opportunity where only despair currently resides. This shifts the focus from violent resistance to peaceful development, giving the people of Gaza a tangible, constructive future.

Furthermore, this resolution is necessary for global peace. The conflict in Gaza is a geopolitical fault line

that sends shockwaves across the Middle East, destabilizing international shipping lanes and fueling extremism worldwide. By resolving the core issue in Gaza, the Trump plan, which has garnered crucial support from key Arab partners like Qatar, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, removes a central source of regional tension. It leverages this consensus to anchor a new phase of integration and cooperation, potentially solidifying the Abraham Accords and leading to broader stability across the entire West Asian region. A peaceful Gaza means a more secure world.

The choice now rests squarely on the shoulders of the spoiler: Hamas. The plan is an ultimatum: relinquish control and disarm, or face the consequences. Individual members are offered a path to amnesty if they choose peaceful coexistence, or safe passage out of Gaza to a willing country. However, the rejection of this deal—which is the only currently proposed mechanism to end the suffering and begin reconstruction—carries severe penalties.

If Hamas rejects the framework and refuses to disarm and recognize the new reality, President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu have made the consequences explicit: Israel will receive the full backing of the United States to continue military operations until the organization is completely dismantled. This is not a threat of further negotiation; it is a clear statement that the window for armed resistance under the guise of governance is permanently closed. Hamas must choose between its violent ideology and the immediate survival, relief, and future of the Palestinian people it claims to represent. Their refusal guarantees only continued devastation.

This plan, therefore, is not merely another diplomatic proposal; it is a necessary pivot toward a future where security and prosperity are finally within reach.

The Anchor of the Free World: US-India Strategic Imperatives

The U.S.-India partnership is often called the defining relationship of the 21st century, a natural confluence of the world's oldest and largest democracies. Yet, realizing its full potential requires moving past transactional irritants and investing deeply in shared strategic imperatives. To truly come together, Washington and New Delhi must rapidly resolve lingering trade disputes, fortify democratic resilience, and align forces to combat global terrorism. The pathway to deeper unity begins with eliminating economic friction. While both nations successfully terminated six outstanding World Trade Organization (WTO) disputes in recent years, demonstrating a capacity for compromise, the larger goal—a comprehensive Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) and reaching \$500 billion in trade by 2030—remains elusive. The resolution hinges on political pragmatism. Instead of demanding ideological conformity on issues like energy imports, the U.S. must offer robust technology transfer and market access in exchange for gradual, reciprocal openings in Indian sectors. A sustainable trade deal, built on mutual trust and benefit, is the economic engine that powers the strategic partnership. The cornerstone of the partnership is shared democratic values, but the concept of "unity" must be redefined. The U.S. often seeks alliance-style alignment, while India insists on strategic autonomy. This conceptual gap can be bridged by adopting a "Great Power Partnership" paradigm that values practical cooperation over policy convergence. Through forums like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), the focus must shift to joint technology collaboration—from semiconductor supply chains to AI governance—and bolstering institutional strength. Strengthening democracy means more than shared rhetoric; it requires continuous

commitment to the rule of law and transparency in both countries, building a model that demonstrates democracies can deliver stability and prosperity better than authoritarian alternatives. In the realm of security, cooperation is already robust and indispensable. Regular joint exercises and the U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group (CTJWG) provide the structure for intelligence sharing and capacity building. The next step is cementing a global front against transnational terrorism by consistently and jointly holding state sponsors of terror to account. Naming and dismantling networks—particularly those targeting India, like Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)—must remain a mutual, non-negotiable priority. By deepening defense co-production and military interoperability, the two nations not only safeguard the Indo-Pacific but also establish a credible deterrent against global threats. The path forward is clear: sustained political will, mutual respect for sovereignty, and a focus on action-oriented cooperation. Resolving trade issues unlocks economic power; embracing strategic autonomy strengthens resilience; and jointly fighting terror ensures stability. Only by fully integrating these four pillars can the U.S. and India transform their shared vision into the geopolitical anchor the free world needs. As the trade tensions during the Trump administration are key to understanding the current path of the U.S.-India strategic relationship, which the Canvas calls the "geopolitical anchor the free world needs."

Here is an outline of President Trump's specific demands, India's response, and the framework for resolving these differences, drawing on the context of the Canvas document and recent trade negotiations.

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'Hard to come back': Congress heads into shutdown unknown

Washington is waking up to its first government shutdown in nearly seven years. How many more days that will be the case, no one knows.

With President Donald Trump and congressional leaders not actively negotiating, there's no sign the shutdown will be over before the end of the day. And with Congress dormant for Thursday's Yom Kippur holiday, that all but ensures it will go until at least Friday, if not far beyond.

Instead, Congress is poised to enact a reprise performance Wednesday: The Senate will vote on, and likely reject, dueling stopgap proposals for a third time, while House Democrats hold another closed-door meeting and House Republicans do not plan to return to the Capitol until next week at the earliest.

Leaders of both parties are digging in for a lengthy battle — ramping up the blame game and putting the onus on their political opponents to blink if they are going to quickly find a way to reopen shuttered agencies.

"It's in their court to solve it — it's their shutdown," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said of Republicans on Tuesday.

"We are not going to be held hostage," Senate Majority Leader John Thune said. "There isn't anything here to negotiate."

Fueling the stalemate are perverse political incentives. Both parties believe the other will face a bigger voter backlash over the shutdown. Democrats are banking on Republicans shouldering the blame because they control the levers of power in Washington.

Under pressure from their base to show they are fighting Trump, they spent months honing a strategy to make health care, including extending insurance subsidies set to lapse at the end of the year, the centerpiece of their message going into this shutdown and next year's midterm elections. But Republicans are warning that if Democrats are banking on them quickly caving, they will be waiting — and agencies will

be hamstrung — for quite some time. GOP leaders are set to hold a morning news conference outside the Capitol on Wednesday to hammer Democrats and reiterate that there is one path out of the shutdown: a House-passed seven-week funding punt.

Asked if he was ruling out any talks on Democrats' health care demands, Thune said, "The negotiation happens when the government opens."

The trench warfare has lawmakers openly questioning whether they can find a way out of the showdown anytime soon. The atmosphere in the Capitol has darkened from just 48 hours ago when senators and aides were holding out faint hope that an Oval Office meeting between Trump and Democratic leaders would help shake loose some progress toward a deal.

Instead, the meeting produced no outward progress, and Trump has since poisoned the well by posting inflammatory deepfake videos depicting Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.) said he hoped a shutdown would be "short" as he cast doubt on Schumer's ability to hold Senate Democrats together indefinitely.

"I don't believe that 47 Democratic senators are going to want to walk the plank," he said.

Republicans got a boost Tuesday night when Sens. Angus King (I-Maine) and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.) joined Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) to vote for the GOP-led House bill. Republicans are hoping they will be able to peel off five more Democrats as the shutdown continues, with Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) among the senators they're watching closely.

King critiqued the push from some corners of the Democratic base to use the shutdown battle to fight Trump, saying in a video explaining his vote that the "irony, the paradox, is by shutting the government, we're actually giving Donald Trump more power." Thune left the door open for talks with

Schumer after Tuesday's votes, noting that the New York Democrat knows how to get a

vote on and are also discussing what votes they could potentially force Democrats to



hold of him. But any conversations would happen against a backdrop of mounting political pressure. Republicans will force a vote again Wednesday on their funding bill and plan to keep calling up the bill almost daily — including through this coming weekend — to try to squeeze the opposition. Speaker Mike Johnson and fellow House GOP leaders, meanwhile, are still mulling how to extract maximum pain from Democrats, including debating whether they'll return next week as previously advised, according to two people granted anonymity to describe private deliberations. Top Republicans, the people said, are wary of bringing the House back without a legislative fix to

take to inflict more political pain. Senate Democrats have also been privately debating what steps they can take during a shutdown to try to keep pressure on Republicans and potentially create an off-ramp, according to two other people granted anonymity to disclose internal discussions. Schumer remained unbowed after Tuesday night's vote, saying "Republicans have failed to get enough votes to avoid a shutdown. They've got to sit down and negotiate with Democrats." But pressed on whether he could guarantee his caucus would stick together against the GOP bill, Schumer was less than definite: "The bottom line is, our guarantee is to the American people that we are

going to fight as hard as we can for their health care," he said. While leadership-level relations stay chilly, rank-and-file Republicans and Democrats have engaged in quiet talks about possible paths out of the shutdown. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) said it might be time to bring back the "talking stick," an object passed around in bipartisan meetings of senators who helped end a brief shutdown in early 2018.

"I still have it," a smiling Collins said.

Cortez Masto told reporters after her vote Tuesday night that she's "open to working with my colleagues across the aisle to extend the credits if that helps open the government again." Part of the discussions include potential reassurances on the Affordable Care Act credits that are key for Democrats. Other Republican senators are floating trial balloon olive branches to their Democratic colleagues. Those talks, so far, haven't reached critical mass. And some Republicans who support extending the credits worry the shutdown will make an eventual deal more complicated. "This will put that on ice for a while," said Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri, one of the Republicans who favors an extension. "I think the length of the shutdown will affect that. ... Once you go off the cliff it's hard to come back."

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India engages Global South, once more with feeling

Global turmoil marked the UN General Assembly as India recalibrated ties amid strained US relations, Pakistan's renewed favour in Washington, and efforts to deepen South-South cooperation and EU engagement.

There was nothing united about the United Nations as leaders gathered for the annual General Assembly to say their piece in times of no peace and find succour in times of a worldwide shortage.

The week was reflective of a world wracked and wrecked by uncertainty, where friends have turned hostile and enemies are ascendant, even if briefly. In the absence of clear answers, countries, including India, are trying to find new partners and resurrect old ones while managing geopolitical turmoil on the side.

South-South cooperation is once again gaining emphasis as New Delhi tries to manage multiple crises in its relations with the US, including verbal onslaughts by loud proponents of America First.

Tumult defined last week's gathering in New York – even the escalators seemed to give up just as US President Donald Trump arrived to assault and insult UN members. A man who lives by disruption and diktat, told the attendees their countries were “going to hell” because of unchecked immigration. They must follow his example or forever be damned as victims of the “failed experiment of open borders”. He called India a “funder” of the Ukraine war in violation of all facts.

The sharp downturn in India-US relations over the past four months, and an equally fast upturn in US-Pakistan relations, has taken a toll on New Delhi, even as it has absorbed the shocks and insults without getting into a tit-for-tat with Washington.

Pushed on tariffs and oil purchases, India is trying to diversify more, re-engage countries of the Global South with fervour, and fast-track trade talks with the European Union. The pace of diplomacy has quickened.

But the path is uncertain and filled with potholes. Complex interplay of geopolitical tensions, two continuing wars and a heavy cloud of uncertainty have darkened the horizon. Double standards are



the norm where buying cheaper Russian oil is a sin for some but not for others.

The level of anxiety is high as leaders try not to get caught between a punitive US and a coercive China. Options remain few – the American market is not easily replaced and China's control of supply chains, critical minerals and heavy equipment makes it hard to bypass Beijing.

After Trump's tariff wars, most don't want to rely on any one country for exports. The idea is to work hard to find substitute markets even if smaller and more difficult to navigate.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's concentrated outreach to countries of the Global South and the European Union was an attempt to enhance the level of India's engagement. He met more than 40 foreign ministers, either bilaterally or in multilateral groupings, both to seek, offer, and cement under-

standings.

He listed vaccines, digital capabilities, education capacity and SME culture as some of the things India brings to the table to bolster South-South cooperation. He called on BRICS countries to defend the multilateral trading system as protectionism grows.

Jaishankar also met his US counterpart, Marco Rubio, but the meeting came two days after Trump's “proclamation” on H-1B visas announcing a \$100,000 fee from next year. Designed to restrict entry into the US, the move was yet another hostile measure on top of the 50 per cent tariffs on India.

If India faces the American stick, Pakistan seems to be the recipient of carrots. Freshly emboldened by the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia strategic military pact, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif attended Trump's meeting with Muslim leaders to discuss the Israel-Gaza war and regional secu-

rity.

Sharif and Army Chief General Asim Munir also went to the White House – first visit by a Pakistani PM in six years after Imran Khan came in 2019 during the first Trump administration. Interestingly, former president Joe Biden found neither the time to call nor the will to engage Pakistani leaders. He focused on building stronger relations with India and strengthening the Quad.

Trump is doing the opposite – punishing India and rewarding Pakistan. Three months ago, he gave Munir an unprecedented White House lunch – US officials admit it was a thank you for the Nobel Prize nomination – and invited him again last week. The canny army chief and de facto ruler of Pakistan came with a briefcase filled with samples of critical minerals and rare earth metals which Trump's associates want to mine and profit from.

Pakistan clearly is back in

US favour as part of the cycle of engagement and neglect and no one knows how long this phase may last. But it complicates India's strategic outlook, especially in light of Pakistan's military pact with Saudi Arabia.

The pact was likely done with Trump's blessings after Arab experts openly questioned the worth of US security guarantees in the wake of Israel's attack on Hamas leaders living in Qatar.

Saudis originally had wanted a mutual defence pact with the US, and serious discussions were held during the Biden administration. The end goal was normalisation of ties with Israel, but those plans were shelved in the wake of the Gaza war. It goes without saying that Saudi largesse for Pakistan, while decades-old and ever-present, could directly impact Indian security now as Rawalpindi goes on a shopping spree for new weapons.

New Delhi will no doubt recalibrate for these uncertain times.

Is Karur tragedy career-ending for Vijay? You don't know Tamil Nadu's matinee-politics enough

The ashes of the dead in Karur may not have yet settled down, but a lot of political dust has been kicked up in the few days since. Leader after leader from across parties is making a beeline to the disaster site, then the hospital, on to consoling the bereaved families and then to the mandatory meeting with the media, with their own versions, perversions and diversions of the truth, which in any case is unlikely to ever surface. There are so many calamities and crimes, committees and commissions, reports and records all gathering dust, that this will be one more such forgotten episode in the annals of this godforsaken rational state.

The cursed town has not yet been blessed a visit by the author of the original sin. Instead, Vijay did make a cameo on video on Tuesday with a solemn face and a contrived tone, and we see why he prudently ended his acting career mid-way. It was a sloppy performance that had obviously involved many takes and hence the two-day delay. We had to strain our senses to comprehend his incoherent mutterings, meant for his ears only. It appears that he not only lacked direction but a director as well.

But let us move to what we have discerned, thanks to the subtitles. Vijay has completely washed his hands of any responsibility for the disaster, blaming the ruling establishment fully. Period. However, he also says, people came out of affection and love for him. Indeed, praise the bard who said love can be painful and fatal! So, in the actor's scheme of things, the people are to be blamed for turning up in huge numbers 'spontaneously and unpaid', a crowd that he often said he was proud of.

This is a clear caveat emptor, buyer beware, statement, somewhat like paying Rs 100 plus snacks for a bad movie, with the difference that this was a one-way ticket to doom. But would his crowd care? Would they stay away the



next rally Vijay dares to call? Of course, they won't. Vijay knows his fans well! What a tango! So, with due confidence of the moral immunity he has bestowed upon himself, Vijay has assured that notwithstanding Karur, his political travels, read people's travails, will continue, placing non-fans on permanent dread. Now, how do you deal with this kind of leader who is at once the message and the messenger in a messy milieu that is manifestly maniacal? Even without Vijay, Tinsel Nadu was already on a heady high, thanks to its genetic obsession with celluloid, with the masses irretrievably hooked to the histrionics of heroes on screen and then stage.

Tamil Nadu is very forgiving of its stars, forever ready to endanger life and limb just to see their Thalaivar on the top seat and relish that glorious sight. Really, the people of this pious land find salvation in serving and preserving its self-serving leaders.

Indeed, this state qualifies as a fit case for a psychological study of collective, large-scale madness. And some selective treatment of the self-styled saviours who inflict this criminal affliction wilfully.

So, has a cloud come over Vijay's political meetings and career? Naah, wake up, folks!

And now to Vijay's punch line, though it was too feeble

for our ears. In typical filmy style, Vijay challenged Stalin to take him, Vijay, on one-on-one instead of taking it out on his party men.

Let's examine this one by one. So, it is personal. No party, no policy, no polemic, not even politics. Meaning, Stalin should now put on his boxing gloves, go to the box-office star's workplace or residence, and fist it out in a duel, like old times, or well, movie climaxes. Or arrest him and arraign him before the law so that he can ride the familiar sympathy wave and gain power through Tamil Nadu's much-too-familiar jail-bail, court-fort routine.

Vijay also knows Stalin's predicament. There is no one in his party who is known beyond their immediate family, let alone be accountable and available, as an accused for arrest.

There is no framework, no structure or hierarchy and nothing in the one-man party that is Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK). No wonder the police were wringing their hands in despair to land some TVK 'leader' of worth to arrest, but all they could muster up was a random, clueless duo. They are now looking for this 'famous' Bussy Anand and another fugitive, I forget his name, for quorum in court.

If Vijay were to become

istic itch for a personality parade of 'I, Me, and Hail Myself', that has put all his fans in much peril and 41 of them prematurely on their flaming funeral pyre. The actor's palanquin-bearers became unwitting pall-bearers of their dear in a blink. That parents can offer their month-old kids at the sacrificial altar of a matinee idol speaks volumes of the utter insanity that stars like Vijay and his illustrious predecessors have spawned.

Was he right in scooting Karur even as the stampede was unfolding? He claims he did not want to create more chaos, that he is also human — an admission he must remember for the future — and that he was at a loss as to what to do. Nonetheless, his great escape smacked of political immaturity, gross insensitivity, self-preservation and cowardly insecurity, too.

After all, he had at his disposal bouncers and bodyguards to protect himself while it was searing heat and an endless wait for his followers. No one stopped him from staying back in Tiruchi or despatching some of his 'tall' leaders to the disaster site. But the TVK clan scooted the scene, en masse, fearing backlash.

And these are the Pied Pipers who seek our precious mandate. Tamil Nadu has little hope until it stops stargazing and looks down instead at Karur's blood-drenched earth for whatever future that can still be salvaged.

Is only Vijay to be blamed? Of course, not. There were glaring lapses, deliberate or otherwise, on the administrative side. Established guidelines for such meetings were given the short shrift, but the point is that no number of cops could have coped, even the army would have been overwhelmed by the mob.

So, the crux is still this. In his earlier meetings, Vijay declared in all pomp that he is the candidate in all 234 constituencies. It is his face that the people are actually voting for, in the process condemning and converting his entire cadre and crowd as mere zombies, in one fell swoop.

After all, it is Vijay's ego-



Let's teach our kids why America is worth fighting for



On Sept. 17, in Washington, D.C., a coalition of more than 40 groups gathered with U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon to plan to upgrade civic and history education on the eve of America's semiquincentennial — the 250th birthday of our independence in 2026.

Education leaders and policymakers started the process of fortifying classrooms against the corrosive tide of anti-American indoctrination that's poisoned too many young minds, replacing this indoctrination with a robust curriculum in history and civics that reignites pride in the greatest experiment in human liberty the world has ever known.

In a time when leftist agitators unleash waves of violence — from campus riots to street-level chaos — this isn't just about dusty textbooks. It's about arming the next generation with the knowledge to engage in the civil discourse our republic demands, turning down the temperature on a nation fraying at the edges.

Polling conducted for the America First Policy Institute unambiguously show that Americans get it: We're a patriotic people, failed by our public education system — and the consequences are tearing at our seams. Americans — 86% of us — agree that a strong America makes the world a better place and 86% see the Stars and Stripes not as a relic of oppression, but as a beacon of patriotism

and unity.

It's a resounding rebuke to the relentless propaganda machine that frames our founding as original sin, our heroes as villains, and our progress as plunder.

Yet, as we stand on the cusp of 250 years, there's a yawning gap: civic literacy. A slim 23% think schools do an adequate job teaching U.S. history. Nearly all of us, 93%, agree that too many citizens are clueless about the basics. The proof is in the quiz.

When asked to answer 18 questions similar to those on the naturalization test — the verbal gauntlet immigrants must pass to become citizens — 86% of native-born adults scraped by with a passing grade (11 out of 18 correct). We nailed the easy ones: 98% know a president's term is four years; 97% peg George Washington as our first chief executive. And 93% can explain the flag's stripes or name "The Star-Spangled Banner."

But dig deeper, and the cracks show. Only 74% can name the three branches of government. Just 69% grasp the president's core duties. And a shocking 41% wrongly think House members face reelection every four years — that's the presidential cycle, not theirs. Even foundational stuff trips folks up: Just 65% credit President Thomas Jefferson with penning the Declaration of Independence, and 20% bizarrely inject First Amendment rights into its celebrated trio of life, liberty and

the pursuit of happiness.

Unfortunately, 56% flubbed more than five questions of 18 — were it the real naturalization test, with only 10 questions, of which you can miss only four, they'd be in serious danger of failing. This isn't mere trivia; it's the scaffolding

of self-government. In an era of targeted violence from the radical left — whether Molotov cocktails lobbed at federal buildings or the organized tuggery that turns protests into pogroms — ignorance breeds division.

Without a shared understanding of why America is exceptional, why our Constitution is a bulwark against tyranny, extremists fill the void with rage. Pride in our history isn't jingoism; it's the antidote to hatred-fueled anarchy. Fostering reasoned debate based on a shared understanding of civics and history lets us hash out differences without hurling bricks. The good news? Americans aren't just griping — we're united on fixes. A whopping 82% back a bold idea: Require every high school grad to pass a civics test like

the naturalization exam before grabbing that diploma. Imagine it — kids drilled not in grievance studies, but in the genius of federalism, the sacrifices of Valley Forge and the miracle of 1776.

This isn't nostalgia; it's necessity. As the left's street-level fury escalates — a direct outgrowth of their victimhood curriculum — bolstering civic pride will knit us back together. Knowledgeable citizens don't burn flags; they wave them. They don't shout down opponents; they out-argue them, as Charlie Kirk modeled. They don't despair; they build. Heading into our 250th, let's demand schools teach truth, not a false shame. Mandate that civics test. And let's strive to renew an appreciation for America's promise to secure the blessings of liberty for another quarter-millennium.

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Can India Rescue Its Exiled Coders - Like China And Taiwan?

President Donald Trump's order to slap a breathtaking \$100,000 fee on every new H-1B visa application has hit India like a sledgehammer. For years, this visa was more than an immigration document. For decades, this visa programme was the launchpad of ambition - carrying bright young engineers from Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai into the gleaming towers of Silicon Valley. Indeed, their paychecks transformed their families back home. The middle-class mantra was: study hard, crack the exams, get the visa, build a life in America. That promise now lies in ruins. With one sweep of Trump's pen, thousands of hopes have been dashed. For a generation raised on the idea that the H-1B was the golden ticket, this feels like the door slamming shut. The H-1B visas had turned Indian talent into a global brand. Each year, about 85,000 visas were handed out, out of which nearly 70% went to Indians. The US got its innovation engine supercharged; India got remittances, prestige and the satisfaction that its best minds were shaping tomorrow. That bridge now looks blown apart. Was Trump's move born of cold economic nationalism, or just a clumsy attempt to fix alleged loopholes? In the end, the motive doesn't matter. What matters is the message: the American Dream, already wobbling, has slipped further out of reach for India's young talent.

The Shockwave In India

The immediate fallout is brutal. Every year, around 60,000 Indian professionals relied on H-1B visas. They are software developers, data scientists, AI researchers, medical professionals and teachers - the backbone of America's high-tech and specialised sectors. A fee of \$100,000 per application will now ensure that even the richest tech firms will trim their intake, while startups, nonprofits and universities will be shut out entirely. Tens of thousands of Indian hopes have been crushed in one swoop.

The impact spreads further. India's IT service firms, employing millions, depend on sending skilled staff to client sites in the US. A dramatic rise in visa costs will force them to rethink business models, perhaps shrinking their US presence and slowing their growth. The so-called "bench" of engineers, waiting for onsite postings, may suddenly find the door closed. At a social level, this strikes at the middle-class imagination - the idea that talent could leapfrog borders and destiny through hard work.

Trouble For The US, Too

Ironically, Trump's move risks damaging his own country. The US has long relied on Indian graduates to plug labour shortages in specialised fields. American universities now produce fewer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) graduates than required. Many domestic students choose business or liberal arts over engineering. By contrast, India churns out nearly 1.5 million engineers annually. This imbalance explains why Indian-born leaders run companies like Google (Sundar Pichai), Microsoft (Satya Nadella) and IBM (Arvind Krishna). To tell the truth, the H-1B pipeline was not a drain on America but a lifeline. Raise the cost high enough, and chances are firms will simply move talent elsewhere, perhaps to Canada, the UK, or offshore operations elsewhere. Experts warn that such restrictions rarely create jobs for Americans. Instead, they offshore innovation and weaken competitiveness. By making migration narrower and hugely expensive, America is pushing away the very talent that sustains its technological edge. As a matter of fact, the American dream isn't dead. But it has now become sharply exclusive: accessible only to the wealthy or the extraordinarily skilled, while the broader middle-class aspirant is locked out.

The Crossroads for India

For India, however, every crisis is also an opportunity. In the longer term, it could be India's gain. For decades, we worried about "brain drain" - the flight of talent to richer shores. Now, America's doors are narrowing. Should we merely mourn? Or should we seize the chance to welcome our brightest talents back home? If this happens, it won't be without precedent. Surely, history offers lessons. In the 2000s, Chinese students and professionals dominated US visas. Access tightened for them, like it's for Indians now. Many returned. Beijing had anticipated and was ready. Soon, it started to offer generous grants, tax incentives, repatriation schemes and flexible visa categories like the new "K visa" for STEM experts. These returnees joined existing firms and built new giants like Alibaba, Tencent and Baidu, and seeded China's AI and mobile revolutions. South Korea and Taiwan did something similar in the 1980s and 1990s. By luring back highly successful diaspora scientists, researchers and engineers with competitive pay, research autonomy and cutting-edge labs, they built world-leading chip industries. Today, South Korea's Samsung and Taiwan's TSMC dominate the semiconductor supply chain. Those revolutions were fuelled

not by imports of foreign expertise, but by the return of their own. India stands at that very juncture. With more than four million Indians and Indian-origin professionals in the US (rough estimates) and many more spread across Europe, Australia and the Gulf, our diaspora is arguably the most accomplished of all. Imagine what would happen even a fraction came back, bringing skills, technical knowhow, management experience, capital and global networks. The Conditions for Return But talent will not return out of sentiment alone. India must prepare for it and earn the right to have them back. That means globally competitive salaries and other perks to match the Western packages. It also means work cultures that reward creativity instead of suffocating it under red tape and hierarchy. It surely means institutional reforms: one-window digital clearances for labs and startups, streamlined ethics approvals and infrastructure that lets research flourish. We already have the skeleton. Bengaluru, Mumbai,

Hyderabad, Pune and Gurugram host global capability centres for multinationals, employing more than 1.6 million people. Indian IT exports are robust. The digital economy is expanding. What we lack is ambition: a bold national project to lure the best talent back. It has to be public-private initiatives. Could we launch a scheme to attract returnees, cutting bureaucracy, offering autonomy and linking them to capital? China is rolling out its K visa this October, which is similar to America's H1-B visa. India cannot lag behind. If Taiwan and South Korea could build a

chip empire and China an AI surge on the back of return migration, there is no reason India cannot seed a renaissance in semiconductors, biotech, or quantum computing. This is not fantasy. It is a question of ambition, backed by policy. The diaspora already looks back with mixed feelings: admiration for India's growth, frustration with its bureaucracy. The government's task is to tip the scales decisively - to make return not a sacrifice but an opportunity.

A Test For Atmanirbhar Bharat

This is where strong leadership helps. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made Atmanirbhar Bharat - a self-reliant India - his enduring mantra. He has spoken of India as a future hub for semiconductors, artificial intelligence and digital innovation. Trump's visa shock may be the unplanned opening that allows PM Modi to act on those words with renewed determination.

My hope is that he rises to the moment - as the statesman who turns crisis into a homegrown revolution. After all, history rarely knocks twice.



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Cut The Politics, We Need Answers On Tamil Nadu Tragedy

Actor and TVK chief Vijay is known to attract crowds. Irrespective of where his political journey takes him, this one tragedy will remain an indelible memory. It should remind every politician and star the flipside of their mass appeal, star display, political power and the craze they thrive on.

The rally, which was organised by Vijay's political supporters, saw large crowds and heavy security presence. However, what was meant to be a show of strength for the actor's growing political influence instead turned into a disaster, exposing several flaws. The state administration and the DMK have categorically blamed TVK for flouting the conditions under which the permission to hold the rally was given. The TVK has alleged a criminal conspiracy, while the AIADMK and BJP have blamed both the TVK and the state government. One key takeaway from the response to the tragedy is that Vijay continues to behave like the enormously powerful star that he is and not a grassroots politician. The fact that he went to Chennai and didn't meet the press after such an enormous tragedy drew serious criticism. Even his party hasn't sent out a single senior leader before the media, and instead relied on social media posts and forwards.

It's clearly time for Vijay to address a press conference and face tough questions, both about his politics and this tragedy.

This, especially as every politician worth their salt in Tamil Nadu has made a public display of grief at Karur, ostentatious or not, it's part of electoral politics. If Vijay can't come out in public because it will create more crowds, his party's senior leadership ought to have been on display. Unfortunately, that senior leadership remains invisible.

However, it's important to cut beneath the politics and ask specific questions and categorical answers, which are essential to determining the truth. While Vijay needs to answer tough questions, the Tamil Nadu Police and the state government can't duck responsibility.

The Delay: A Key Factor?

Vijay was scheduled to arrive at noon, but he reached only after 6 pm. The crowds surged as thousands waited despite the heat all day. This was characteristic of crowds for big stars anywhere in south India. At big events, stars and politicians are known to reach late to allow crowds to gather. Yesterday, in the sweltering heat, Vijay's star-stricken fans used every bit of their endurance to get a glimpse of their icon.

Why was Vijay so late is the first crucial question? Did this delay add to the chaos? The crowds surged once he arrived, as is always the case, but did the delay leave them in a desperate state? Could things have been different had the event followed its planned timings?

Why Floodlights Went Dark?

It's now clear that soon after Vijay reached the spot, the floodlights went off for a bit. This threw the area into darkness. Did this lead to panic? The government said power from the electricity board was not cut off, but a floodlight connected to a generator used by the TVK switched off. We simply need to know who switched off the power and why. Was it because people fell on the generator? Or did the lights going dark led to panic and subsequently the stampede?

Tree Branch Incident

Vijay's fans are known to climb on buildings, poles, banners and anything that can give them a vantage view of the star. He has warned his fans, but did they follow? A broken tree branch with slippers on it reveals how fans had climbed there to get a vantage view. The branch gave way, did that lead to some

chaos?

Police Action: Lathicharge And Its Impact

Images of the police using lathis to control the crowds have been circulated. Was this done to clear the way for Vijay? If yes, did this add to the situation. Such were the crowds that it was virtually impossible to take people who had fainted to the ambulance or outside the chaos.

What exactly did these 500 policemen do? Was their response enough, or was the situation simply too overwhelming for them to manage? This is not the first rally by Vijay, there have been many in the past, surely the police were aware of the situation.

The Question Of Planning: Was It Sufficient?

The critical question revolves around the planning of the event and the permissions given. Despite the rally being approved, it is becoming clear that the authorities and organisers failed to account for the number of people who would show up. The rally's original application requested permission for 10,000 people, but reports indicate that the crowd size ballooned to an estimated 27,000. This is the job of the local intelligence to estimate and they know how to do this.



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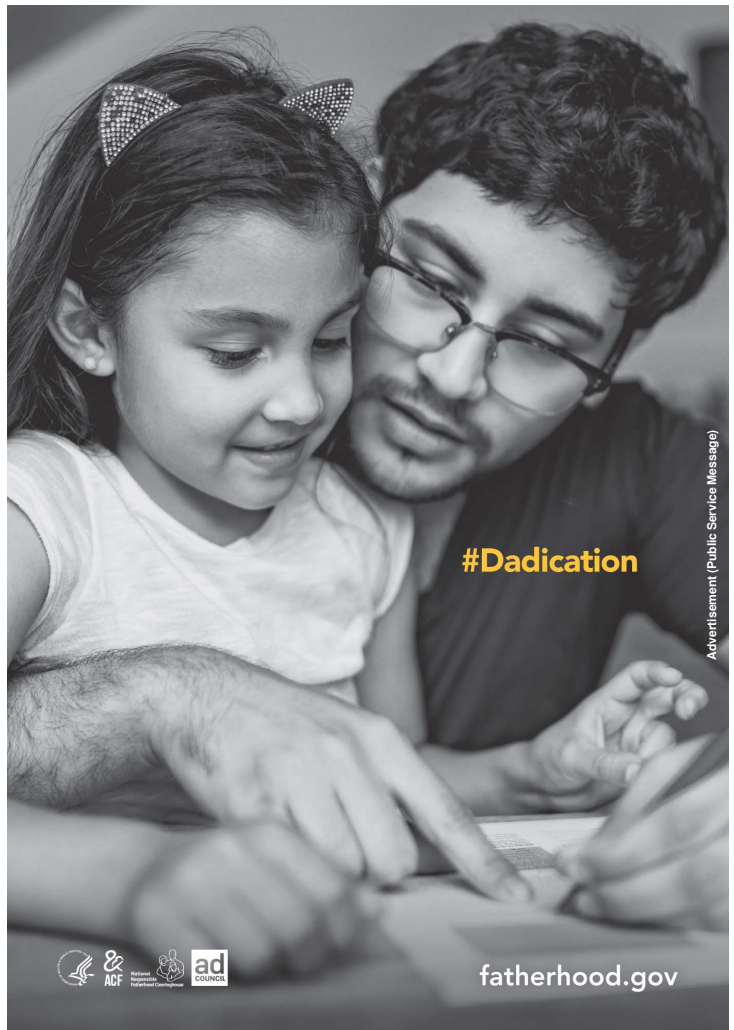
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Message To India, Or Something Else? Why Trump Is Really Coddling Pakistan

Even as US President Donald Trump is delivering blows to ties with India, he is stepping up ties with Pakistan. There is clearly some re-balancing of US ties in the subcontinent. How much this new approach of creating misunderstandings with India and improving understandings with Pakistan is sufficiently thought through in a longer term perspective is unclear.

Trump has targeted India on many fronts. On the trade front, he is not seeking a balanced trade deal. He wants to breach India's redlines in the agricultural and dairy sectors under pressure from US lobbies. No principle is involved, only an assertion of US power. He has extracted one-sided, even humiliating, concessions from the EU, Japan and South Korea. He wants to be able to claim a similar public victory in India's case, but India is resisting.

What Trump Doesn't Understand

Trump and his henchmen who are pressuring India, to the point of even insulting it, do not realise that as a democratic country, the Indian government is answerable to public opinion at home and cannot concede on issues that affect the welfare of large parts of its population.

In India's case, Trump, by imposing 25% penalty tariffs to force India to stop buying large quantities of discounted Russian oil ostensibly on the ground that India is financing Russia's war in Ukraine, has weaponised tariffs not only for trade reasons but also for political reasons.

The Irony With Chabahar

He has added to pressures on India by imposing sanctions on the Chabahar port in Iran, in which India has invested as a strategic gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia that bypasses Pakistan. With the deterioration of ties between Pakistan and the Taliban government in Afghanistan, the US may also have wanted to send a message to Kabul. This connectivity project dilutes Pakistan's stranglehold on landlocked Afghanistan. It also competes with the Gwadar port. This may be one of the reasons why the US has taken this step as part of its new political bonhomie with Pakistan. Gwadar is a Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project that gives China access to the Arabian Sea and the Gulf region, where it is now competing with US and European influence. With a base on the Makran coast, the expanding Chinese navy adds to the maritime security threats in the Indian Ocean that both India and the US face. By sanctioning Chabahar, the US is undermining India's strategic interests and, ironically, aiding those of China.

A Miffed Trump

Trump's political tilt in favour of Pakistan seems to have political, economic and security dimensions.

On the political side, Trump seems to have been deeply piqued by India's refusal to give him credit for arranging a ceasefire between India and Pakistan following India's Operation Sindoor. One assumed that Trump's desire to receive the Nobel Peace prize was a political ambition many leaders have had and was not a pathology of sorts, as it now appears to be.

Trump seems to have taken very ill India's refusal to acknowledge his claimed role in brokering a ceasefire through trade threats to both sides. He has obviously felt that this achievement qualified him to receive the Nobel Peace prize. This explains why he has also been dramatising that he prevented a potential India-Pakistan nuclear showdown. Pakistan, on the other hand, decided to pander to Trump's ego by not only giving him full credit for arranging the ceasefire but also, quite cynically, officially nominating him for the Nobel Peace award. Despite India's denial of any US role in a statement in the Indian parliament, Trump has taken credit for the ceasefire almost 40 times now. To this he has added a list of six other conflicts he has ended, some of which are imaginary.

The Kashmir 'Pitch'

Trump has also been provoking India by wanting to mediate between India and Pakistan on Kashmir. This goes back to his first term. He has restated his desire to do so in his second term following Operation Sindoor. India has, naturally, rejected any third party role in resolving bilateral issues with Pakistan. By raising this issue with a view to stabilising India-Pakistan ties, Trump was preparing the ground for his subsequent political moves towards Pakistan, which India did not anticipate.

That Saudi Pact

On the security side, Operation Sindoor occurred when Trump was in Saudi Arabia, which, with hindsight, might explain his evolving pro-Pakistan position. He was, it would appear, planning a more active role for Pakistan in providing security to Saudi Arabia through a Saudi-Pakistan defence pact, which has now been announced. It is most unlikely that with the huge US bases in Bahrain, next to Saudi Arabia, and in Qatar, and the underwriting of Saudi security over the years with arms supplies, etc., this defence pact would have been negotiated without US countenancing it. Its complex connotations need further analysis, no doubt.

The US could well have in mind the strengthening of Pakistan's military machine with Saudi funds after the battering it received during Operation Sindoor. This is because direct US military aid to Pakistan would cause serious long term strains in India-US ties. The US has already turned a blind eye to Chinese arms supplies to Pakistan, with more in the offing, despite Pakistan continuing to be a major non-NATO Ally of the US. If Pakistan bought more Chinese arms with Saudi money, the US could overlook it.

Lunch Visits, Military Honours

Trump is fully aware of Pakistan's record of double-dealing and deceit in its relations with the US, and has said so openly in the past. The US is cognisant of Pakistan's long truck with terror. He is surely briefed on the deep Islamist leanings of the Pakistani Army Chief, Asim Munir. He would know that India would also be following closely the signals coming from the US on the heels of Operation Sindoor.

Trump chose nonetheless to take the unprecedented step of inviting Asim

Munir to a private lunch at the White House. The US CENTCOM chief, General Kurilla, in turn, lauded Pakistan in hearings in the Congress for its phenomenal counter-terrorism cooperation with the US. He was invited to Pakistan to receive the country's highest military honour. Asim Munir went to Florida for the farewell ceremony on General Kurilla's retirement. During his visit, Munir in an address to the Pakistani diaspora threatened to use nuclear weapons to destroy half the world, without any reaction from the US. Pakistan has now offered nuclear protection to Saudi Arabia. It raises very serious nuclear proliferation issues, but there is no murmur from the US.

Pressuring India

It may not be wrong to infer from all this that the US under Trump wants to strengthen Pakistan as a pressure point on India after its weaknesses have been exposed during Operation Sindoor. The economic dimension pertains to Pakistan offering rights to the US to mine for rare earths and other metals in Balochistan.

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What A 'Win-Win' TikTok Deal Means To China



When President Donald Trump first brought up banning TikTok due to perceived national security concerns more than five years ago, the app from Beijing-based ByteDance Ltd. was the envy of the global tech industry.

Its powerful algorithm reinvented a tired social media landscape by keeping users engaged not just via posts from their friends, but by endlessly recommending content based on how they interacted with clips they came across.

Beijing drew a red line, saying there was no way they were giving up their crown jewel of the consumer tech industry. Chinese officials accused Washington of trying to plunder their private companies and even updated export laws to prohibit a sale of the secret-sauce algorithm.

That uncompromising stance now appears to have softened, at least on the surface. While Trump has hailed an accord that ostensibly saves TikTok's US operations, and values it at \$14 billion, Beijing has revealed almost nothing about what was agreed. But state-backed media has repeatedly described it as a "win-win" in readouts of the negotiations. The details of the purported deal have raised more questions than answers on both sides of the Pacific. The biggest one that Americans should be asking is: What did Trump give up to save TikTok?

It's possible that China could still pull the rug out from under a deal or

that the terms won't pass muster in Washington. It doesn't always appear that the two sides are on the same page. Beijing has yet to publicly confirm whether it has given its approval, despite Trump signing an executive order Thursday to advance plans for American investors to buy the US operations. But the time is ripe for Xi to concede TikTok. A law was passed with bipartisan support to ban the app or force a divestiture during the Biden administration, and TikTok has exhausted its legal battle to remain in the US.

More than half a decade since this all began, Washington and Beijing are now locked in a battle over tariffs, rare earth magnets and advanced semiconductors. Those lines of code powering TikTok have become one of the biggest sticking points in stabilizing a deteriorating relationship between the two superpowers. With deflationary pressures at home and broader macroeconomic uncertainty, Xi has bigger worries.

Trump, meanwhile, campaigned on saving the app, and has credited it with making him a "star" and reaching younger voters. TikTok doesn't even operate in China, and it's become very clear over the years that it means much more to Trump than it does to Xi. This has only given Beijing more leverage. Now is the time to use it.

Xinhua reports that a framework for a consensus was reached that also aims to resolve other issues, such as

reducing investment barriers and promoting economic and trade cooperation. That suggests that something was offered up in exchange for allowing TikTok to continue operating in America. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has said that it was the threat of allowing the app to go dark in America that ultimately sealed the deal.

Yet Trump has gone beyond the law to punt the deadline for TikTok's US shutdown four times this year alone, and when the app did briefly cease operations in the country in January, it was the president himself who took credit for its return in a message to its 170 million US users. Clearly, something else was offered to prevent Trump's favorite platform from being turned off at home after he promised to save it.

As part of the deal, Beijing is sticking to its original red line. ByteDance will reportedly still own the coveted algorithm, but will license a copy of it to a US consortium to rebuild its own version of "from the ground up," a White House official has stated. It's unclear whether this scheme will abide by the US law to ban the app, as well as ensuring that Beijing won't have even a shred of influence. After all this, China is still holding onto the algorithm. A leasing arrangement may give ByteDance a way to earn money to focus on its other priorities. The tech landscape has also moved on over the years. The short-form video field is now

crowded with copycats, from Alphabet Inc.'s YouTube Shorts to Meta Platforms' Instagram Reels. ByteDance in the US is still most well-known for being the TikTok parent company, but in China it has already shifted its focus to becoming an AI powerhouse. It's Doubao chatbot is the most popular AI app in the country by monthly active users, beating out even DeepSeek. And its latest model is the highest-ranked Chinese AI system on benchmarking platform OpenCompass' leaderboard, just behind OpenAI and ahead of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.'s Qwen and DeepSeek.

While it was once the centerpiece of China's global tech ambitions, TikTok may now be just another tradeable asset in a larger strategy to secure dominance in key technologies of the future. Xi has held his ground so far by standing up to Trump and eking out an extended trade war truce. Now, something has to give. Allowing the White House to find a way to keep TikTok in the US is a strategic peace offering in exchange for more pressing priorities.

In his 2025 book chronicling the entanglement of Apple Inc.'s relationship with Beijing, tech journalist Patrick McGee writes: "In China, 'win-win' means China wins twice." The White House may be taking a public victory lap for keeping a version of the popular social media platform in the US, but this could prove far less valuable than what Beijing quietly walked away with.

Inside Trump's Quiet Takeover Of Silicon Valley

"I want to thank you for setting the tone such that we could make a major investment in the United States." These words of Apple CEO Tim Cook were directed at the US President Donald Trump when the latter hosted key figures of major American tech companies for a dinner at the White House on September 4, 2025. In addition to Cook, other tech CEOs, such as chipmaker AMD's Lisa Su, also praised Trump's leadership. But beyond the optics of the dinner, Trump has been threatening Apple with tariffs if it manufactures its products overseas (including in India), while AMD has agreed to share 15% of its revenues from China with the US government.

While Big Tech companies have always worked closely with the US government, the former had asserted their autonomy during the four years of the Biden presidency. But since President Trump was sworn in earlier this year, his administration has steadily eroded the corporate autonomy of US Big Tech players. This will not just alter how these companies operate domestically in the US but also reshape the global tech landscape as these tech firms further entrench themselves as instruments of Trump's machinations and economic coercion directed towards friends and foes alike.

The Biden Era

Earlier this year, in February 2025, researchers from Leiden University, Ashoka University and King's College London published a research paper in the journal *Review of International Political Economy*, citing examples from the Biden years to make the case that tech players were asserting their corporate autonomy. In their response to the Russia-Ukraine war, US tech companies such as Microsoft, Google, Apple, Meta, Amazon, Intel and AMD went beyond what they were legally required to do. For instance, the authors cite examples of Intel and AMD restricting the sale of even non-military consumer chips to Russia, Apple limiting online payment, and Microsoft suspending new sales of its products and services in Russia.

However, one company that has displayed the most autonomous behaviour has been Elon Musk's Starlink, thanks to its role of providing internet to the Ukrainian military. The authors credit Musk's volatile behaviour on Starlink service provisioning as stemming from his parleys with multiple nation-states, including the US, Ukraine, and even Russia and China. Musk's restriction of the provision of satellite internet services to the Ukrainian military at a critical point in the war only underscored the infrastructural power commanded by Starlink.



One Step At A Time

Generally, the findings of journal papers produced after rigorous research stay relevant for years after their publication. But such are the changes brought about by the Trump administration that what would have held during the Biden years does not hold for the eight months Trump has been in office. The Trump administration has undertaken a series of steps that are causing a steady erosion in the autonomy of tech players. For instance, in August 2025, Nvidia and AMD agreed to pay 15% of their revenues from China to the US government - effectively transforming the chipmakers into partners of the US government. As part of the deal, the Trump administration eased the export control restrictions on Nvidia's H20 and AMD's MI308, downgraded chips specifically designed for the Chinese market. In addition to the policy problems stemming from the US government easing national security-linked export controls to become a revenue partner, the arrangement is potentially also in contravention of the US Constitution, which prohibits taxes on exports.

Further, just weeks after calling for the resignation of Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan, Trump was not just appreciative of him but also announced taking up a 10% stake in the tech giant.

Beyond the stakes and revenue-

sharing arrangements, the administration has also threatened tech companies with consequences if they do not invest in the US. As discussed above, Apple has been threatened with tariffs if it fails to invest in manufacturing in the US. Similarly, Trump has threatened semiconductor imports with steep tariffs unless the tech companies involved make investments in the US.

Although it may not appear so on the surface, the Trump administration has also expanded its grip on the tech sector through the TikTok saga. First, rather than upholding the 2024 law that required the ban or sale of TikTok, Trump first gave multiple extensions for its implementation, with the Department of Justice even formally asking US tech companies (whose services keep TikTok running in the US) not to worry about legal requirements. Second, in reaching a deal with ByteDance and China on TikTok's future in the US, the Trump administration has played a role in deciding which tech players would be involved in the app's operations in the country. Lastly, the Department of Justice's push for the breaking up of Google, in two separate cases in US courts this year, might stem more from the Trump administration's motivations to control the tech sector instead of any concern about monopolies and abuse of market power by Big Tech players.

Reshaping The Landscape

One implication of the erosion of corporate autonomy of tech players will play out domestically within the US. Companies would be expected to comply with the administration's directive of culling 'woke' AI and aligning more closely with the administration's AI agenda.

But given the dominance of the US Big Tech companies globally, spanning sectors such as cloud, AI and social media, the Trump administration's curtailment of the corporate autonomy of tech players will have implications beyond the US borders. Tech companies would be expected to align ever more closely with the machinations of the Trump administration. Even if the companies would like to comply with the regulations of a foreign jurisdiction - from Europe to India - as the markets in question may be key to their expansion, Trump's broad tariff threats may come in the way. Tech companies may also slow down their plans to diversify their supply chains out of China and towards developing countries in Asia, such as India and Vietnam. The continuation of the trend of the US government becoming a business partner and instituting investment conditions for the remainder of Trump's term would alter how tech companies do business and, in the process, reshape the global tech landscape.

The Real Reason World Is Suddenly Rushing To Recognise Palestine

The debate around Palestinian statehood has once again gathered steam. A spate of countries, notably European or white, have recognised Palestine as a state. The United Kingdom spearheaded the latest wave, with Prime Minister Keir Starmer saying, "In the face of the growing horror in the Middle East, we are acting to keep alive the possibility of peace and a two-state solution." He was followed by Canada, Australia and Portugal. On September 22, President Emmanuel Macron of France also followed suit, with Malta, Monaco, Luxembourg and San Marino announcing similar decisions. The move came at the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, co-chaired by Saudi Arabia and France, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in the US. Belgium and Andorra have also issued declarations of recognition, though both have conditioned it on the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas and the group's removal from power in Gaza.

In total, 153 of the UN's 193 member states - around 80% - now officially recognise Palestine. Other states that have announced such recognition more recently are South Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Sweden, as well as Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Slovenia, Armenia and Mexico added their names.

Where India Stands

India, for one, had recognised the State of Palestine decades ago in 1988, becoming one of the first countries to do so. It was the same year when Yasser Arafat, the Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), had declared Palestinian independence in Algiers. Dozens of Arab, Asian and African states immediately extended recognition, followed over the years by much of the developing world. Incidentally, in 1974, India was already the first Non-Arab State to recognise the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Of course, this has been met with anger by Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed that there would be no Palestinian state and boasts that he has expanded Jewish settlements on the West Bank, which is illegal under international law. He has vowed a response to those recognising a Palestinian state - "to this attempt to impose a terror state in the heart of our land" - upon his return from the US. He has alleged that recognition of a Palestinian state was a reward for terrorism, alluding to Hamas's unprecedented and ma-

cabre attacks on Israel in October 2023. His far-right minister, Itamar Ben Gvir, responded to the news by calling for Israel to annex the West Bank and dismantle the Palestinian Authority. In his address at the UN this week, US President Donald Trump also decried the move by countries to recognise a Palestinian state. "As if to encourage continued conflict, some of these bodies [are] seeking to unilaterally recognise a Palestinian state," he said, adding that it would be like a reward for Hamas for its actions.

Israel's Case

The Israeli government's position may be explained by the fact that the attacks orchestrated by Hamas on Israel in October 2023 are said to be the largest single attack on Jews since the Holocaust. Around 1,200 people - mostly Israelis, but some foreign citizens too - were killed, which included both elderly as well as infants; another 251 were taken hostage. Some 41 hostages still remain in the Gaza Strip.

Israel launched a relentless aerial assault on Gaza after the attacks, which were then followed by a massive ground assault. Two short, fragile ceasefires came later. The US has been the most supportive of Israel in this war, with President Trump even floating a 'Trump plan' for Gaza, which purportedly involves developing the region as a luxury resort after resettling its residents elsewhere. International condemnation, along with discouragement by America's Arab allies, has led to the plan being shelved for now. But widespread death, destruction, displacement and devastation continue.

So, why has the Western world suddenly decided to recognise Palestine now, more than three decades after Arafat declared a Palestinian state?

Guilt Speaking?

A cynical explanation may be: to placate its own conscience. There is no denying that European anti-Semitism, culminating in the Holocaust, sowed the seeds of the current conflict in the Middle East. The 1948 UN decision proposed partitioning British-mandated Palestine into two independent states, one Jewish and one Arab. This was challenged by the Arabs. Today, many Palestinians would agree that this was a catastrophic mistake. Three major Arab-Israeli wars later, with several rounds of conflicts between Israel and the PLO, and later Islamist groups - prime amongst which is Hamas - and endless negotiations, numerous conferences, two Palestinian uprisings, displacement, and the pathbreaking Oslo Accords in between, the Palestinians are nowhere

near having their own state. They have settled for less than what the UN Partition Plan had allotted them, as a price for not accepting it initially. Yet, statehood has been elusive. The West Bank land continued to shrink as Israel did not cease settlement-building, a key requirement for negotiations that were based on the land-for-peace formula. Instead, more restrictions were put in place. Even when Israel disengaged from Gaza, it was not a complete disengagement - it retained control over border crossings, movement of goods and people, and collection and disbursal of taxes.

War On Both Sides

In turn, Palestinian fractiousness, coupled with the growth of Hamas and other militant groups like Islamic Jihad, which continued terror attacks inside Israel, contributed to the death of the Oslo Accords. Whenever a glimmer of hope appeared on the horizon, it would quickly be snuffed out by one or the other side. Either Hamas would carry out an attack on Israel, or Israel would assassinate one of its militant leaders, scuttling whatever negotiation or discussions were underway. This is what happened in October 2023, too. Israel had just renewed permits for residents of Gaza to come and work in Israel - much-needed for the people - when Hamas struck. Any country would have retaliated, but Israel did so with its famous disproportionate force. Two years into the war, investigations and data, much of it collected by Israeli advocacy groups like B'tselem and Physicians for Human Rights, report finding evidence of starvation and a genocidal war being waged by Israel. More than 62,000 Palestinians are reported dead by the Hamas Ministry; there is widespread displacement, and Gaza has been almost flattened. Most recently, an independent UN inquiry found that Israel has "committed four genocidal acts" in the enclave since it began its retaliatory war against Hamas.

Spillover Effect

The war has spilt over into neighbouring countries, too. Israel is fighting the Hezbollah in Lebanon, and in Yemen, the Houthis. In fact, it was also engaged in a direct 12-day war with Iran a few months back. Most recently, Israel attempted to strike Hamas members of the negotiating team in Doha, but that turned out to be a failed endeavour. No amount of persuasion, coercion, boycotts or punitive measures by either the US or the European Union, let alone the Arab world, has succeeded in halting Israel's actions. And yet, all this has not given Israel the decisive victory it has

been looking for. Though Hamas is a spent force with almost its entire leadership decimated, 41 Israeli hostages still remain in their control. Neither has Hamas surrendered. Both sides seem to be engaged in what can only be described as a messianic battle: a fight to the finish.

A Tactic To Push Israel?

The recognition of Palestinian statehood, probably, is thus meant to be a pressure tactic to bring Israel to the negotiating table and keep the prospects for a two-state solution alive. This was the justification given by Starmer. Australia's Albert Albanese also echoed the same logic: "The recognition of Palestine is a step forward towards Israelis and Palestinians living side by side in peace and security and advancing the prosperity of both peoples." Macron defended his move by saying that recognition was necessary to preserve chances for a two-state solution and that it was also a defeat for Hamas and those who fuel anti-semitism. The worst, though, could still happen - more civilian deaths, the expulsion of Gaza's residents to Egypt, annexation of the West Bank, the killing of hostages held by Hamas, etc., he said.

Large Muslim Populations

Many have argued that the existence of large Muslim communities in these countries has been instrumental in conferring such recognition. There is much truth to this, too. Yet, not all countries recognising a Palestinian state are conditioned by their Muslim electorates - Norway, for instance. Many have coupled their recognition with other punitive measures against Israel to stop its war on Gaza and settlement expansion in the West Bank. Britain, for instance, has curbed defence exports to Israel and sanctioned far-right Israeli ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich. Germany and Spain have announced a total arms embargo on Israel, while Norway's sovereign wealth fund - the world's largest - has divested from a number of Israeli companies over the Gaza war. With Israel's close ties to Europe, these pressure tactics may cause a rethink within the Israeli government. The UAE, Israel's closest Arab ally, recently banned the Israeli government and defence companies from their November Dubai Air Show. The recognition has brought the Palestinians cheer and hope. Most Palestinians, while hating Israel, are not Hamas supporters. Still, the move remains largely symbolic. Recognition does not grant Palestine a full UN membership; that requires a Security Council approval and is something the United States is likely to block.

The India-Pakistan Face-off At UNGA

Some never learn from their failures, and Pakistan is one such entity that thinks that by brazenly repeating a lie year after year it can give its incredulous Kashmir charade a semblance of legitimacy. Furthermore, by making an unending string of palpably false allegations regarding Kashmir-related issues, it rightly invites New Delhi's ridicule, but having become thick-skinned, it doesn't seem to bother about regularly being humiliated at the annual UN General Assembly [UNGA] meet. So, the 80th UNGA meet was, expectedly, no different. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif delivered a speech that was met with a forceful rebuttal from India. Laden with provocative rhetoric and contentious claims aimed to castigate India over the May 2025 military confrontation, commonly referred to as Operation Sindoor, Sharif's address was a comic and hallucinatory account of unsubstantiated claims gleaned from dubious social media accounts. Sharif's exposition was so feeble that India's First Secretary Petal Gahlot had no difficulty at all in demolishing the same with her hard-hitting and incisive retort that cleared the air and left no room for ambiguity.

A tapestry of allegations

Prime Minister Sharif's speech was a crudely sewn tapestry of hollow rhetoric, wild allegations, and contrived historical grievances with frantic calls for international intervention. He accused India of "unprovoked aggression" during Operation Sindoor, concealing the fact that the Indian armed forces had initially only struck terrorist infrastructure and it was the Pakistan army that enlarged the scale of the conflict by targeting defence installations and civilians.

Sharif neither explained why senior Pakistan army officers participated in the funeral ceremony of terrorists killed in the Indian strike, nor assigned any reasons for holding military funerals for the deceased terrorists. Instead, he unsuccessfully tried to paint a picture of a Pakistan standing resilient against an overwhelming adversary, emphasising the nation's military prowess and the so-called "victory" achieved during the conflict. One of his most incredible assertions was the



claim of Pakistan having downed seven Indian fighter jets, and in the absence of any independent verifications and evidence to support this allegation, the same was expectedly met with scepticism. Sharif's rhetoric also included references to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), and his declaration that India's legitimate actions in the region were tantamount to "acts of war," smacked of belligerence, an inappropriate utterance for a UN event.

Unmasking lies

While exercising India's "right of reply", Gahlot convincingly dismantled Sharif's web of lies with undisputed facts. She began by addressing the alleged downing of Indian jets by stating, "If destroyed runways and burnt-out hangars look like victory, as the Prime Minister claimed, Pakistan is welcome to enjoy it." This pointed remark [supported by physical evidence in the form of satellite imagery and videos uploaded on social media by Pakistani citizens themselves] underscored the absurdity of equating extensive infrastructural damage with military success.

Furthermore, Gahlot highlighted Pakistan's consistent support for terrorist organisations, stating, "Pakistan continues to glorify terrorism that is so central to their foreign policy." This pointed accusation brought attention to Pakistan's long-standing history of harbouring and supporting armed

groups that have perpetrated acts of terror across the region.

The IWT controversy

Sharif's invocation of the Indus Waters Treaty as a justification for considering military action was another focal point of India's rebuttal. The treaty, established in 1960, governs the use of the Indus River system between India and Pakistan, and New Delhi's stance has consistently been that any dispute regarding the treaty should be resolved through bilateral dialogue and not through military means.

Emphasising New Delhi's logical stance on IWT, Gahlot reiterated India's commitment to the treaty and its preference for peaceful resolution of any disagreements. She further criticised Pakistan's attempts to internationalise the issue, labelling such efforts as attempts to divert attention from its own internal challenges.

Kashmir narrative

That Sharif would raise the Kashmir issue was expected, and he didn't disappoint. However, with nothing substantial to speak about on this issue, he chose to rake up Islamabad's routine complaint of human rights violations in this region. However, with Gahlot reaffirming that "Kashmir is an integral part of India", it became clear that any reference to it was tantamount to meddling in its internal affairs.

Furthermore, by citing Pakistan's own abysmal record on

human rights and its support for groups that have been designated as terrorist organisations by the United Nations, she exposed the irony of Pakistan's stance.

International reactions and the broader implications

The tone and tenor of Sharif's speech and India's brusque rebuttal leave no room for doubt that any normalisation of Indo-Pak relations is unlikely in the foreseeable future. This verbal face-off has also drawn reactions from the international community with a majority of observers commenting on the stark contrast between Pakistan's provocative assertions vis-à-vis India's measured and fact-based response.

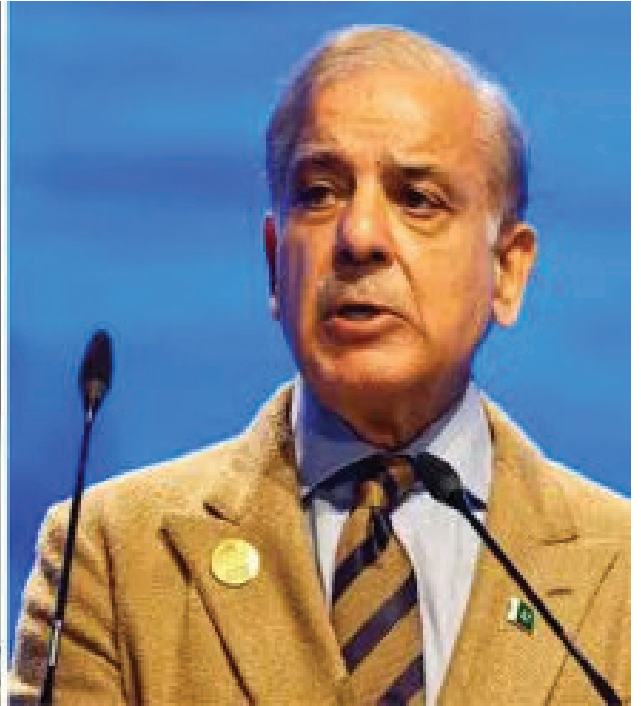
While India as a country is doing well and progressing at an impressive pace, Pakistan is, unfortunately, sinking deeper into the morass of political and financial instability. The venom against India spewed by Sharif through his address at UNGA has obviously been scripted by the Pakistan army which is still smarting under the severe punishment it received during Operation Sindoor.

Accordingly, while Sharif may have scored some brownie points back home and pleased the Pakistan army by talking tough, taking a position that leaves no window for reconciliation will have serious repercussions for Islamabad. While India has the financial capacity to upgrade its military inventory significantly to

counter the envisaged threat, for Pakistan to match this capability will put an immense strain on its fragile economy that is struggling to keep afloat by regular infusion of capital acquired through foreign loans.

Conclusion

The exchange at the UNGA serves as a microcosm of the broader India-Pakistan relationship: a delicate balance between dialogue and discord, cooperation and confrontation. While Sharif's bellicosity impressed no one as Pakistan lacks the means to convert its words into action and as such relies on international support, India's strong response reaffirmed its independent standing within the global community. As the dust settles on this diplomatic confrontation, the world watches closely. New Delhi is in no hurry to talk with Islamabad, and Pakistan doesn't seem to be keen on mending fences either. To add to this, Pakistan army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir has played to the gallery by resurrecting the 'Two Nation Theory', further fuelling anti-India sentiments amongst his people and thus creating a dangerously volatile situation. One only hopes that good sense prevails and Pakistan's newly promoted Field Marshal doesn't commit the blunder of initiating any misadventure by his military or non-state actors.



Taliban kills internet across Afghanistan, citing morality concerns as UN protests

The Taliban shut down internet and telecom services across Afghanistan on Monday, plunging the country into near-total digital darkness and drawing a UN warning of "significant harm" to citizens. The blackout is said to have come after Afghanistan's 9,350-kilometer fiber optic network was disabled, leaving flights grounded, banks frozen, and millions of citizens and businesses cut off. Kabul International Airport has seen all commercial flights canceled or marked as "unknown," leaving the country's main air hub virtually deserted, per Reuters. Monitoring group NetBlocks also confirmed to Reuters that traffic levels had dropped to around one percent of

normal, underscoring the unprecedented scale of the disruption. According to Reuters, the Taliban ordered internet and mobile data services to be cut across the country, with diplomatic and industry sources confirming cellphone connectivity had collapsed. NetBlocks also confirmed connectivity was cut in phases starting on Monday, with the final stage also affecting telephone services, which share infrastructure with the internet. The nationwide blackout appears to be part of a phased campaign led by Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada in Kabul. Earlier in September, he directed the dismantling of fiber optic networks in many provinces. Officials have

defended the move as a way to curb "immorality" online, echoing earlier statements from provincial governors. Reuters reported that Afghan telecom companies said they were "managing this sensitive and complex situation" under Taliban directives, while hoping to restore services soon. Private broadcaster Tolo News, also cited by Reuters, reported that authorities had set a one-week deadline to shut down 3G and 4G internet services for cellphones, leaving only 2G active. In a statement, the United Nations mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) urged the Taliban to immediately restore access and warned that the blackout "has left Afghanistan almost



completely cut off from the outside world, and risks inflicting significant harm on the Afghan people." Reuters also quoted UN officials as saying the blackout has crippled humanitarian operations. Arafat Jamal, the UN refugee agency's country representative, told reporters how it could no longer reach frontline aid workers, including those responding to a deadly earthquake in the east. "It is another crisis on top of the existing crisis," he said via satellite link from Kabul.

Pakistan Minister Mohsin Naqvi-Led Asian Cricket Body 'Regrets' Asia Cup Trophy Fiasco: Sources



The Asian Cricket Council (ACC), led by Mohsin Naqvi, has expressed regret over the Asia Cup 2025 trophy fiasco. Naqvi, who is also the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and is a key figure in Pakistan's political spectrum, was confronted over his decision not to hand over the Asia Cup trophy to the Indian team after the final last Sunday by two Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) officials.

As per NDTV sources,

the Asian cricket body has expressed 'regret' over the trophy controversy, saying such a situation could have been avoided. However, it has also been learned that Naqvi hasn't issued a formal apology for his actions in the trophy ceremony. NDTV sources also confirmed that Naqvi is set to fly to Lahore today, with there being no clarity over what happens with the Asia Cup trophy and the winners' medals. Naqvi decided to take

the Asia Cup trophy and the medals to his hotel room in Dubai after storming out of the presentation ceremony on Sunday. The trophy and the medals have been kept in his hotel room since then. As the logjam continues, it has also been learned through sources that diplomatic back-channel negotiations are on to bring the trophy to India.

BCCI Raises Strong Objection In ACC Meeting Representing the BCCI, Rajeev Shukla and Ashish

Shelar attended an ACC meeting virtually on Tuesday, where objections over Mohsin Naqvi's actions were made. "Shukla and Shelar categorically said that the trophy should be handed over to the winning team. It is an ACC trophy and it doesn't belong to an individual. Naqvi did not say no to it, he was passing the buck," a PTI report quoted a source as saying. "Naqvi insisted that the matter should not be discussed in the AGM and should be brought up separately at some other time. The single point agenda of the meeting was to elect a Vice-Chairman but even that was deferred."

Naqvi, it is understood, did not congratulate the BCCI members for India winning the Asia Cup but was forced by Shelar to formally praise the Suryakumar Yadav-led side's unbeaten performance. "When the meeting started, the Chairman (Naqvi), in his brief opening remark, congratulated Nepal for winning against the West Indies and Mongolia for becoming an ACC member and concluded. "That was when Shelar raised the point

that 'why are you not congratulating India for the Asia Cup title?' He forced Naqvi to congratulate and the PCB chief agreed and duly congratulated," the source went on. The BCCI has also said that it is looking to take the matter to the ICC which will hold its meeting in November. "Shukla and Shelar argued that the ACC should keep the trophy in the office and the BCCI would get it collected. They said 'we want the trophy as legitimate winners.'

Naqvi was passing the buck, not saying no at the same time. "It was made clear that the BCCI will complain to the ICC and Shelar briefly left the meeting," said the source who quoted Naqvi as saying that the latter felt "like a cartoon" and was embarrassed while waiting for the victorious Indian team at the podium. Get the Latest Cricket Updates, Check Asia Cup 2025 News, Schedule, Points Table and Results at NDTV Sports. Like Us On Facebook Or Follow Us On Twitter For More Sports Updates.

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At 15, he waited tables at chain restaurant Friendly's— 22 years later, he bought the whole company

When Amol Kohli started working at a Philadelphia-area Friendly's as a waiter in 2003, he was a restless sophomore in high school hoping to make some pocket change. Kohli made about \$5 an hour at the diner-style restaurant chain, doing any job his manager needed, he tells CNBC Make It. On any given day, he was a cook, a dishwasher, a table busser, an ice cream scooper, you name it. More than two decades later, Kohli added another Friendly's job title to his resume: Owner. On July 22, Kohli's investment group Legacy Brands announced its acquisition of the entire Friendly's chain — which

plummeting sales at Friendly's during the Covid-19 pandemic. The company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in November 2020, and announced plans to be acquired by Dallas-based

of Legacy Brands International was the result of "a combination of a lot of stars aligning, the right people supporting, faith, and a lot of goodwill that all got cashed in at one time," says Kohli. And his long



has locations in most states on the U.S. eastern coast — plus its parent company Brix Holdings and six other restaurant brands, for an undisclosed amount. The deal marked a culmination of sorts for Kohli, 37, who has now spent most of his life working at Friendly's in some capacity. Even while attending Drexel University — where he double majored in finance and marketing — Kohli spent his summers working five to six days per week at Friendly's, learning more about the ins and outs of the business as time went on, he says.

"I started supporting a couple franchisees and just started learning what happens after the money makes its way into the register," says Kohli. "Learning about insurance, payroll, food costs and all these other things. I did that all through college." Kohli graduated with honors in 2011, according to his LinkedIn profile, and chose to take a Friendly's regional manager position instead of pursuing a career in finance, he says. A few years later, he applied to take over a closing franchise location. Licensing, contracting, and equipment for the store cost around "a quarter of a million dollars," including credit, money from Kohli's savings and funds he got from friends and business partners, he says. "That's how my franchising career started. And from there, it just never stopped," says Kohli, who eventually franchised 31 Friendly's locations before buying the brand outright.

An 'unbelievable' ascent with challenges ahead

Kohli's path to owning his one-time employer started with

franchising company Brix Holdings for just under \$2 million. The deal was finalized in 2021. In May, Kohli founded his own investment group, Legacy Brands International, with a sole purpose: Acquire Brix Holdings. He funded his investment group "through a mix of both capital (equity) and debt financing," a spokesperson says. The creation

track record with the company made him "the ideal candidate for ownership," Brix founder John Antioco said in a statement when the deal was announced. Kohli is now a franchisor who owns, but doesn't operate, the other 60-plus Friendly's restaurant locations in the U.S., a company spokesperson says. As a result

of the deal, Kohli's company also now owns Clean Juice, Orange Leaf, Red Mango, Smoothie Factory + Kitchen, Souper Salad, and Humble Donut Co. The entire portfolio includes more than 250 restaurant locations. The ascent from entry-level Friendly's employee to chairman of Brix's board of directors is "unbelievable," says Kohli. Yet he faces a challenge reviving a brand with dwindling locations, he adds — just over 100 today, down from more than 800 in the mid-1990s. More broadly, chain eateries have reported declining sales amid inflation and a shaky economic environment that's caused many consumers to rethink how often they want to spend money at a sit-down restaurant. Kohli aims to modernize the brands he oversees, leaning on technology like a recently revamped Friendly's mobile app, Kohli told Nation's Restaurant News in August. He also hopes to attract new franchisees, using his own career trajectory can prove to be a selling point, he now says. Specifically, he wants people to see

restaurant and food service roles as opportunities to establish a long-term career and start building wealth, not just dead-end jobs or gigs you ditch after graduation, he says. His particular path is rare, but not completely unique: Former IHOP CEO Julia Stewart was a waitress at IHOP as a teenager before eventually leading the brand from 2002 to 2017. Some of the people that are on my executive team now were dishwashers and cooks," Kohli says. "This is one of the few [industries] in the entire world that you can literally start from that level and work your way up to a CEO or executive." Last chance to save: Want to be your own boss? Final days to get 30% off Smarter by CNBC Make It's new online course, How To Start A Business: For First-Time Founders. Find step-by-step guidance for launching your first business, from testing your idea to growing your revenue. Use coupon code EARLYBIRD for an introductory discount from September 16 through September 30, 2025.

Red Lobster's 36-year-old CEO got the company out of bankruptcy. Now he's plotting the 'greatest comeback in the history of the restaurant industry'

Red Lobster entered bankruptcy last year, but quickly clawed its way out in just about three months. The once-struggling 57-year-old seafood chain had endured an \$11 million endless-shrimp fiasco among other mistakes made. But under the leadership of Damola Adamolekun, 36, who was previously the CEO of P.F. Chang's, Red Lobster has officially turned the ship around. As the company continues to recover from bankruptcy, the chain expects positive net income in fiscal 2026, and adjusted Ebitda is expected to grow 43% from fiscal 2025 to 2027. "I think this is going to be the greatest comeback in the history of the restaurant industry," Adamolekun recently told Fortune's Ruth Umoh in her new podcast series, The CEO Playbook. "Of course it's risky; I took over a company that's bankrupt and had a lot of problems." But Adamolekun, who was featured on Fortune's inaugural 100 Most Powerful

People in Business list, knows about taking risks. He led P.F. Chang's, an Asian-fusion chain, through the COVID pandemic, returned the company to profitability, and drove major operational and strategic change at the company. Under his leadership, P.F. Chang's started generating revenues of about \$1 billion, according to the National Restaurant Association. That was "a crazy feat on its face, given the challenges the restaurant and hospitality industry is recovering from: the worst pandemic in 100 years, supply-chain challenges, a shallow labor pool, and a still-uncertain economy," according to the National Restaurant Association. But for Adamolekun, a former Goldman Sachs investment banker, that reward was worth the risk—and it could be the same at Red Lobster. "Investing is the business of risk assessment, and I think you should manage your career the same way," he told Fortune's Umoh. "Risk on

its own isn't something to avoid. You just need adequate return."

What Damola

Adamolekun has planned for Red Lobster

Similar to his P.F. Chang's playbook, Adamolekun is laser-focused on shattering inefficiencies at Red Lobster. Namely, he said he'd never bring back the endless-shrimp promotion, one of the factors that propelled Red Lobster into bankruptcy in the first place. It's "because I know how to do math," Adamolekun said plainly during an interview with Today last November. While the \$20 endless shrimp deal made quite a splash with customers, the company suffered millions in operating losses.

Adamolekun is also spearheading the company's \$60 million plan to keep the seafood chain afloat by stacking his C-suite with restaurant-industry veterans. His vision is to "inject more energy" into the restaurant locations, Adamolekun told Today, through new lighting,

music, and decor.

That's in an effort to improve and renovate current locations, while also fixing broken HVAC systems, torn carpets and chairs, and ensuring more locations don't close in the future. During bankruptcy, Red Lobster shuttered dozens of locations. Now the chain operates about 500. Adamolekun has also said he wants to "lower the check" for customers, making it more affordable to dine there. "We should be the best deal for the best lobster because we do have the best product," Adamolekun told Today. Similar to other restaurant chains like Chili's, Red Lobster is working to pare down its menu, eliminating items that don't perform as well to increase restaurant efficiencies. This year, Red Lobster also ran its Lobsterfest promotion, offering items like \$20 lobster rolls and unlimited Cheddar Bay Biscuits. The company also introduced a happy hour menu and brought back other fan favorites, SeafoodSource reported.

Indian travellers turn to Africa for the ultimate safari experience

Indian travellers have definitely expanded their travel scape. Right now, they are checking off some roaring adventures – the African savannahs. Thanks to Alia Bhatt - Ranbir Kapoor's viral proposal, Kareena Kapoor - Saif Ali Khan, and several other Bollywood biggies' luxurious family vacations, the safari dream has now found its way onto everyone's bucket list. At a time when people are expanding travel budgets and planning frequent weekend getaways (both domestic and international), luxury trips have become more common. A recent survey by travel platform Thrillophilia shows affluent Indians are increasingly looking at Africa for their next big trip, with a 21 per cent year-on-year rise in bookings for Tanzania and 17 per cent for Botswana. Visa process is one of the most challenging aspects when it comes to planning an international trip. While Indian passport holders can apply online for an e-visa for Tanzania,



Botswana requires a visa in advance through consulates or online applications. From zoos to safaris, and now luxury jungle retreats, the trend to explore the wilderness is steadily expanding. In fact, several safaris offer luxury stays, exclusive retreats, water safaris, and other experiences, making them sought-after destinations. And Indians are ready to splurge. Interestingly, the survey also highlights that travellers are willing to pay for exclusive safaris priced between Rs 1.6 and Rs 2.5 lakh per person for five to seven nights. Wilderness diaries What

makes African safaris different are the endless savannahs, scattered trees, and wildlife roaming wild and free against the backdrop of a sunset – just like in 'The Lion King'. Africa is celebrated as the home of the Big Five – the lion, leopard, African elephant, rhinoceros, and Cape buffalo. It is also where one can witness the Great Migration, the time when animals move in huge herds from one place to another in search of food and water. While Tanzania and Botswana are top picks for Indians, Kenya, Namibia, and South Africa are also some of the

popular places. Here are the top spots to wear your safari hats and get your binoculars in place: Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya: Let's begin with Bollywood's favourite! Ever since "Ralia's" much-talked-about proposal, the Mara has become a trendy destination. It is often seen as the quintessential safari dream, with an endless expanse of land framing one of the most breathtaking wildlife spectacles. For Indian travellers seeking cinematic safari moments, the Mara offers an unmatched blend of drama, luxury tented camps, and close encounters with the Big Five. Serengeti National Park, Tanzania: This is where the iconic Great Migration unfolds. Each year, over two million wildebeest, zebras, and other species journey in search of greener pastures, creating one of the most awe-inspiring natural views. It's almost like those travel documentaries. With its vast landscapes dotted with acacia trees, the Serengeti offers a stunning display of both flora and

fauna. Chobe National Park, Botswana: Located along the Chobe Riverfront, this park is home to the world's largest population of elephants. Here, the heavy thud of hooves on the sand is often accompanied by the trumpeting of mighty herds. At sunset, gatherings of elephants by the water's edge make for unforgettable safari moments. One can also enjoy a short river safari too. Kruger National Park, South Africa: If spotting the Big Five is on your list, Kruger National Park is another place to be. As one of Africa's oldest and most accessible reserves, Kruger combines adventure with comfort. It offers visitors a chance to witness wildlife in their natural habitat, with well-developed infrastructure for an effortless safari experience. Etosha National Park, Namibia: Etosha is famed for its vast salt pan, abundant waterholes, and dense populations of elephants, rhinos, lions, and rare antelope. With over 340 bird species, it's also a paradise for birdwatchers.

The curious case of Ladakh's 'pregnancy tourism'

When you hear the phrase 'pregnancy tourism,' what comes to mind? Usually, it's expectant mothers travelling to countries where jus soli (citizenship by birth) grants their children automatic rights and, often, a better future. It's a calculated move that many couples resort to in the hope of securing passports, healthcare, education, and social benefits. But the concept takes a complete U-turn when you head deep into Ladakh's Aryan Valley, where the narrative around pregnancy

Hanu, Darchik, Biama, and Garkon, claim to be direct Aryan descendants. Unlike other

that later. But this legend has also given rise to another claim that might leave you shocked.

"pure Aryan" genetics (straight out of a Vicky Donor subplot, some might say). Stories circulate of local men being financially compensated, turning conception into a commercialised arrangement. To outsiders, it sounds like the plot of a sensational novel, and perhaps that is why travel vlogger Soumil Agarwal ventured into the Aryan Valley to ask the residents directly whether there was any truth to these claims.

Myth vs. Reality

First of all, the claim that the Brokpas are direct Aryan descendants has been widely dismissed by geneticists and historians. No scientific evidence backs it. As for pregnancy tourism itself, there is little to suggest it is widespread or organised. Most accounts come from word-of-mouth stories, exaggerated travelogues, or whispers in Ladakhi guesthouses. Journalists and anthropologists

who have spent time in these villages note that while isolated cases may exist, it's hardly a thriving practice. When Soumil asked around, he got mixed responses. Some residents insisted that foreign women had indeed come to conceive "Aryan babies," while others dismissed the stories outright. The village pradhan (name withheld) was also firm in brushing them off as complete hearsay. Some observers even argue that the whole idea has been inflated, sometimes by locals themselves, to spark curiosity and attract more tourists. Between folklore and gossip In the end, Ladakh's so-called pregnancy tourism sits somewhere between folklore and gossip, part travel lure, part living rumour. Like most legends, it endures not because there is proof, but because people want to believe it and there is a sense of fascination and intrigue. And maybe that's the real draw here, not children born of 'legendary genes', but legends that refuse to die.



The claims of 'pregnancy tourism' in Ladakh

There have been stories suggesting that some foreign women, particularly from Germany and other parts of Europe, travel to these Brokpa villages with a very specific goal: to conceive children with Brokpa men. The belief? That their offspring would inherit the prized

Ladakhi communities, the Brokpas have distinct features - tall frames, fair skin, and light-coloured eyes, that have long set them apart. Local lore, amplified by tourism narratives, has branded them as the "last pure Aryans," said to descend from soldiers who marched with Alexander the Great. True or false, we'll come to

The idea may sound far-fetched, and in all probability, it is, but the Brokpa community (also called Drogpa or Drokpa), who inhabit a cluster of Himalayan villages like Dah,



Sunny Sanskari Ki review: Varun Dhawan leads a shaky front in this lukewarm rom-com

In 2014, when Shashank Khaitan teamed up with Varun Dhawan for 'Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania', the actor-director duo sprung a pleasant surprise with their modern take on a DDLJ-styled romance. Now, more than a decade later, they reunite in a film with an oddly put-together ensemble and a title that's quite a mouthful – 'Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari'. Starring Varun Dhawan as Sunny and Janhvi Kapoor as Tulsi, the film also features Sanya Malhotra and Rohit Saraf in near-parallel lead roles. The Dharma template of

sequined, long-neck kurtas, big-fat sets, and extravagantly shot songs is back in full force. And this time, the stakes are high for Varun and Shashank, whose pairing has so far worked well at the ticket window. Plot-wise, however, the film doesn't offer anything new. The story of two exes crashing each other's weddings feels like an idea that's been toyed with in several Hollywood rom-coms. Still, despite its lack of originality, the film finds clever ways to create comic moments that feel very 2025-coded. In the era of every

possible 'ship'—from relation to situation—the writers weave in enough humour to keep things entertaining. A partly smart move is the inclusion of social media stars like Dharna and Prajakta Koli, who play to their own respective fandoms. On the performance front, Varun Dhawan appears his most at ease in years. There's a certain likeability about him that resurfaces here, especially in the rom-com space. His dance numbers radiate energy, and his comic timing—especially in banter with co-stars—lands

consistently well. Janhvi, meanwhile, feels slightly unsteady in some sequences, often struggling to keep pace with Varun's energy. Rohit Saraf and Sanya Malhotra add their own charm, injecting the narrative with an extra dose of drama. 'Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari's strength lies in its writing, peppered with dialogues that wink at iconic Bollywood moments—from SRK's 'Chak De' monologue to a cheeky reference to 'Mr. India's 'Kaante Nahin Katte'. The first half builds solidly and promises an equally strong

payoff. Unfortunately, the film falters in its final act, with a rushed and illogical climax that undermines the buildup. There is also an oddly forced scene in the ladies' restroom where Sanya and Janhvi's characters engage in a cleavage showdown while sucking in their stomach and trying to outdo each other. Awkward and unnecessary, the scene is meant to evoke laughter but just felt grossly a misfit. Shashank Khaitan's USP has always been witty dialogues, light humour, and true-blue romance.

One Battle After Another review: Leonardo DiCaprio leads Paul Anderson's wild ride

Paul Thomas Anderson thrives in chaos, and with 'One Battle After Another', he embraces it like never before. Returning to Thomas Pynchon's universe after 'Inherent Vice' (2015), Anderson riffs on the 1990 novel 'Vineland', transforming it into a pulpy, political, and unexpectedly tender action thriller which is equal parts absurd, funny, and unapologetically over the top. At the film's centre is Bob (Leonardo DiCaprio), a

washed-up ex-revolutionary and single father who spends most of his time high or drunk. His teenage daughter Willa (newcomer Chase Infiniti) is far more capable than him, trained in martial arts by her eccentric sensei Sergio (Benicio Del Toro). Years earlier, Bob's partner Perfidia

(Teyana Taylor) betrayed their radical cell, French 75, and disappeared. Now the past comes crashing back and Colonel Lockjaw (Sean Penn, at his most grotesque) is after Willa, forcing Bob to pull himself together, call on old comrades, and try, with little success, to remember crucial passwords that could save them all. Anderson's film is at once serious and unserious. On one hand, it's a satire of American politics, touching on border separations, ICE

roundups, and creeping authoritarianism. On the other, it's pure pulp spectacle; a car chases across undulating highways, rebels blasting through compounds, and Perfidia, heavily pregnant, firing a machine gun in one of the film's most unforgettable images.



Lahore 1947: Sunny Deol resumes shoot after Aamir Khan suggests changes



Actor Sunny Deol is all set to resume the shooting for director Rajkumar Santoshi's 'Lahore 1947'. The team has decided to reshoot certain portions of the film, as Aamir suggested some changes after watching the first cut. The 'Sitaare Zameen Par' actor recommended some changes as the producer of 'Lahore 1947', which Sunny and Santoshi have agreed to implement, as reported by Mid-Day. The portal quoted a source who stated, "Sunny and Santoshi sir will shoot most of these newly envisioned sequences in real locations of Punjab."

Explained: How The Taj Story poster row reignited Taj Mahal controversy

Taj Mahal's origins spark fresh debate after Paresh Rawal's 'The Taj Story' poster depicts a Shiva idol inside the monument. Here's why the poster is raising storm.

The Taj Mahal has long been a subject of debate. While it is often celebrated as a symbol of love, claims have surfaced over the years suggesting that the iconic monument was originally a Shiva temple. In 2018, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) filed an affidavit affirming that the Taj Mahal is the tomb of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan and his wife Mumtaz Mahal. This was expected to put an end to the controversy. However, the poster of the upcoming film 'The Taj Story', set to release in October, 2025, has reignited the controversy. The film's recently-unveiled motion poster, shared on social media by actor Paresh Rawal, shows a Lord Shiva idol emerging from inside the dome of the Taj Mahal. This visual has sparked widespread criticism from a section of social media. Following the backlash, Rawal deleted the post and issued a statement from the film's makers



clarifying their position. Filmmakers' response The production team of 'The Taj Story' released a disclaimer on September 30, stating, "The makers of the film The Taj Story clarify that the movie does not deal with any religious matters, nor does it claim that a Shiv temple resides within the Taj Mahal. It focuses solely on

historical facts. We kindly request viewers to watch the film and form their own opinion." Origins of the Shiva Temple claim The claim that the Taj Mahal stands on a spot where originally stood a Shiva temple, sometimes called 'Tejo Mahalaya', has circulated for years, often fuelled by viral WhatsApp forwards and social

media posts. Much of this controversy traces back to a book by self-styled historian PN Oak, who argued that an older monument was built centuries earlier by Hindu ruler Jai Singh, long before the Mughals. Ever since the publication of the book, this controversy raises its head time and again. Political voices and renewed claims The Taj

Mahal, commissioned by Shah Jahan in the 17th century, has frequently been at the centre of such debates. In recent years, several BJP leaders have publicly questioned the monument's origins: In 2022, Rajneesh Singh filed a petition demanding a fact-finding panel to investigate the Taj Mahal's history and examine 22 sealed rooms for Hindu idols. Earlier claims were made by Kapil Mishra in 2020 and Vinay Katiyar in 2017. In 2022, BJP MP Diya Kumari, from the Jaipur royal family, also claimed that the land on which the Taj Mahal stands belonged to her ancestors. William Dalrymple dismisses theory as 'malicious nonsense' As debate intensifies around the upcoming film 'The Taj Story', with many assuming it promotes the theory that the Taj Mahal was once a Shiva temple, noted historians have stepped in to clarify the facts.

Tere Ishk Mein teaser: Dhanush as jilted lover set to destroy Kriti Sanon's world



The teaser of 'Tere Ishk Mein' was unveiled today. Starring Dhanush and Kriti Sanon in the lead, the film features soulful music by maestro AR Rahman and writing by Himanshu Sharma and Neeraj Yadav. The teaser captures the intense chemistry between Dhanush's character Shankar and Kriti Sanon's Mukti, revealing a story filled with passion, pain, and the relentless pursuit of love that may never be fully realised.

Directed by Aanand L Rai, the film promises a love story that is both destructive and redemptive. The love story promises to be an intense one, also depicting the pain of heartbreak. The makers have been careful not to reveal much about the characters, their setting, or their relationships. It begins with Mukti's family celebrating her haldi ceremony as a bruised Shankar enters the venue. He looks into her eyes and says, "Apne baap ko

jalaane gaya tha Banaras, socha tere liye Ganga jal leta aon (I went to Banaras to cremate my father and thought of bringing some Ganga jal for

you)." "Nayi zindagi shuru kar rahi hai, purane paap toh dho le (You are starting a new life, at least wash your old sins)," she says as he pours Ganga

jal on her. Aanand L Rai described the film's theme, saying, "Ishk is only about surrender – letting it heal you, hurt you, and change you."

Kantara Chapter 1 review: Rishab Shetty's folklore saga is a spellbinding spectacle

Seldom does a movie leave you speechless. Sometimes, the impact is awe-inspiring and words fail you. Sometimes, you are so impressed you can't stop talking about it. Sometimes, it hits you so hard that you just revel in its magic. But when a film manages to do all of this at once, it isn't just a masterpiece - it is a cultural phenomenon. That is what Rishab Shetty's 'Kantara: Chapter 1' does to you. The film opens with the Kadamba dynasty and its tyrannical ruler's endless quest to own every piece of land and water. Man, woman, or child - it doesn't matter to him. He kills and conquers all. During



one such conquest, he spots a mysterious old man fishing near the sea. He orders his men to capture him, and when they drag him away to kill him, precious materials fall from his bag. The ruler examines these and embarks on a mission to find

their source. This pursuit leads him to Kantara, where tribes live in harmony with nature. The Kadamba ruler's ambition meets its match when he sets his eyes on Eeswara Poondhottam, a mysterious area guarded by divine power in Kantara.

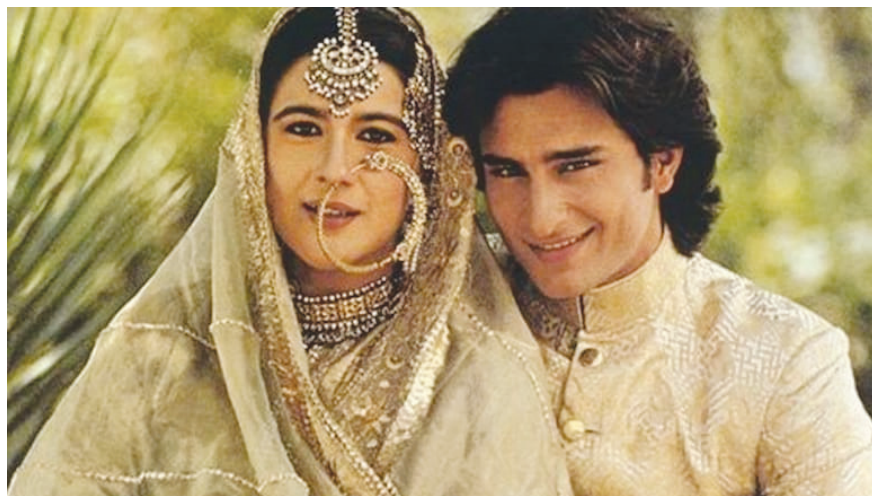
Silent Retreats in India have a new fan: Jennifer Aniston

Designers Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla spoke about being witnesses to Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh's interfaith marriage in 1991

Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh were 12 years apart in age, but very much in love. They had been living together for a few months before marrying in a Muslim wedding, a nikaah, in 1991. Designers Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla recently opened up about the impromptu wedding, how it led to Amrita Singh changing her name to "Aziza", and the aftermath, as the couple's parents were oblivious to the whole situation.

What Happened

In a conversation with fashion journalist Namrata Zakaria on her YouTube channel, Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla revealed that Amrita Singh wore whatever she could, as there was no time to prepare during the nikaah with Saif. The designers recalled, "We signed as witnesses at their nikahnama. One fine day, they came to us and said, 'We want to get married now!' It was Saif; Dingy was still undecided. They were in love, and he had been living with her for six or eight



months. He was ready for it; she kept swinging between yes and no. At the time, we were living in a single room. We went to a friend's house - she lived alone in a beautiful apartment and offered to host it. Abu and I dressed Dingy, and of course, we called for a maulvi." They continued, "There was also a sardarji pandit sitting there. She

wore whatever fit her, because there was no time... Fortunately, she had some fantastic jewellery from her mother. Saif wore a bandhgala. Then the maulvi asked, 'What is your name? Your name has to start with A.' All four of us looked at one another, and the pandit said, 'Aziza.' That was a runaway bride - it was insane. On the drive back, her mother

called her... Eventually, they all took it in their stride." When Sharmila Tagore Was Hurt About Being Unaware Of Saif's Wedding In an earlier episode of Koffee with Karan, Saif Ali Khan recalled how his mother, veteran actress Sharmila Tagore, was deeply upset about his and Amrita Singh's secret wedding. He shared, "I said, 'I got married

yesterday', and a big tear fell from her eye. She started crying, and I felt I had really hurt her. She said, 'You really hurt me. Why didn't you tell me?' That's exactly what happened."

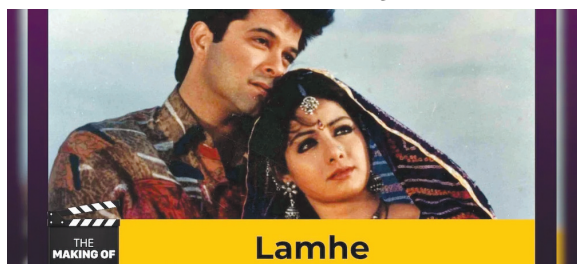
About Saif Ali Khan And Amrita Singh's Marriage

The couple separated in 2004, ending their 13-year-long marriage. Despite their 12-year age gap, they had a very public relationship. However, rising personal tensions, along with Saif repeatedly mentioning in interviews that he felt "restricted" in the marriage, eventually led to their divorce. Together, they have two children - Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim Ali Khan.

In A Nutshell

Designers Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla spoke about being witnesses to Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh's nikaah in 1991. They revealed how the "runaway bride", Amrita, was given the name Aziza during the ceremony in their interfaith marriage.

The Making Of Lamhe: How Yash Chopra's "Taboo" Love Story Became A Cult Classic



Yash Chopra's Lamhe is A Hit

celebrated as a cult classic today, but its release caused a storm. Critics and audiences talked about its so-called "incestuous theme" of an older man falling for a girl who is "like his daughter." What was happening behind the cameras when Lamhe was being made? How did Yash Chopra, Sridevi, Anil Kapoor, and his team bring this daring, delicate narrative to life? September 27, 2025, would have been Yash Chopra's 93rd birthday. Yash Chopra's 1980s Drought: A Decade Without

The last major triumph for Yash Chopra in the seventies was Trishul (1978). After that, the eighties were merciless. For a decade, Chopra could not deliver a hit. Silsila (1981), his ambitious love story, stumbled. The decade had shifted. Audiences now craved action, not romance. Yash Chopra tried to follow the trend with Mashaal (1984) and Vijay (1988), the latter a diluted version of Trishul. Both floundered. Even the romantic Faasle (1985), meant to recapture Kabhi Kabhie's

charm, tanked. By the mid-eighties, Yash Chopra's career had reached an unexpected crossroads. It seemed the magic had faded. Yash Chopra refused to bow out. He decided to return to his true forte with the musical romance Chandni. Chandni became a blockbuster, marking a revival in 56-year-old Yash Chopra's fortunes and reaffirming his cinematic instincts. 1988-89 had witnessed romance reclaim the box office with Maine Pyar Kiya and Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak, powered by fresh young actors, but Chopra had done it even without new, young actors to draw crowds. He seemed to draw fresh energy from his teenage assistant, his son, Aditya Chopra. The huge success of Chandni also gave him the confidence to finally explore a story that had been simmering in his mind for years.

Subhash Ghai Considering Legal Action After Actor Nehal Vadoliya Accuses Him Of Kissing



Weeks after actor Nehal Vadoliya publicly accused Subhash Ghai of kissing her without consent, the veteran filmmaker on Wednesday in a statement said his legal team is prepared to take "strict action against any such defamatory attempts". While Subhash Ghai did not name Nehal Vadoliya in the statement, the director said, "I wish to make it clear that any individual attempting to malign my reputation or that of my companies and team members through false allegations will be held accountable under the law. Our legal team is prepared to take

strict action against any such defamatory attempts". "If anyone has a genuine grievance, the correct and rightful course is to approach the police or the appropriate legal authorities. Resorting to social media to spread unverified claims for publicity is not only misleading to the public but also unlawful," Subhash Ghai, 80, further said in the statement. Actor Nehal Vadoliya, known for adult web series Gandii Baat and Dunali, in a recent interview with Galatta India accused Subhash Ghai of inappropriate behaviour back in 2021 when she was 26.

Can the 2-minute military sleep method work on today's anxious, sleepless minds?

Herbal teas, white noise machines, sleep masks, lavender sprays, strict no-phone policies, and more - people have tried countless trial-and-error techniques to improve their sleep cycle. While some work, some don't. Another age-old technique making the rounds is the so-called military sleep method - a hack that claims to help you drift off in under two minutes. But in an era of burnout, endless doomscrolling, and peak insomnia, the question is: can this simple trick even work for us? The military sleep method is a relaxation technique developed to help soldiers fall asleep rapidly, even in stressful situations. It claims to enable sleep in about two minutes. The method was explained in the 1981 book, 'Relax and Win: Championship Performance.' Interestingly, the

technique shares a lot with yoga nidra, often called 'yogic sleep' that was introduced ages ago. Both practices guide the body into deep relaxation while gently calming the mind, helping you drift into rest without forcing it. With social media doing what it does best, chances are you may have already seen a Reel about it. Here's how it works: Start by lying down comfortably, close your eyes, and focus on slow, deep breaths. Next, relax every muscle in your face, starting from your forehead, moving through your cheeks, jaw, and tongue. Drop your shoulders, letting them sink into the bed, and gradually relax your arms, hands, and fingers. Slowly, move your attention downward to your chest and abdomen, consciously relaxing those areas as you exhale. Continue through your legs,

relaxing each muscle and joint from thighs to toes. Once your body is relaxed, clear your mind by visualising a peaceful scene - floating on a calm lake or lying in a velvet hammock - or by repeating the phrase "don't think" for ten seconds. Well, it may sound like another viral routine that doesn't deliver, but the military sleep method isn't a gimmick. It's backed by science. It taps into neurological principles that help your nervous system shift into a state of rest. Now coming back to the question: Can this decades-old trick actually work in our modern, overstimulated lives, where screens, stress, and late-night scrolling keep our brains on high alert?

Potentially, yes, but with caveats.

During the day, constant exposure to stress, screens,



and multitasking keeps your nervous system in "alert mode." By night, instead of winding down, your brain is still processing. That's where this method might work. "The military sleep method targets both mind and body. By relaxing your muscles and focusing on your breath, you trigger the parasympathetic nervous system—the 'rest and recover' mode and signals to the brain that it is safe to sleep," Dr. Rituparna Ghosh, senior clinical psychologist, Apollo Hospitals,

Navi Mumbai, tells India Today. Dr Shobha N, consultant neurologist, Manipal Hospital Malleshwaram, Bengaluru agrees. "This technique is said to boost melatonin production, slow the heart rate, lower blood pressure, and create an overall soothing effect - making it particularly useful in today's stressful, sleepless times." Now, for the caveats bit. Of course, like any technique, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. What works for one person may not work for another.

Married, but no connection: Reality of silent divorces in Indian homes

Silent divorce is the reality of many Indian households. On paper and in society's eyes, couples remain married, but behind closed doors there is no emotional or physical connection. Rarely acknowledged, this situation often leaves people bitter, fuels mental health struggles, and has long-term consequences for children.

Deepa and Nitish are inching towards their 20th wedding anniversary this December. But theirs is a classic case of a silent divorce - a marriage that exists on paper, yet has long ceased to exist in spirit. They still share the same roof, but their worlds no longer overlap. Conversations are limited to bare necessities - "food is ready" or "do we need anything else from the market?" Weeks can slip by without a single meaningful exchange. There is no warmth left in their relationship - no laughter, no curiosity about each other's lives, no physical intimacy. Their daughters are grown and working, busy with their own lives. Outwardly, Deepa and Nitish still play the part of a couple - attending family gatherings together, posing together with their daughters for family pictures on festivals. But inside their home, the disconnect is stark. Deepa spends her days immersed in chores and mindfulness classes, while Nitish throws

himself into work, drinks with friends at night, and returns home only to sleep. They do not fight, they do not part ways - they simply co-exist. This situation, often called a 'silent divorce', is the reality of many Indian households. On paper and in society's eyes, the couple remains married. But behind closed doors, there is no emotional or physical connection.

WHAT A SILENT DIVORCE LOOKS LIKE

Marriage counsellors agree that silent divorce is common in both metropolitan and smaller cities in India. "Many couples stay in the marriage not out of love or partnership, but often because of children, social pressure, or practical reasons. What is left is the shell of a relationship, with the essence of companionship long gone," says Dr Nisha Khanna, a Delhi-based psychologist and marriage counsellor. You know you are going through a silent divorce when apathy takes over your



relationship. Conversations are purely transactional, limited to bills, children, or household tasks, with little to no emotional sharing. Conflict is absent, not from harmony but from disengagement. Couples live parallel lives, spending time separately, with physical and emotional intimacy all but gone. Socially, they may appear as a normal couple, but behind closed doors, they exist under the same roof while living separate, disconnected lives. Suvarna Varde, a Gurugram-based psychologist and couple counsellor, adds that for generations, couples have

quietly stayed in marriages to avoid societal judgement. This, she points out, is one of the reasons why India's official divorce rate remains significantly lower than in Western countries. Since divorce is still seen as a public admission of failure, many couples - both newly married and long-time partners - continue to maintain the picture-perfect facade of marriage. But societal judgement is only one of the key reasons. In many Indian households, it is also 'for the sake of the kids' and financial dependency that keep couples together-yet-apart, in a silent

divorce. Fear of change is also a key reason why people never step out of failed marriages. Ending a marriage and starting afresh may feel like a threat to the comfort zone. "A habitual attachment to each other keeps couples in a marriage that is no longer emotionally fulfilling," says Dr Khanna. Joint family expectations make it harder too, as divorce is not just between two people but seen as a stain on the entire family. So, many couples simply choose to share the same roof, performing their duties while quietly detaching from each other's emotional lives.

WHY A SILENT DIVORCE IS A SLOW, EMOTIONAL POISON

A silent divorce often goes unacknowledged between couples, accepted with a resigned 'it is what it is'. But this quiet fracture is not without long-term consequences - both partners, as well as their children, inevitably bear its impact.

Hollywood's Distortion Of Hindu Symbols: The Shadow Of Swastika & The Silence Of Gita

Hollywood has always had a way of flattening differences. In the grand illusion of cinema, two things as far apart as night and day can, with the right framing, appear indistinguishable. The business of film thrives on archetypes, but sometimes the archetypes are chosen with so little care—or perhaps so much calculation—that they collapse distinct histories and philosophies into one misleading picture. As the world approaches the eightieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, it is worth revisiting how Hollywood has systematically placed Eastern symbols into Western nightmares, encouraging audiences to see the sacred through the lens of the profane.

Two films, separated by more than sixty years, offer a striking study of this phenomenon: Stanley Kramer's *Judgment at Nuremberg* (1961) and Christopher Nolan's *Oppenheimer* (2023). Both films confront cataclysmic episodes in modern history—the Nazi crimes against humanity and the making of the atomic bomb—yet each imports Hindu symbols at decisive moments, almost as if to suggest that the moral ambiguities of the West and the spiritual legacies of the East occupy the same continuum. To the uninitiated viewer—and let us assume this is the overwhelming majority—these moments collapse cultural distances, turning difference into sameness.

Consider *Judgment at Nuremberg*, whose opening credits depict the shattering of a swastika. At first glance, the symbolism is unambiguous: the icon of Nazi horror reduced to rubble. Yet the image that lingers on screen is not the crooked, tilted hakenkreuz of Hitler's Reich but the upright, balanced form of the Hindu swastika, a sacred sign of prosperity and cosmic order that predates Nazism by millennia. The misrepresentation is not trivial. Symbols are repositories of collective memory. The Hindu swastika embodies cycles of life, cosmic balance, and good fortune; it appears on



thresholds, marriage rituals, and the opening pages of business ledgers. By confusing it with a twentieth-century emblem of genocide, the film extends the Nazi theft of the symbol into the cultural memory of the West. The original meaning is obscured, the millennia-old inheritance distorted.

This conflation continues to reverberate. In 2021, a bill introduced in the New York Senate proposed that schools teach the swastika as a hate symbol, without distinction. Hindu and Buddhist organisations protested, pleading for nuance, but the damage was already in place. Once a sign has been recast on screen, it tends to stay recast.

If Kramer's film blurs visual iconography, Nolan's *Oppenheimer* entwines philosophy with spectacle. In one of the film's most startling sequences, Robert Oppenheimer quotes from the Bhagavad Gita not in the laboratory or the lecture hall, but in the intimacy of a sexual encounter. As Jean Tatlock presses him to read aloud from a Sanskrit verse, he recites

Krishna's cosmic proclamation: "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." The scene conflates erotic vulnerability with spiritual revelation, suggesting that the scientist's deepest confession emerges not through moral reckoning but through carnal intimacy. The quotation itself has long been debated. Oppenheimer knew Sanskrit and genuinely engaged with the Gita. Yet in the film, the context trivialises the source. Krishna's words on the battlefield of Kurukshetra are a divine disclosure of cosmic duty and the eternity of the soul; they are not an endorsement of technological annihilation. By placing this moment in a boudoir rather than a battleground, the film distorts not just the scripture but its moral gravity. More troubling is the film's broader posture.

Nolan's portrait of Oppenheimer is sympathetic, even indulgent. The architect of the atomic bomb emerges as a tragic genius, crushed by politics and scapegoated by lesser men. The deaths at Hiroshima and Nagasaki recede into abstraction, almost

footnotes to the protagonist's inner torment. The climactic scene with President Truman, who dismisses Oppenheimer as a "crybaby," allows the audience to pity the scientist while diverting attention from the annihilated civilians. The film invites us to grieve for the maker, not the victims. Hardly surprising then that the studios were clear in not releasing the film in Japan in its initial run — a market that for long has been second home for Hollywood.

In this reframing, Eastern philosophy functions as an alibi. The Gita becomes the text that gives Oppenheimer a language for his burden, as if the destruction of worlds could be sanctified by scripture. The appropriation universalises the bomb: no longer the invention of one nation's scientists, but the cosmic destiny of humankind.

The misappropriation of Hindu symbols is not an isolated case. Hollywood has long repurposed Asian traditions, plucking them from their contexts and suturing them into Western narratives where their meanings are inverted or hollowed out. As the world

marks eighty years since the end of the Second World War, it is crucial to remember not only the horrors perpetrated but the symbols misused in their narration. The hakenkreuz was not the swastika; the Gita was not a manual for atomic warfare. Each had meanings far older, richer, and more humane than the distortions allowed.

These are not small distortions. Why do they persist? One answer lies in Hollywood's appetite for the exotic. For decades, India, Japan, and China have been backdrops of mysticism, storehouses of symbols repurposed to lend profundity or menace.

Another answer is more unsettling. By blurring the sacred with the profane, Hollywood erodes the capacity for distinction itself. If the Hindu swastika and the Nazi cross are interchangeable, if Krishna's revelation and the mushroom cloud are comparable, if Bushido is nothing more than gangster loyalty, then moral categories collapse. The West's darkest deeds can be cloaked in Eastern wisdom, while the East's oldest traditions are dragged into the West's nightmare.

This was never a mere accident. Hollywood has long been an unofficial arm of the American state. FBI files and Cold War records show cultural appropriation was part of the soft-power playbook: projecting American myths while bending other civilisations' icons inward. When the swastika is recast as eternal evil, or the Gita becomes the language of apocalypse, the damage is geopolitical.

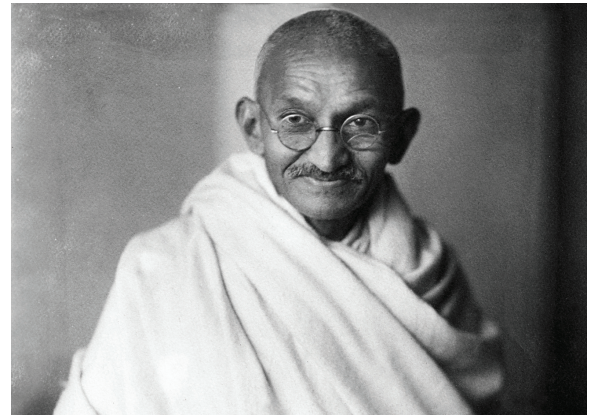
A generation in India grows up unsure of what belongs to them, quick to doubt their inheritance. And the irony is unbearable: heirs to millennia of civilisation outsourcing their doubts to California while their certainties wither at home. Unless we wake up to these distortions, the oldest philosophies in the world will survive only as Hollywood subtitles — mistranslated, misused, and mistaken for someone else's truth.

Living like a Mahatma

Today is Gandhi Jayanti. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, through his childhood and as a young man, was not particularly remarkable or talented. He was not a scientist, an artist, or a spiritually evolved person. I remember what he wrote about his first case at a court in India — he stood up to argue his case, and his heart sank into his boots. Does this sound like Mahatma Gandhi? But this man developed a certain level of relentless commitment to a cause and rose like a colossus. The man went on to move millions of people. If you take the name of Gandhi, not only in India but anywhere in the world, there is a sense of respect. All this happened at a time when there were so many leaders who were true giants in India. They were more talented, better orators, and better educated. Yet this

man stood above them all, simply because of his commitment. It is not that he was a perfect human being. People can do a post-mortem on his life now and find all kinds of faults. No one is without fault. But the important thing is that neither friends nor enemies, neither people who supported him nor the oppressors — no one — could ignore him because his commitment was so absolutely solid. was at Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram a few years ago. I was always intrigued by the Salt Satyagraha — what a brilliant idea. Just going and picking up a fistful of salt took the whole national movement in a certain direction. Just 78 people walked with him, not thousands, and he changed the trajectory of India's freedom struggle. Any situation where there is an individual who

is committed to something beyond his own personal well-being becomes powerful. This is what Mahatma Gandhi displayed and embodied all his life and it continues to represent even today. In every society, it is necessary to have people whose passion in life is beyond their own well-being. Every society needs those individuals who will go on planting mango trees without thinking about whether they will get to eat the fruits or not. This is my call to the youth of India. Just drop this one calculation from your head — "What about me?" — and function to the best of your ability. You will become a wonderful human being because, once you take away "What about me?" you are naturally looking at "What can I do about all the life around me?" Once you are looking at this, you



will naturally enhance your capabilities because there is so much to do. I cannot understand how people in India claim to be unemployed when there is still so much to do in this country. You are too concerned about "What about me?" You are only willing to do a certain kind of job or work to fulfill certain kinds of needs, so you think you are unemployed. Otherwise, there is too much to do in this country. How can you be unemployed?

Take this one calculation out and function to the fullest of your ability. What has to happen will happen. People may or may not call you Mahatma; it does not matter. You will live like a Mahatma; you are a Mahatma. "Mahatma" means you are a great piece of life. You are a great piece of life the moment you take away this one calculation from your mind. Then, wherever you are, you will shine.

Indian Diaspora And The Shifting Ground Beneath Their Feet



In October 2024, on a direct flight from Newark to New Delhi, I struck up a conversation with a 32-year-old professional during one of those informal gatherings near the aisle, when passengers stand up to stretch and exercise. Coincidentally, his first name was also Luv, and he was from Delhi. He was wrestling with a dilemma: whether to continue in the United States or return to India. On his way home to get engaged, he had been diligently saving every month for the past three years. Yet, despite this discipline, he saw little scope for salary progression or meaningful career growth. The uncertainty of his future was palpable. Recently, a Bangladeshi-origin technology entrepreneur and a long-time friend in New York told me he had

been forced to lay off 19 of his 22 employees, retaining only three. His verdict was blunt: "The change is perceptible. AI is rewriting the rules." Even large corporations are not immune. Salesforce, emblematic of the tech industry's resilience, reportedly announced layoffs recently citing restructuring in the wake of rapid technological change. For more than two decades, the Indian diaspora, colloquially known as the desi community, in the United States has been celebrated as a success story. From Silicon Valley to Wall Street, from university campuses to start-up hubs, Indian-origin professionals became a byword for hard work and achievement. This success story has been central not only

to diaspora self-perceptions but also to how India projects itself abroad. Yet, that sheen of acceptance has started dull with the wider technological changes taking place at an exponential speed that is eliminating the roles for many of these engineers. This is coupled by the latest blow that came on September 19, 2025, when U.S. President Donald Trump who signed a proclamation imposing a \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa petitions. Though it exempts current visa holders and renewals, the measure marks a dramatic escalation in Washington's immigration policy. For the Indian diaspora, overwhelmingly the largest beneficiary of the H-1B programme, the decision has generated deep anxiety. U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick underlined this shift when he announced there will be "a significant number of changes" in the H-1B visa process before February 2026, when the new \$100,000 fee goes into effect. He described as "just wrong" the idea of "inexpensive" tech consultants coming into the country and bringing their families — remarks that cut to the heart of the long-simmering resentment against Indian professionals.

The US Government Shuts Down Over Funding Plan Impasse



The United States government has initiated a shutdown after the Republican and Democrat leaders failed to reach a consensus over two legislations. The Republicans had tabled a proposal to fund the government through 21 November, which the Democrats blocked. The Democrats backed a measure that would have extended healthcare benefits and other priorities. Both proposals did not reach the mark of the mandated 60 votes. The 55-to-45 vote and the following shutdown in the Senate means that hereon, only "essential" activities will continue, including law enforcement starting on Wednesday. "Far-left interest groups and far-left Democrat members wanted to show down with the president, and so Senate Democrats have sacrificed the American people to Democrats' partisan interests," Senate majority

leader John Thune had said after the vote. U.S. President Donald Trump's first term saw government shutdowns as well, including over immigration issues. It also accounted for the longest shutdown in American politics, lasting 35 days. While the Senate's top Democrat, Chuck Schumer, said that Republicans are plunging America into a shutdown, rejecting bipartisan talks, pushing a partisan bill and risking America's healthcare, the Trump administration had stated that it will terminate federal workers in case of a government shut down. "When you shut it down, you have to do layoffs, so we'd be laying off a lot of people," Trump had said, adding: "They're going to be Democrats." At the heart of the issue is a \$1.7 trillion that funds agency operations, which amounts to roughly one-quarter of the government's total \$7 trillion budget.

Why Millions of Indians Abroad is Not the Trade Engine Economists Thought

RSS: 100 years of service to the nation



For decades, economists have believed that migrants serve as natural trade ambassadors, carrying with them knowledge of home markets and preference for home country goods. It is an elegant idea that a family from India, moving to New Jersey, sparks new demand for Indian spices, or a Chinese engineer in Frankfurt links up a German firm with a Shenzhen supplier. But what if this pro-trade story is not the rule, but the exception? That is the provocation in "International Migration and Trade: A Comparative Analysis of China and India" (Journal of Asian

Economics, 2025) by VC Sabeer, a research associate at Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Delhi. Using a much stricter empirical lens than earlier research, Sabeer finds that neither Indian nor Chinese emigrants systematically boost trade at the aggregate level. In fact, the evidence hints that in some cases, migration may substitute for trade rather than promote it.

Fixing Old Models

Earlier studies often used trade models that had blind spots. They struggled to account for cases where no trade happened between two countries

and ignored the fact that trade is also shaped by what happens with other countries. Moreover, both trade and migration flows may be influenced by bilateral historical relationships, such as colonial ties or longstanding cultural connections, which earlier studies failed to control for adequately. Because of these gaps, many studies may have overstated the extent to which migrants boost trade. Sabeer fixes this by using a more advanced method that can handle all these issues. He looks at data from 1990 to 2020, combining UN numbers on migrant populations with global trade statistics. Unlike earlier research, he does not just look at exports, but also imports, and even breaks trade down into different types of goods, such as everyday consumer products, machinery and raw materials. He also checks whether migrants in rich countries have a different effect on trade than those in poorer countries. The biggest takeaway is that Indians and Chinese living abroad do not seem to boost their home countries' exports or imports in any clear way.



A hundred years ago, on the sacred occasion of Vijayadashami, the Swayamsevak Sangh was founded. This was not the creation of something entirely new. It was a newer manifestation of an ancient tradition, where India's eternal national consciousness expresses itself periodically, in different forms, to face the challenges of the times. In our times, the Sangh is the embodiment of that timeless national consciousness. It is the good fortune of our generation of swayamsevaks that we are witnessing the Sangh's centenary. On this historic occasion, I extend my greetings to the countless swayamsevaks who remain dedicated to the pledge of serving the nation and its people. I also bow in reverence to the founder of the Sangh, our guiding ideal, Param Pujya Dr. Hedgewar Ji. To mark this glorious journey of a hundred years, the Government of India has released a special postage stamp and commemorative coin. Human civilizations thrived on the banks of great rivers. Similarly, countless lives have flourished due to the impact of the Sangh. A river enriches each part of the land that it touches with its waters. Likewise, the Sangh has nourished every part of our nation, every sphere of our society.

The Beginning

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About the Author



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

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

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



The Beginning

MAD MEN OF NU WAY ADVERTISING

Sharanjit Thind Singh

The Beginning

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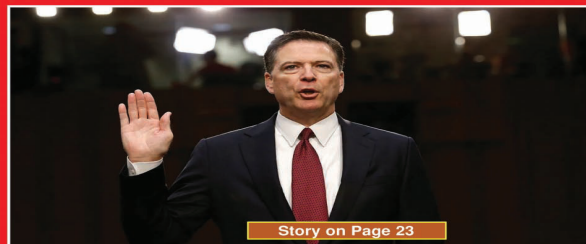
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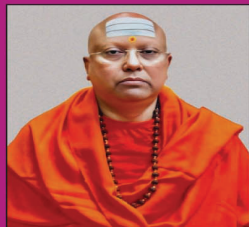
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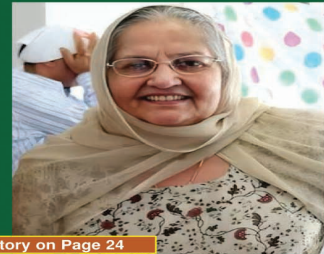
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