

Nipah virus outbreak in India prompts airport screenings across Asia



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An outbreak of the deadly Nipah virus in India's West Bengal state has triggered heightened airport screenings in several Asian countries, as authorities move to prevent cross-border spread. India's health ministry has confirmed two cases since December, both involving healthcare workers. Officials said 196 close contacts have been traced, tested, and found to be asymptomatic.

Thailand has begun screening passengers arriving from West Bengal at major airports in Bangkok and Phuket, while Nepal has introduced checks at Kathmandu airport and land border crossings with India. Taiwan is considering classifying Nipah as a high-risk emerging disease. Nipah can spread from animals to humans and between people through contaminated food. With a fatality rate of up to 75 percent and no approved treatment or vaccine, the World Health Organization lists it among priority pathogens.

India backs U.S. role as Gaza peace deal moves into second phase



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India on Wednesday welcomed United States' efforts to end the Gaza conflict as a fragile peace deal entered its second phase. Speaking at a United Nations Security Council debate, India's envoy condemned terrorism and praised progress in implementing a previous Council resolution on Gaza. He said reconstruction and humanitarian recovery would require sustained international support.

The United States announced it was launching the next stage of a multi-point plan that includes creating a transitional Palestinian administration, demilitarizing militant groups, and beginning large-scale rebuilding. India said it has contributed nearly 135 metric tons of relief supplies and has ongoing development projects worth about \$40 million. India also reiterated its support for a two-state solution, with an independent Palestine alongside Israel.

A VENTURE OF ANSAL MEDIA GROUP OF USA, LLC

VOL: 03 • ISSUE: 13 30 JANUARY 2026 MIDWEST EDITION www.indoustribune.com We serve community first

India and European Union sign the ‘mother of all deals’ amid global trade shifts

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and the European Union sealed a sweeping free trade agreement on Tuesday at a summit in New Delhi, ending nearly two decades of talks and creating one of the most consequential trade pacts of this decade. Leaders from both sides hailed the agreement as transformative for global commerce and a powerful economic partnership spanning nearly two billion people.

Under the deal, tariffs on 96.6 percent of goods by value traded between India and the European Union will be reduced or eliminated, potentially doubling European Union exports to India by 2032 and saving companies about €4 billion (\$4.8 billion) in duties annually. European cars, machinery, chemicals, medical devices and surgical equipment see steep tariff cuts, while Indian exports such as textiles, seafood, and leather goods win improved market access.

Tariffs on European cars will fall from as high as 110 percent to as low as 10 percent over time, with quotas protecting phased entry. Wine duties will drop



sharply, olive oil and many processed foods will see zero tariffs, and the pact also opens services markets including financial and maritime trade. The agreement still needs legal vetting and looks set to come into force by next year, with many provisions phased in over several years.

The pact drew criticism from U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who expressed disappointment that the European Union appeared to prioritize trade with India over joint Western

pressure on Russia, including coordinated sanctions. He said the deal exposed tensions in transatlantic unity and questioned European commitment to collective geopolitical goals.

Economists and industry groups say the agreement is poised to boost Indian spice exporters, strengthen healthcare and pharmaceutical supply chains, and expand engineering and manufacturing exports, while European businesses gain deeper access to a fast-growing Asian market.

India urges UN reform as Security Council faces ‘parallel platforms’ and regional conflicts

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India has raised concerns at the United Nations over emerging platforms operating outside the Security Council, warning that “parallel plurilateral frameworks” and private actors are challenging the UN’s authority on peace and security. Speaking on Monday, India’s Permanent Representative P. Harish emphasized the need for urgent Council reform to enhance representation and effectiveness, citing paralysis on crises like Gaza and Ukraine.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reinforced that only the Security

Council can legally authorize force under international law. Harish also addressed Operation Sindoor, India’s military response to a terror attack in Pahalgam, clarifying that Pakistan’s military had directly requested cessation of fighting.

India framed the operation as measured, responsible, and aligned with the Council’s stand against terrorism. Harish called for strengthened global governance, stating that evolving power dynamics and contemporary challenges demand comprehensive reforms, including the expansion of permanent and non-permanent Council members, to uphold the international rule of law.



Gold surges past \$5,500 as geopolitical fears drive investors to safety



Indous Tribune Newsdesk

Gold prices surged past \$5,500 on Thursday, hitting a fresh record as investors sought safe-haven assets amid rising geopolitical tensions and market uncertainty. The rally followed President Donald Trump’s renewed warnings of possible military action against Iran, along with expectations that United States interest rates could fall later this year.

Bullion briefly climbed above \$5,580, extending gains that now exceed 27 percent this year after a sharp rise in 2025. Analysts said gold is increasingly being viewed not just as an inflation hedge, but as a reliable store of value during periods of political and policy uncertainty. Oil prices also advanced on supply concerns, while equity markets across Asia fell sharply. The United States dollar remained under pressure, despite Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent reaffirming Washington’s commitment to a strong currency.

Rubio defends Trump's Venezuela action while easing concerns over allies and Iran



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Secretary of State Marco Rubio strongly defended President Donald Trump's decision to remove Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro during a Senate hearing on Wednesday, calling the operation a necessary step to eliminate a major national security threat. Rubio said the United States is now safer and pledged to work with interim Venezuelan authorities to stabilize the country, while stressing that no further military action is planned.

Rubio also sought to reassure uneasy allies over Trump's rhetoric on Greenland, NATO, and Iran, saying tensions within the alliance are easing and talks are underway. As Trump again warned Iran over its nuclear program, Rubio said the increased United States military presence in the Middle East is defensive and aimed at protecting American personnel.

He acknowledged rebuilding Venezuela would take time but said conditions are improving compared to weeks earlier.

Iraq's al-Maliki condemns U.S. remarks as election interference



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on Wednesday accused the United States of blatant interference after President Donald Trump threatened to withdraw U.S. support if al-Maliki returns to power. Trump cited al-Maliki's past leadership as destabilizing and warned that Iraq would lose American backing under his rule.

Al-Maliki rejected the comments as a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and said he would continue his bid for the premiership following his nomination by the largest Shiite political bloc. Political uncertainty remains high after a parliamentary session to advance the government formation process was canceled earlier this week due to a lack of quorum.

India-EU free trade deal sparks panic in Khalistani circles



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The India-European Union Free Trade Agreement, hailed as a landmark deal, has rattled Khalistani groups that fear enhanced India-EU security cooperation will hinder their activities abroad. Babbar Khalsa International and Sikhs for Justice, based in Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom, warned the pact could lead to a "Free Transnational Terrorism Agreement." Analysts say the groups are trying to incite violence against Indians in Europe and gain publicity despite limited domestic support.

The agreement includes a Security and Defence Partnership covering counter-terrorism, maritime security, cyber threats, space, and classified information exchange, making collaboration between India and the EU more robust. Counter-terrorism experts say the deal strengthens mechanisms to track and curtail Khalistani operations, and European governments are increasingly acting on evidence provided by India. The pact underscores India's ability to secure international cooperation while weakening the influence of fringe separatist movements abroad.

Middle East tensions rise as Iran fears possible U.S. strike amid deepening unrest



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Iranian officials launched urgent regional diplomacy on Wednesday as fears grew over a possible United States military strike, one month after nationwide protests erupted over economic collapse. Activist groups say more than 6,200 people have been killed in a deadly crackdown, while Iran's currency fell to a historic low of about 1.6 million rials to the dollar, worsening public anger.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates said they would not allow their airspace to be used for any attack on Iran, even as the United States moved an aircraft carrier and missile destroyers into the region. President Donald Trump warned Iran over the killing of peaceful protesters and potential mass executions, urging Tehran to negotiate and abandon any nuclear ambitions. Iran said it remains open to dialogue but vowed a forceful response if attacked.

US, Greenland and Denmark hold talks to ease Arctic tensions



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Senior officials from the United States, Greenland, and Denmark met on Wednesday to begin diplomatic discussions aimed at resolving a crisis sparked by President Donald Trump's recent threats against the Arctic territory, the Danish foreign ministry said. The talks follow months of strained relations between Denmark and the United States, both founding NATO members, over security and sovereignty issues in Greenland.

According to Denmark's foreign ministry, the meeting focused on addressing U.S. concerns about Arctic security while respecting the "Kingdom's red lines," highlighting Greenland's autonomy within the Danish realm. The discussions signal a coordinated effort to prevent further escalation after Trump's remarks raised questions about the stability of Arctic partnerships.

The talks were held in Nuuk, Greenland, where the Greenlandic and Danish flags flew prominently as diplomats convened. Officials did not provide details on outcomes, but the dialogue marks the first high-level engagement among the three parties since tensions intensified.

Hasina criticizes Bangladesh election from exile as tensions rise



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Bangladesh's ousted former leader Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday denounced the country's upcoming national election, warning it would deepen instability after her party was barred from participating. Speaking from exile in India, Hasina said in an email interview that excluding the Awami League disenfranchised millions of voters and undermined the legitimacy of the process. She said Bangladesh could face prolonged unrest without an inclusive and credible vote.

The election, scheduled for next month, will be the first since Hasina fled to India on Monday in August 2024 following weeks of violent protests that ended her 15-year rule. An interim administration led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus is overseeing the process and has pledged a free and fair election, though critics continue to question its inclusiveness.

Russia pauses strikes on Ukraine power grid after Trump intervention



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Russia agreed on Friday to halt air attacks on Ukraine's power grid until Sunday following a request from President Donald Trump, as Washington pushes for diplomatic de escalation amid severe winter conditions. The Kremlin said President Vladimir Putin accepted the request to create space for peace talks. President Volodymyr Zelensky said there was no formal truce but confirmed that Russian strikes on energy facilities did not occur overnight. He added that Moscow had shifted attacks toward Ukrainian logistics and transport infrastructure. Ukraine said it was ready to reciprocate by suspending strikes on Russian energy targets. The pause comes as Kyiv faces extreme cold, widespread heating outages, and ongoing concerns over air defense shortages.

Vietnam and European Union elevate ties amid shifting global trade



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Vietnam and the European Union on Thursday upgraded their relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership, Vietnam's highest level of diplomatic engagement. The announcement was made in Hanoi during a visit by European Council President Antonio Costa, as both sides adjust to global trade disruptions linked to U.S. tariff policies.

The move places the European Union on par with Vietnam's top partners, including the United States and China. Leaders from both sides said the partnership aims to deepen cooperation on trade, investment, and global stability. Vietnam and the European Union have already been linked by a free trade agreement in force since 2020, which has expanded bilateral commerce.

Japan braces for heavy snowstorms ahead of winter election



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Japan's meteorological agency warned that northern and western regions could see up to 70 centimeters of snow this week, with up to 60 centimeters in south-central Kinki, as the country approaches its first winter election in 36 years. Officials cautioned about traffic disruptions and avalanche risks. Heavy snowfall last week stranded thousands in Hokkaido and grounded dozens of flights. The Lower House election on Feb. 8 could face lower voter turnout due to extreme cold, particularly in rural areas. Preliminary polls suggest Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's Liberal Democratic Party may increase its parliamentary majority despite the snow-related challenges.

Bessent warns Carney against escalating rhetoric ahead of North American trade review

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United States Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Wednesday cautioned Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney against sharpening public criticism of U.S. trade policy as Washington, Ottawa, and Mexico prepare for a formal review of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Speaking in a television interview, Bessent said confrontational remarks could undermine Canada's position ahead of talks on the trade pact, which shields it from the harshest effects of President Donald Trump's tariffs.

The warning followed Carney's speech last week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where he criticized economic coercion by major powers. President Trump later threatened a



100 percent tariff on Canadian goods, citing concerns over a separate trade arrangement Canada was exploring with China. Bessent said disputes should be handled through diplomacy, not public sparring, and suggested Carney's political

approach could backfire. While Trump has recently played down the importance of the agreement, Bessent said he remained confident negotiations would ultimately stabilize relations, even if the path forward proves uneven.

Britain's Starmer seeks reset with China as global alliances shift

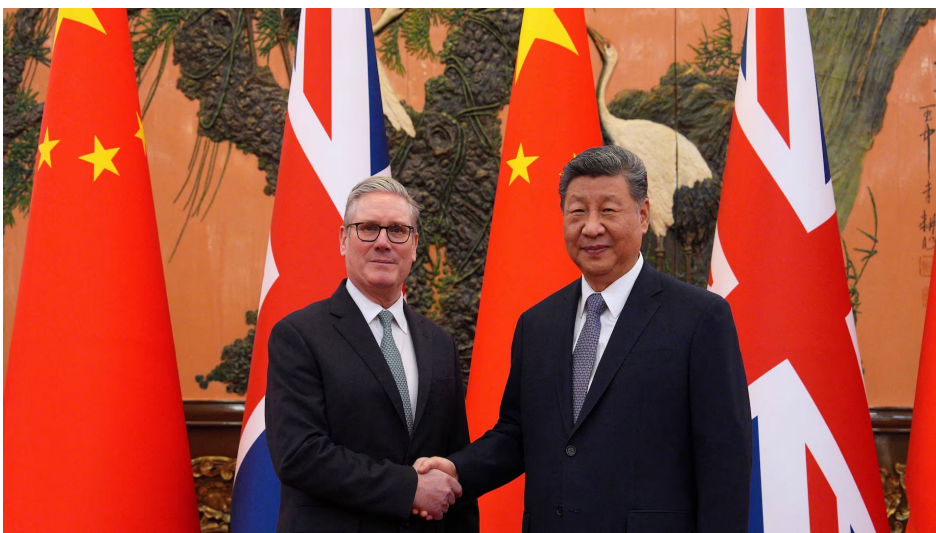
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British Prime Minister Keir Starmer met Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday, calling for a "sophisticated relationship" with Beijing focused on economic growth and security. The visit, the first by a British prime minister since 2018, signals a shift after years of strained ties driven by security concerns and human rights disputes.

Starmer said Britain must engage with China while maintaining honest dialogue

on areas of disagreement. Xi said both countries should move past previous tensions and work toward a long-term strategic partnership.

The trip comes as Western nations reassess diplomatic strategies amid uncertainty in relations with the United States under President Donald Trump. Starmer is accompanied by a large business delegation, underscoring his government's priority on trade and investment, even as critics warn of espionage and national security risks.



Suspected digital breach exposed Nobel Peace Prize winner early, committee says

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Digital espionage likely led to the premature disclosure of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize winner, the Norwegian Nobel Committee said on Friday. Unusual betting activity surged hours before the official announcement in Oslo, with wagers backing Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado sharply increasing.

According to the committee's permanent secretary Kristian Berg Harpviken, bets quickly climbed to about \$2.2 million despite Machado not being tipped by experts or media beforehand. Norwegian intelligence agencies investigated whether



the breach stemmed from an internal leak or external spying, possibly involving criminal or state actors. The committee said the motive remains unclear and is now focused on strengthening safeguards against future digital intrusions.

South Korea's former first lady sentenced to 20 months for corruption

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Kim Keon Hee, wife of ousted South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, was sentenced on Wednesday to 20 months in prison for accepting luxury gifts from the Unification Church in exchange for political favors. The court said Kim exploited her position as first lady for personal gain. She apologized through her lawyers. Prosecutors had sought a 15-year term. Kim's husband faces a rebellion charge tied to his 2024 martial law decree, which could carry the death penalty or life imprisonment. Kim has been in jail since August, and investigators found she was not involved in Yoon's martial law enforcement. Appeals are expected.

North Korea to unveil nuclear plans at upcoming party congress



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country will reveal plans to strengthen its nuclear program at the upcoming party congress in February, state media reported Wednesday. During a live-fire drill on Tuesday, Kim oversaw the launch of upgraded large-caliber rocket systems, improving mobility and strike accuracy. Analysts say the new systems blur the line between artillery and ballistic missiles and may carry nuclear warheads. Kim emphasized that expanding military capability remains central to the Workers' Party line. The congress will set new political and economic priorities and is expected to showcase North Korea's weapons achievements since December, including hypersonic and long-range cruise missile tests.



Published Weekly by:
Ansal Media Group
of USA, LLC

Chicago Office:
Lincolnwood, IL 60712
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BOOK

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India at Davos, the India–EU breakthrough, and the spirit of January 26



Dr. Avi Verma

As India marked its 77th Republic Day on January 26, reaffirming the strength of its Constitution, democratic institutions, and national unity, the country also projected growing influence on the global stage. That same week at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Indian leaders, ministers, state officials, and corporate representatives underscored the nation’s economic resilience, strategic engagement, and growing role in shaping global discourse.

India’s presence at Davos this year was notable for its size and diversity, and for advancing its narrative as more than an “emerging economy.” Delegates highlighted India’s robust growth trajectory, underpinned by structural reforms, infrastructure expansion, and digital public infrastructure that supports long-term growth rather than short-term stimulus.

Indian officials and business leaders engaged with counterparts on issues ranging from artificial intelligence applications at scale to resilient supply chains and clean energy transitions.



A defining moment of the week was the landmark India–European Union Free Trade Agreement, often described by officials on both sides as the “mother of all trade deals.” After nearly two decades of negotiations, India and the European Union concluded a comprehensive pact that will eliminate or cut tariffs on most goods traded between the two economies and liberalize market access in key sectors. The deal is projected to create a free trade area covering approximately two billion people and nearly a quarter of global gross domestic product, significantly expanding opportunities for Indian exports and European investment. Leaders said it will strengthen trade in textiles, leather, gems and jewellery, engineering goods, and agricultural products, while boosting job creation and deepening economic ties. The agreement was hailed as a major strategic and economic milestone, reflecting a shared commitment to rules-based trade and cooperation amid global market uncertainties.

The timing of the trade breakthrough alongside Republic Day celebrations lent

added symbolism. At home, January 26 celebrated India’s constitutional values and democratic continuity; abroad, Davos amplified India’s message that these values now underpin a nation with global economic weight and strategic influence. Together, these moments told a unified story: India is navigating a fragmented world by strengthening partnerships and reinforcing its role as a constructive force in shaping global economic and strategic architecture.

Looking ahead, the challenge for India will be translating its expanding global stature into inclusive prosperity at home as it approaches the centenary of independence in 2047. But for this moment, India stands tall, celebrating its Republic, forging pivotal alliances, and asserting a durable place in the future world order.

Best Regards,

Dr. Avi Verma.

Publisher,

IndoUS Tribune



Hundreds feared dead as migrants attempt Mediterranean crossing during cyclone

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Italian authorities said on Monday that up to 380 people may have drowned while trying to cross the Mediterranean last week as Cyclone Harry battered southern Italy and Malta. Maltese officials confirmed that 50 people died in one shipwreck on Friday, with only one survivor rescued after clinging to debris at sea for nearly a day. The boat had departed from Tunisia earlier in the week.

In another incident, one-year-old twin girls from Guinea are presumed dead after an overcrowded vessel was struck by severe weather near the Italian island of Lampedusa. Italy’s coast guard is searching for several missing boats launched despite dangerous conditions. The central Mediterranean remains one of the world’s deadliest migration routes.

German chancellor calls US violence “worrying” after federal shootings

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Monday that recent fatal shootings by US federal agents in Minnesota reflect a “worrying” level of violence. Two Americans were killed this month, including Alex Pretti Saturday and Renee Nicole Good earlier in January. Merz said he expects US authorities to investigate whether the shootings were necessary and if officers faced real threats. The White House defended federal enforcement actions and emphasized cooperation with local leaders to restore law and order. Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said President Trump is closely monitoring developments, with multiple investigations underway, including by Homeland Security, the FBI, and Customs and Border Protection, following both the shootings and severe winter storms.

Chinese researchers identify key Ebola virus mutation driving outbreak

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Chinese scientists identified a crucial Ebola virus mutation, GP-V75A, that increased infectivity during the 2018–2020 outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which caused over 3,000 infections and 2,000 deaths. The study, published in Cell, found the variant replaced the original strain and enhanced viral ability to infect multiple cell types, potentially reducing the effectiveness of some therapeutic antibodies and drugs. Professor Qian Jun said real-time genomic surveillance is vital for monitoring transmission risk and guiding adjustments to vaccines and treatments. The research highlights how viral evolution can accelerate outbreaks and emphasizes the importance of continuous monitoring to inform epidemic response and drug development.

Senator Warner warns H-1B uncertainty could strain India-US ties

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Senator Mark Warner, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, warned Tuesday that confusion around the H-1B visa program risks undermining India-US relations and creating uncertainty among skilled workers. In an interview, Warner criticized recent announcements about a proposed \$100,000 fee, noting implementation details remain unclear. He acknowledged flaws in the program, including labor arbitrage by some companies, but emphasized the essential role of H-1B visa holders in the US economy.

Warner cautioned that aggressive rhetoric and policy changes could damage trust and push India to seek alternatives, noting the country’s growing global influence. He highlighted the Indian American community as a stabilizing force, saying attacks on H-1B could be seen as singling



out India. Analysts say visa policy carries symbolic weight, affecting perceptions of openness and partnership, while Indian professionals continue to make significant contributions to technology, healthcare, and research sectors across the United States.

Trump calls tariffs “indispensable” and signals workarounds if courts block

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

US President Donald Trump defended tariffs Tuesday as central to his economic and foreign policy strategy, calling them “indispensable” for domestic investment and manufacturing growth. In a Fox News interview, he claimed tariffs forced companies from Germany, Mexico, and Canada to build plants in the United States, spurring construction and hundreds of major factories. Trump said tariff revenue, totaling \$600

billion, supports domestic programs, including \$12 billion in farm aid, and argued the policy reverses years of unfair trade practices. He acknowledged potential Supreme Court intervention but promised alternative measures if his authority is limited. Trump framed tariffs as a geopolitical tool for world peace and protection of US industries, arguing foreign competitors could no longer rely on low-cost overseas production without penalties. He said the benefits would take time to materialize, with farmers among the biggest beneficiaries once trade measures fully take effect.

Iran signals readiness for peace and regional security dialogue with Saudi Arabia

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian told Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Tuesday that Tehran is ready to support any peace and conflict prevention efforts within international law while safeguarding its national interests. The leaders emphasized the importance of regional stability in West Asia and mutual cooperation among Muslim nations. Pezeshkian accused the United States of undermining diplomacy and disrupting regional security, while the crown prince affirmed that Saudi Arabia rejects aggression or escalation toward Iran.

Separately, Iran’s Deputy Navy Commander Mohammad Akbarzadeh



warned that Tehran monitors regional airspace and waters to prevent attacks, signaling readiness to respond decisively. These developments coincide with the arrival of the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group in the Middle East amid ongoing tensions, highlighting the strategic importance of dialogue and coordination to avoid escalation in the region.

California Post launches with tabloid-style push into West Coast media

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The California Post officially launched on Monday, bringing the bold tabloid style of the New York Post to the West Coast. Backed by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp, the new outlet will be digital-first while also offering a daily print edition priced at \$3.75. Editors said the paper aims to focus on issues affecting everyday

Californians, including homelessness, affordability, crime, technology, and sports. The inaugural print edition led with a Hollywood-focused splash headline during awards season, signaling its entertainment-heavy approach. A West Coast version of the New York Post’s gossip column Page Six will also debut. Executives said the California Post will draw on national coverage while developing its own local voice and newsroom presence.

Federal judge summons ICE chief over court defiance in Minnesota

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A US federal judge has ordered ICE Acting Director Todd Lyons to appear in court Friday to explain why he should not be held in contempt for failing to follow multiple judicial orders in Minnesota. Chief Judge Patrick Schiltz warned that previous measures had failed and that noncompliance caused significant hardship for immigrants. The order reflects escalating tension between federal enforcement and the judiciary. The White House defended ICE actions, with Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt accusing Minnesota officials of defying federal law. President Trump has instructed senior officials to ensure state and local cooperation with ICE amid ongoing investigations into recent fatal shootings involving federal officers.

South Korea, US and Japan hold talks over North Korea missile launch

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

South Korea, the United States, and Japan held a trilateral phone discussion Tuesday to coordinate responses to North Korea’s latest missile launches. The talks involved Baek Yong-jin from Seoul, Dan Cintron from Washington, and Otsuka Kengo from Tokyo. The previous day, South Korea reported Pyongyang fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, while North Korea announced a test of an upgraded large-caliber multiple rocket launcher with leader Kim Jong-un in attendance. The South Korean foreign ministry said the consultation allowed the three nations to share information swiftly and reaffirmed that ballistic missile launches by North Korea violate UN Security Council resolutions, stressing coordinated international responses.

Powell avoids questions on Fed future, focuses on economic policy



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell declined Wednesday to comment on whether he will remain at the central bank, repeatedly telling reporters he had “nothing to add.” He also avoided speculation on potential subpoenas, political pressure, or a Fed transition, emphasizing central bank independence. Powell said inflation remains “somewhat elevated” and noted tariffs are pushing goods prices higher. The Federal Open Market Committee decided to keep the policy rate at 3.5 to 3.75 percent. He described the economy as starting 2026 “on a firm footing,” with resilient consumer spending, growing business investment, and continued weakness in housing, reaffirming the Fed’s commitment to its institutional mandate.

India and Japan reaffirm naval cooperation at New Delhi staff talks



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and Japan reviewed ways to deepen maritime cooperation and improve naval interoperability during the eleventh round of staff talks between the Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force, held in New Delhi on Friday.

The talks were co chaired by Rear Admiral Srinivas Maddula of the Indian Navy and Rear Admiral Toshiyuki Hirata, Director General for Operations and Plans of the Japanese force.

Officials said discussions focused on joint operations, coordination in equipment and personnel exchanges, and a shared approach to maintaining a free and open Indo Pacific. Both sides underlined the importance of naval cooperation for regional peace and stability.

Earlier this month, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and later co chaired the eighteenth India Japan Strategic Dialogue with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, covering economic, maritime, and multilateral cooperation.

Italy sees India partnership accelerating across strategic and economic sectors



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Italian President Sergio Mattarella said on Tuesday that relations between India and Italy are on a path of rapid expansion, driven by shared democratic values and converging strategic interests. In a message to President Droupadi Murmu marking India’s Republic Day, he emphasized cooperation in trade, security, and global governance. Mattarella highlighted the Joint Strategic Action Plan as a key driver of deeper collaboration, including economic partnerships, scientific research, and civil society exchanges. He also noted shared priorities such as maintaining a rules based international order and promoting stability across the Indo Mediterranean region.

Indian and Italian leaders have recently reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening ties through high level exchanges. Both sides see growing opportunities in defense, innovation, education, and connectivity, as well as closer engagement between India and the European Union.

Palestine urges India to help bridge dialogue with Israel ahead of India Arab meeting

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Palestinian Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian said on Thursday that India can play an important role in bridging dialogue between Palestine and Israel, citing New Delhi’s longstanding relations with both sides. Speaking in New Delhi ahead of the India Arab Foreign Ministers meeting, she said Palestine expects India to actively participate in ongoing peace efforts.

Aghabekian said the upcoming meeting would provide a platform to discuss the Palestinian issue, the situation in Gaza, post conflict reconstruction, and peace initiatives of interest to both India and the Arab world. India will host the second India Arab Foreign Ministers meeting on Friday, co-chaired by

India and the United Arab Emirates, with participation from Arab League member states and the Secretary General of the Arab League.

Describing the New York Declaration as extremely important, Aghabekian said it offers a clear pathway toward Palestinian independence and sovereignty. She said Palestine is ready to work with all countries that have endorsed the declaration to ensure its commitments are implemented.

Commenting on the United States led Board of Peace initiative launched by President Donald Trump, Aghabekian said India should assess participation based on its national interests. She reiterated condemnation of violence and stressed that disputes must be resolved through dialogue and international law.



India and United States step up cooperation against global drug trafficking

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and the United States reinforced their shared commitment to tackling global narcotics trafficking during the inaugural meeting of the United States India Drug Policy Executive Working Group, held in Washington on Monday and Tuesday. The meeting highlighted the growing importance of counter narcotics cooperation within the broader bilateral security partnership.

United States officials emphasized that the drug crisis has become a core national

security concern, with both governments focused on dismantling illegal drug production networks and preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals. Indian representatives underlined the need to balance strict enforcement with the facilitation of legitimate trade and the protection of lawful pharmaceutical supply chains.

Both sides agreed on a whole of government approach, strengthening interagency coordination and building on recent joint operations that disrupted transnational drug trafficking networks linked to organized crime and terrorism.



Ten year defense framework set to deepen India United States military ties



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United States Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said on Wednesday that the ten-year defense framework signed in 2025 will significantly deepen the already strong defense partnership between India and the United States. His remarks followed meetings with senior Indian defense officials, including Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh. The agreement is designed to provide long term direction for expanding military cooperation, joint exercises, defense technology collaboration, and information sharing. Officials on both sides have described the framework as a unified vision for advancing defense ties across land, sea, air, space, and emerging domains. Recent discussions between Indian leaders and a visiting United States Congressional delegation also focused on trade, security, and critical technologies. Washington has reiterated that India remains a priority defense partner, particularly in maintaining stability and a free and open Indo Pacific region.

United Nations chief voices optimism over India- EU trade agreement



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday that he sees strong positive expectations from the recently announced trade agreement between India and the European Union, calling it a step toward strengthening global multipolarity.

Speaking at his annual priorities briefing, Guterres said global challenges cannot be solved by one or two dominant powers and stressed the need for a more inclusive and balanced international system. He described partnerships in trade, technology, and development as essential to achieving lasting global stability.

Referring to recent agreements involving the European Union and major economies, Guterres said the India European Union deal could help build a networked model of cooperation. Such arrangements, he noted, support equitable development and reinforce the principles of multilateralism and international cooperation at a time of growing geopolitical uncertainty.



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UPS retires MD-11 cargo jets after deadly Louisville crash



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UPS said on Tuesday that it has retired its entire fleet of McDonnell Douglas MD-11 cargo aircraft, months after a fatal crash near Louisville killed 15 people. The crash occurred during takeoff on a Sunday, killing the three-member crew and 12 people on the ground after an engine detached from the plane. The Federal Aviation Administration grounded all MD-11 aircraft following the incident. UPS said the aircraft made up about nine percent of its fleet and the decision resulted in a \$137 million after-tax charge. Investigators later found cracks in engine mount parts that were missed during inspections.

Medicare to negotiate prices of Botox and major drugs this year



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Trump administration said on Tuesday that Medicare will negotiate prices for Botox and 14 other high-cost prescription drugs this year. The talks stem from the Inflation Reduction Act, which allows Medicare to negotiate drug prices annually. The selected medications accounted for about \$27 billion in Medicare spending. Companies can opt out but risk losing Medicare coverage. Negotiated prices will take effect in 2028. Medicare does not cover Botox for cosmetic use but pays for treatments such as chronic migraines and muscle disorders. Officials also said the diabetes drug Tradjenta will be renegotiated under this round.

Trump and Senate Democrats reach stopgap deal to avert shutdown

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump and Senate Democrats reached a bipartisan agreement on Thursday to prevent a prolonged federal government shutdown, according to the White House and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer's office. The deal would fund most federal agencies through September, while the Department of Homeland Security would receive a two week stopgap measure to allow further negotiations over changes to the department and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



Senators had planned to vote Thursday night but delayed action over unresolved issues, with a vote now expected on Friday. The House

is set to return to Washington on Monday and would need to approve the package before it is sent to the president. Funding for several agencies is scheduled to lapse early Saturday, though the impact is expected to be limited since most federal employees do not work weekends.

Trump urged lawmakers from both parties to support the agreement, warning that another shutdown could damage the economy. The compromise followed the Senate's rejection earlier Thursday of a sweeping House passed funding bill that included Homeland Security, underscoring Democratic leverage in the negotiations.

Trump launches Great American Recovery Initiative to combat addiction nationwide

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United States President Donald Trump on Friday signed a sweeping executive order launching the Great American Recovery Initiative, a national effort aimed at addressing addiction and substance abuse through coordinated federal, state, local, and private sector action. Calling addiction a major challenge in the United States and globally, Trump said the initiative seeks to help people access treatment, recovery support, and prevention services.

Trump said an estimated 300,000 people die each year in the United States from drug and alcohol abuse, adding that overdose deaths had declined by 21 percent over the past year. He attributed the drop to tougher border enforcement and drug seizures, citing the confiscation of more than 47 million fentanyl pills and 10,000 pounds of fentanyl powder. He also claimed maritime drug trafficking



had sharply declined following enforcement actions.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who will co-chair the initiative, said the order marked a shift toward treating addiction as a chronic, treatable disease. He noted that nearly 50 million Americans suffer from substance use disorders, many without access to care. Senior adviser Kathryn Burgum said the initiative emphasizes prevention, coordination, and evidence-based treatment to support long-term recovery.

Pediatricians reject revised federal vaccine schedule for children



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The American Academy of Pediatrics said on Monday that it will continue recommending vaccines for 18 childhood diseases, breaking with new federal guidance issued earlier this month. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reduced its recommended list to 11 diseases, citing a need for further scientific review. Pediatricians said the change does not reflect medical evidence and could weaken disease prevention. The academy has issued vaccine guidance since 1935 and said nothing has changed about the risks children face. Several state health departments and major medical groups have said they will follow the pediatricians' recommendations instead.

Tulsi Gabbard draws criticism after appearing at FBI search of Georgia election center

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard faced sharp scrutiny after appearing on Wednesday at a Fulton County, Georgia, election hub as FBI agents executed a search related to ballots from the 2020 presidential election. National security experts questioned her presence, noting that her role is legally limited to foreign intelligence and does not include domestic law enforcement. Two senior officials said her attendance was not requested by the Justice Department and was unnecessary, though they stressed she did not take part in the search. Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chair Mark Warner criticized the visit on Thursday, warning it blurred the line between



intelligence work and domestic politics. The White House said Gabbard was acting to protect election security.

Bomb cyclone fuels massive travel disruption and dangerous winter weather across U.S.

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

More than 10,000 flights were canceled over the weekend as a rapidly intensifying bomb cyclone brought severe winter weather across large parts of the United States. Forecasters said a powerful storm system developed off the Carolinas early Saturday and strengthened as it moved north, producing heavy snow, hurricane-force wind gusts, and coastal flooding. Blizzard conditions were possible by Saturday night in parts of coastal Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. Millions across the Southeast and East Coast remained under winter storm alerts, with hazardous travel, power outages, and flooding expected through Sunday.

Justice Department joins lawsuit over alleged race-based admissions at UCLA medical school



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The United States Justice Department said on Wednesday that it has joined a lawsuit accusing the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California Los Angeles of using race as a factor in admissions. The case was originally filed by several groups, including Students for Fair Admissions. The University of California system has said it stopped considering race in admissions after a state ban in the mid nineteen nineties. UCLA said it does not comment on pending litigation and remains committed to fair admissions practices under federal and state law.

FBI seizure of Georgia's 2020 ballots raises alarm among local officials

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Federal Bureau of Investigation agents seized original 2020 election ballots in Fulton County, Georgia, on Wednesday while executing a court-authorized search warrant, prompting concern from county officials. The warrant sought ballots, voting machine records, and voter rolls as part of a Justice Department investigation. Georgia officials previously audited and certified the election results. Local leaders questioned the chain of custody after pallets of sealed ballots were removed. The action follows President Donald Trump's repeated claims of voter fraud in Georgia, despite earlier findings that upheld the election outcome.

Affordable Care Act enrollment falls as premiums surge for 2026

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Enrollment in Affordable Care Act health plans dropped to about 23 million people for 2026, down more than one million from the previous year, according to data released on Wednesday. Analysts attributed the decline to sharply higher premiums following the expiration of pandemic-era subsidies. Average annual costs for subsidized enrollees more than doubled, according to health policy researchers. Officials said millions were automatically renewed but warned that enrollment could fall further in coming months as consumers fail to make payments and lose coverage during the grace period.

Border czar signals possible reduction of federal agents in Minnesota if cooperation improves

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump's border czar, Tom Homan, said on Thursday that the administration could reduce the number of federal immigration officers deployed in Minnesota, but only if state and local officials cooperate and protests do not interfere with enforcement. Speaking in Minneapolis, Homan stressed that the administration is not backing away from its immigration crackdown and warned that assaults on federal officers would not be tolerated.

His comments followed last weekend's fatal shooting of protester Alex Pretti during a confrontation with Border Patrol agents, the second such death this month linked to federal immigration operations in the state. Homan acknowledged that mistakes may have occurred but declined to



address the shootings directly. He said any drawdown of the roughly 3,000 officers involved would depend on agreements with local leaders and reduced obstruction. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said he was hopeful federal presence would be scaled back, while state officials disputed claims that Minnesota refuses to cooperate with immigration authorities.

Trump's NSA nominee backs broad surveillance powers but avoids clarity on warrants

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Lieutenant General Joshua Rudd, President Donald Trump's nominee to lead the National Security Agency, told a Senate committee on Thursday that he supports maintaining expansive foreign surveillance authorities introduced after the September 11 attacks. Rudd described Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act as essential to national security but declined to clearly state whether he would require judicial warrants before searches involving Americans.

Pressed by Democratic Senator Ron Wyden, Rudd said he would follow existing legal authorities, drawing criticism for offering vague assurances. Section 702 is set to expire in April unless renewed by Congress and has



long raised privacy concerns. Rudd, currently serving as deputy commander of United States Indo Pacific Command, said he would review warrant requirements if confirmed.

Judge blocks transfer of 5-year-old detained by immigration authorities

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A federal judge ruled on Tuesday that a five-year-old boy detained by immigration officials cannot be moved out of Texas for now. The child was taken with his father last week in Minnesota after returning home from preschool.

Authorities said the father fled officers, leaving the child behind. Both were later transferred to a detention center in Texas. The temporary restraining order prevents their removal or transfer while the case proceeds.

Critics have accused immigration officials of using children as leverage,



an allegation the Department of Homeland Security has denied.

Trump sues IRS seeking \$10 billion over tax leak



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump has filed a civil lawsuit against the Internal Revenue Service and the US Treasury Department, seeking at least \$10 billion in damages over the unauthorized disclosure of his tax returns. The suit, filed Thursday in federal court in Florida, also names his sons Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump and the Trump Organization as plaintiffs.

The case centers on Charles Littlejohn, a former IRS contractor serving five years in prison for illegally accessing and sharing confidential tax data between 2018 and 2020. The lawsuit claims the IRS failed to safeguard Trump's tax information and caused reputational and financial harm. Trump's team argues the delayed disclosure by the Treasury Department is relevant to filing deadlines. The suit seeks statutory and punitive damages, as well as legal costs, citing the scale of the breach involving hundreds of entities.

Trump nominates Kevin Warsh to lead Federal Reserve, setting up tough Senate test



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump on Friday nominated former Federal Reserve Governor Kevin Warsh to lead the United States central bank when Jerome Powell's term as chair ends in mid May. The decision places a longtime critic of the Federal Reserve at the helm of an institution prized for its political independence.

Warsh, a former Federal Reserve official and Stanford University fellow, has publicly supported sharp interest rate cuts and called for a broad overhaul of the central bank, including shrinking its balance sheet and easing bank regulations. Financial markets reacted cautiously on Friday, with stocks edging higher and the dollar strengthening.

The nomination now moves to the Senate, where confirmation is expected to be contentious. Several lawmakers have raised concerns over political pressure on the Federal Reserve following a Justice Department probe involving Powell earlier this month.

Punjab man rescued after being trafficked to Myanmar for cyber fraud



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A resident of Punjab’s Moga district was rescued after being trafficked to Myanmar under the pretense of a job in Thailand, police said on Thursday. Rakesh Kumar alleged he was promised a well-paying job and traveled abroad last year, only to be forcibly taken across forest routes into Myanmar. Kumar said he was held against his will and pressured to work in cyber fraud operations targeting overseas victims. When he resisted, traffickers allegedly demanded money for his release and threatened him with harm. The Thailand army rescued Kumar during a crackdown and facilitated his return to India. He later filed a complaint with cybercrime police in Moga. Authorities have registered a case against the alleged trafficker and said investigations are underway to uncover the broader trafficking and cybercrime network.

Indian-origin man jailed in United Kingdom firearms and drug trafficking case



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An Indian-origin man has been sentenced to 20 years in prison by a court in north-west England for his role in a major drugs and firearms conspiracy uncovered through encrypted communications. Naginder Gill, 47, used the EncroChat handle ‘indianocean’ while coordinating criminal activities with Carl Ian Jones, 59, and Harly Wise, 29. The sentencing took place on Thursday at Bolton Crown Court, where Jones received a 30-year sentence and Wise was jailed for 25 years. Investigators from the United Kingdom’s National Crime Agency said the trio discussed trading military-grade weapons, including assault rifles and handguns, alongside large-scale drug trafficking. The case emerged from Operation Venetic, which dismantled EncroChat in 2020 and exposed extensive criminal networks. Prosecutors said Gill admitted conspiring to supply a range of illegal drugs, while Jones and Wise were convicted of multiple firearms and narcotics offenses.

Republic Day celebrations unite Indian diaspora across continents

Staff Writer, IndoUS Tribune

Indians across the globe marked the 77th Republic Day on Monday with large-scale celebrations that reflected national pride, constitutional values, and the growing global footprint of the Indian community. Indian diplomatic missions and diaspora organizations hosted commemorative events spanning Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. Indian embassies and high commissions in countries including the United Kingdom, the United States, China, Japan, Singapore, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Yemen unfurled the national tricolor and observed the day with ceremonial programs. Senior diplomats read excerpts from President Droupadi Murmu’s Republic Day address,



highlighting India’s democratic foundations and constitutional journey.

Cultural performances featuring classical dance, patriotic music, and community-led exhibitions were central to the celebrations.

Several missions organized thematic showcases tracing India’s freedom movement and the legacy of the Constitution. In London and Singapore, large diaspora turnouts underscored strong community engagement despite regular working days. A particularly significant moment was the observance of Republic Day in Yemen after a gap of more than a decade, symbolizing renewed diplomatic presence and diaspora participation. Across locations, attendance by foreign diplomats and local officials reflected India’s expanding soft power and international partnerships.

Together, the worldwide celebrations reinforced the emotional and civic ties that bind the Indian diaspora to the nation’s democratic ideals, unity, and cultural heritage.

Two Bihar residents arrested in Nepal with fake Indian currency

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Nepali authorities arrested two residents of Bihar on Tuesday night for allegedly carrying fake Indian currency while entering Nepal, officials said on Wednesday. The suspects were identified as Bikram Kumar Paswan, 30, and Rahesh Kumar Sah, 42, both residents of Sitamarhi district.

They were apprehended during a routine security check in Rautahat district while traveling on an Indian-registered motorcycle. Officials recovered counterfeit notes totaling 2,500 Indian rupees, including one 500-rupee note and ten 200-rupee notes.

The arrest was carried out by Nepal’s Armed Police Force, which later handed the suspects over to the District Police Office in Rautahat for further



investigation. Authorities said inquiries are underway to determine the source of the fake currency and whether the suspects are linked to a larger counterfeit network operating across the border.

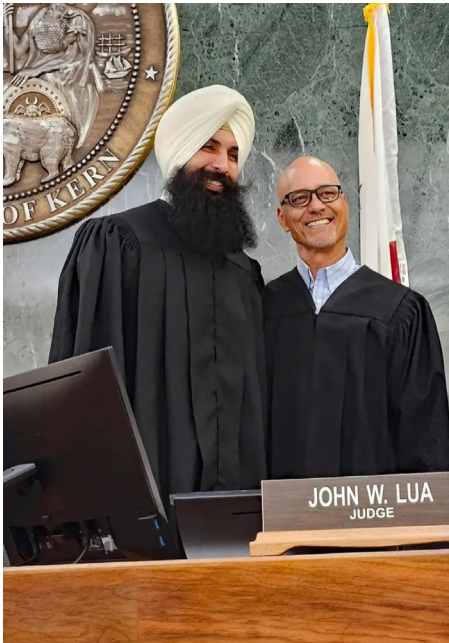
Navraj Singh Rai becomes first Sikh Pro Tem judge in California county

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Navraj Singh Rai made history last week after taking the oath as a Pro Tem judge of the Superior Court of California in Kern County, becoming the first Sikh to serve on the county’s bench. Rai, the son of immigrant parents from India, completed his legal education at the University of California, Davis.

As a Pro Tem judge, Rai will preside over a range of court matters, applying legal principles while ensuring fairness and respect for the rule of law. Community organizations and Punjabi media outlets hailed the appointment as a historic milestone for representation in the judiciary.

Leaders from the Kern County Hindu Cultural Center and Sikh community said the appointment reflects the growing civic contributions



of Sikhs in California. Rai’s elevation follows broader inclusion trends across the state’s legal system and holds special significance in Kern County’s long-established Sikh population.

Two Indian men drown in New South Wales river during Australia Day weekend

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Two Indian men drowned on Sunday evening after being swept away by strong currents in a river on the New South Wales Mid North Coast during the Australia Day long weekend. The victims, Sachin Khillan and Sahil Batra, both in their 30s, were visiting the Never Never River near Bellingen with their partners when the incident occurred. Family members said the men had stepped into shallow water when a sudden and powerful current pulled them under. Emergency services responded but were unable to revive either man after they were recovered. Khillan’s fiancée was injured while attempting a rescue and was taken to Coffs Harbour Health Campus, where she remains in serious condition. A GoFundMe campaign for funeral and repatriation costs had raised more than \$125,000 by Thursday.

Indian national indicted in New York for human smuggling from Canada

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A 22-year-old Indian national identified as Shivam was indicted on Wednesday by a federal grand jury in New York for allegedly smuggling Indian nationals from Canada into the United States. He faces one count of conspiracy and four counts of illegally bringing individuals into the country for private financial gain. Court documents said Shivam coordinated smuggling operations between January and June 2025, directing drivers who transported undocumented individuals across the northern border into Clinton County, New York. In January, United States Border Patrol agents attempted to stop two vehicles traveling together near the border. Both fled, triggering a pursuit. One vehicle was immobilized, while the other was stopped in Mooers, New York, with 12 undocumented individuals inside. If convicted, Shivam faces up to 10 years in prison on each count.

Canada deploys more police as Surrey extortion crisis deepens



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Canada announced the deployment of additional police personnel and resources on Tuesday as authorities respond to a sharp rise in extortion-related crime in Surrey and surrounding areas of British Columbia. Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree described the situation as unacceptable and said urgent action was needed to dismantle organized criminal networks.

The federal Royal Canadian Mounted Police will immediately deploy up to 20 additional officers to support the British Columbia Extortion Task Force and local police. Helicopter resources will also be assigned to Surrey to strengthen surveillance, investigations, and rapid response capabilities.

The move builds on earlier federal funding commitments, including \$4 million announced in November to support drug enforcement teams and \$1 million to assist extortion victims. Surrey officials have warned that cases have surged since last year, largely affecting South Asian businesses through threats, shootings, and intimidation.

Indian-origin man shot dead in Burnaby in suspected gang-linked killing



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Police in Burnaby, Canada, said the fatal shooting of a 28-year-old Indian-origin man on Thursday appears to be linked to gang-related violence. The victim was identified as Dilraj Singh Gill, a Vancouver resident who authorities said was known to police. Officers responded to reports of gunfire near Canada Way shortly before evening and found Gill suffering from gunshot wounds. Despite life-saving efforts, he was pronounced dead at the scene. Shortly afterward, police located a vehicle on fire in another area of Burnaby, which investigators believe is connected to the homicide. The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team has taken over the case and is working with forensic units and the coroner's service. Police have urged witnesses and motorists with dashcam footage to come forward as investigations continue.

Rakhi Israni joins California congressional race as open seat draws new Indian American voices

Staff Writer, IndoUS Tribune

Indian American candidate Rakhi Israni announced her run for Congress, aiming to re-engage communities that feel excluded from decisions shaping daily life, from affordability to healthcare. Speaking during an interview, Israni said she entered the race for California's 14th Congressional District after years of working on service and policy issues, noting that political discourse has drifted from solving real problems.

Israni, a mother of four, attorney, entrepreneur, and educator, emphasized her campaign priorities of restoring attention to quality of life, addressing rising costs, and improving access to healthcare. She highlighted the district's significant Asian population, with one of the largest concentrations of Indian registered voters, and called for greater civic participation.

The seat became available as Democratic Congressman Eric Swalwell



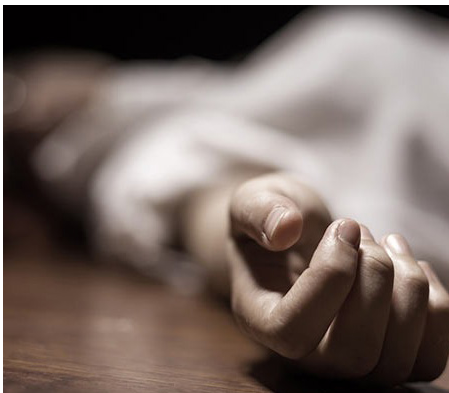
runs for governor. Within 24 hours of announcing her candidacy, Israni raised \$1 million, attracting nationwide support. She describes herself as a "dharmic" candidate, guided by duty, service, and problem-solving. If elected, she would become the seventh Indian American in the House and only the second Indian American woman serving in Congress.

Indian-origin man charged with woman's murder in east London

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A 57-year-old Indian-origin man appeared in a London court on Wednesday charged with the murder of a woman at a residential property in Ilford, east London, British police said. The accused, Dalip Chadha, was arrested at the scene in the early hours of Tuesday after officers responded to reports from Applegarth Drive.

Metropolitan Police officers found a woman deceased inside the home upon arrival. Formal identification is still pending, though police believe the victim to be 58-year-old Vanessa Puntney-Chadha. Authorities said the victim's next of kin have been informed and are being supported by specially trained officers.



Chadha, who resides at the same address, was charged with murder and produced before Barkingside Magistrates Court on Wednesday. Investigations remain ongoing as police continue to examine the circumstances surrounding the death.

Punjab man returns home after being stranded in Austria for 16 years

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A Punjab resident who had been stranded in Austria for nearly 16 years returned to India this week following intervention by former parliamentarian Avinash Rai Khanna and assistance from the central government. Jaswant Singh, a resident of Ghagon Rodanwali village, had initially traveled to Italy for work before moving to Austria.

During his stay abroad, Singh became involved in an altercation, after which local authorities confiscated his passport, leaving him unable to return home. His family made repeated attempts over the years but failed to secure his return.

Khanna said Singh's father later



Indian-origin man charged after four relatives killed in Georgia shooting



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A 51-year-old Indian-origin man has been arrested in Georgia after allegedly killing his wife and three relatives in a shooting linked to a family dispute, police said. The accused, Vijay Kumar, was taken into custody early Friday after officers responded to reports of gunfire at a residence in Lawrenceville.

Police identified the victims as Kumar's wife Meenu Dogra, an Indian national, and relatives Gourav Kumar, Nidhi Chander, and Harish Chander. Three children were inside the home at the time and hid in a closet during the incident. One child later called emergency services.

Authorities said the motive remains under investigation. The Indian Consulate in Atlanta expressed grief and confirmed that assistance is being provided to the affected family. Kumar faces multiple charges including murder and cruelty to children.

Punjab student dies in United States road accident



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A young man from Punjab's Khakra village near the International Border died in a road accident in the United States, officials said on Friday. The victim was identified as Deepkaran Singh, son of Kuldeep Singh, who had traveled to the United States about a year and a half ago on a student visa.

According to family members, Singh was returning home when his vehicle was struck from behind by a speeding car earlier in the week. He was rushed to a hospital in critical condition but later succumbed to his injuries.

The family received the news on Friday morning and has appealed for assistance in bringing his body back to India. Local community members have also stepped forward to help with arrangements as authorities complete formalities abroad.

Spain defends rail spending after deadly crashes spark safety concerns

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Spain's government defended its rail investment record on Thursday after a series of deadly train accidents intensified political and public scrutiny. Transport Minister Oscar Puente told lawmakers that maintenance spending per kilometer has risen sharply since 2017 and now meets or exceeds European averages. His comments followed a high speed rail crash on Sunday in southern Spain that killed dozens, and another derailment on Tuesday in Catalonia that claimed a train driver's life. Opposition lawmakers accused the government of failing to keep pace with an expanding rail network. Puente blamed earlier underinvestment during austerity years and said annual rail spending has increased significantly in recent years.

Military-backed party secures sweeping victory in Myanmar election amid conflict

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Myanmar's military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party has secured an overwhelming majority in the country's three-phase general election, state media said on Thursday and Friday. The party won most contested seats in both legislative chambers, an outcome widely expected amid tight controls during a prolonged civil war. Voting began in late December and ended last month, more than four years after the military seized power. Turnout fell to about 55 percent, with polling canceled in many areas due to fighting. Critics and Western nations denounced the process, saying it entrenched military rule.

Trump orders reopening of US-Venezuela airspace



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump announced the immediate reopening of commercial airspace over Venezuela during a cabinet meeting Thursday, weeks after US forces removed Nicolás Maduro from power. He said American citizens would soon be able to travel safely and instructed the Transportation Secretary and Pentagon officials to implement the change by the end of the day.

Flights between the US and Venezuela had been suspended since 2019 due to safety risks. Trump described the security situation as "under very strong control" under interim president Delcy Rodríguez, who has sought to reset relations with Washington. US oil companies are already assessing sites in Venezuela, signaling potential investment in the country's oil sector. American Airlines plans to resume nonstop service in the coming months.

Trump warns UK against doing business with China

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump cautioned the United Kingdom against closer economic ties with China, calling it "very dangerous," just hours after British Prime Minister Keir Starmer praised progress in Beijing. Starmer's three-hour talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping marked the first visit by a British prime minister to China in eight years. He secured improved market access, lower tariffs, and investment agreements.

Trump's remarks came in Washington as he commented on Starmer's economic reset, highlighting US concerns over engagement with China. Starmer said Britain could strengthen ties with China without harming relations with the United States. The UK leader also visited Shanghai and planned meetings in Tokyo to reinforce ties with Japan amid concerns over US unpredictability and trade threats.



Canadian separatists accused of treason after secret US meetings

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The premier of British Columbia, David Eby, accused Alberta separatist activists of treason after reports revealed covert meetings with US officials, including representatives of President Donald Trump's administration. The activists, seeking Alberta's independence, have also proposed a \$500 billion credit facility from the US treasury to fund a new country if a referendum succeeds.

Eby condemned the effort to solicit foreign support, calling it inappropriate and a threat to Canadian unity. Alberta Premier Danielle Smith has rejected separation, emphasizing a sovereign province within a united Canada. Analysts and Indigenous leaders warned



that foreign involvement could distort a potential referendum, and some experts fear disinformation campaigns could undermine democratic processes.

India and Arab League discuss deeper cooperation ahead of foreign ministers meeting

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met League of Arab States Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit in New Delhi on Friday to discuss strengthening cooperation across multiple sectors and to exchange views on recent regional developments. Jaishankar described the talks as wide ranging, highlighting shared interest in expanding collaboration in political, economic, and cultural areas.

Aboul Gheit arrived in New Delhi on Thursday to attend the second India Arab Foreign Ministers Meeting and related engagements. India is hosting the meeting on Friday along with the United Arab Emirates, with participation from foreign ministers of Arab League member states. The gathering comes after a gap of nearly a decade since the first such meeting was held in Bahrain in 2016.

The talks are expected to build on



existing cooperation in areas such as economy, energy, education, media, and culture. India and the League of Arab States formalized their dialogue mechanism in 2002, with India holding observer status in the 22 member pan Arab body.

US congressional panel to examine India's role in Indo-Pacific power balance



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A United States congressional advisory panel will hold a public hearing in Washington on Monday next month to examine India's relations with China and the United States and how these ties shape the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific. The US China Economic and Security Review Commission said the hearing will focus on geopolitical, military, economic, and technology issues, including border tensions, maritime access, and trade links. Lawmakers will also review India's efforts to strengthen self-reliance in sectors such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and pharmaceuticals, and assess implications for United States security interests.

China coast guard says it patrolled disputed islands near Japan almost daily



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

China's coast guard said on Friday that it patrolled Japan-administered islands in the East China Sea on 357 days last year, underscoring rising regional tensions. The islands, known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China, are strategically located near key shipping routes and Taiwan. Chinese officials said the patrols were intended to assert sovereignty and deter separatist moves by Taiwan. Japan and China have clashed repeatedly over the islands, with the most recent confrontation reported last month. Tokyo has since advised fishermen to avoid the area to prevent escalation.

OSCE states launch expert mission over human rights concerns in Georgia

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and 21 other members of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe said on Thursday they would launch an expert mission to examine the worsening human rights situation in Georgia. In a joint statement, the countries said concerns had grown despite Georgian authorities being asked for clarifications under the OSCE Vienna Mechanism in December. The group said Georgia's implementation of shared democratic commitments and international human rights obligations remained troubling. The OSCE includes 57 participating states across Europe, Central Asia, and North America.

Israel returns Palestinian bodies as Gaza truce moves toward next phase



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Israel released the bodies of 15 Palestinians on Thursday, days after recovering the remains of the last Israeli hostage held in Gaza, in a step mediators hope will help advance the next phase of a fragile ceasefire. The International Committee of the Red Cross facilitated the transfer, saying it marked the completion of a months-long operation tied to the truce. Gaza health officials said the bodies were being identified. The handover comes amid continued tensions, with sporadic violence reported even as the United States presses both sides to move forward with the agreement.

Macron calls Greenland tensions a strategic wake-up call for Europe

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

French President Emmanuel Macron said Wednesday that escalating tensions between the United States and Greenland serve as a strategic wake-up call for Europe. Macron reaffirmed France's commitment to supporting Denmark and Greenland and defending sovereignty and territorial integrity. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen called for NATO to play a larger role in Arctic security, while Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen emphasized that sovereignty remains a "red line." The comments come after President Donald Trump repeatedly expressed interest in acquiring Greenland, a self-governing territory of Denmark, a proposal firmly rejected by Europe.

AQIS forms hit squads targeting civilians in India

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Indian intelligence officials warned Wednesday that Al Qaeda in the Sub-Continent has formed hit squads targeting ordinary citizens across states including Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. The group reportedly seeks to instill fear by randomly attacking unprotected civilians, a tactic previously used by the banned Popular Front of India. Authorities noted AQIS is recruiting former PFI members trained for violent operations and distributing propaganda including targeted maps. Counterterrorism agencies are closely monitoring recruitment and planned attacks to prevent the spread of panic. Officials described the threat as unprecedented, as the group deliberately aims to terrorize communities across the country.

No single power can solve global crises, says UN chief amid strain on multilateral order

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned on Thursday that the world is facing an erosion of international cooperation, cautioning that no single country can tackle global crises alone. Speaking at his annual media briefing, Guterres highlighted urgent issues such as climate change, inequality, conflict, and the growing influence of tech companies. His remarks appeared to target the United States under President Donald Trump, whose administration has bypassed parts of the UN system while promoting the new "Board of Peace." Guterres also suggested that even two powers cannot resolve key challenges by dividing the world into rival spheres, a likely reference to China. The outgoing UN chief emphasized the importance



of international law and multilateral institutions, warning they are under attack, yet affirmed the UN's ongoing commitment to advancing just and sustainable peace globally.

Mexico says halting oil shipment to Cuba was a sovereign decision

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum said on Tuesday that the cancellation of an oil shipment to Cuba was a sovereign decision, denying it was linked to pressure from the United States. The move came as Cuba faces worsening fuel shortages and blackouts, and after President Donald Trump said no oil should be sent to the island.



Sheinbaum said Mexico continues to oppose the long-standing U.S. blockade of Cuba and stressed that solidarity with the Cuban people remains unchanged. She declined to say whether the halted

shipment was temporary or part of a broader shift. The decision comes as Mexico seeks to balance relations with Washington while maintaining support within its left-leaning political base.

Small plane crash in Colombia kills 15 including congressman

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A small plane crashed Wednesday in a rural area of Norte de Santander province in northeast Colombia, killing all 15 people on board, including Congressman Diógenes Quintero. The Satena flight, carrying two crew members and 13 passengers, had departed from Cúcuta for Ocaña, a mountainous municipality, with final contact minutes after takeoff. Authorities confirmed there were no survivors after locating the wreckage near Curasica. Quintero, a human rights lawyer elected in 2022 to represent victims of



Colombia's armed conflict, and social leader Carlos Salcedo were among the victims. An investigation into the cause of the crash is underway. President Gustavo Petro expressed condolences to families.

Haiti sexual violence crisis worsens as gang control spreads

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Doctors Without Borders warned Wednesday that sexual abuse cases in Haiti's capital have tripled in four years amid rising gang violence. The Pran Men'm clinic in Port-au-Prince treated over 2,300 victims in the first nine months of last year alone. Many attacks involve multiple

armed assailants, with victims spanning children to the elderly. Gangs control nearly 90 percent of the city, using sexual violence to instill fear and control humanitarian aid.

Displaced residents are particularly at risk. MSF urged the Haitian government to expand healthcare, shelters, and a 24-hour hotline for survivors to help protect victims and provide critical support.

Russia maneuvers to keep discounted oil flowing to India despite US sanctions



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Russia is actively reorganizing its supply chains to ensure India continues importing discounted Russian crude, analysts say, despite recent US sanctions targeting Rosneft and Lukoil. India, the world's second-largest buyer of Russian oil since the Ukraine war, saw imports drop from 1.7 million barrels a day to roughly 1.2 million barrels in December. Yet four of India's seven largest refineries still rely primarily on Russian crude.

New Russian exporters have emerged to bypass sanctions, creating a "shadow supply chain" that analysts expect will restore pre-sanction levels within months. Discounts of \$9–10 per barrel below Middle Eastern oil make Russian crude an attractive option, potentially saving Indian refiners \$4 billion annually. Reliance Industries, however, has paused Russian purchases to comply with US and EU sanctions, while exploring Venezuelan oil imports. Russian President Vladimir Putin has assured India of uninterrupted shipments, signaling Moscow's commitment to maintain its strategic energy partnership with New Delhi.

Brazilian President Lula confirms February visit to India



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva confirmed Wednesday that he will visit India in February before traveling to Washington to meet President Donald Trump. In India, Lula will attend the AI Summit in New Delhi. Lula and Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed strengthening the India-Brazil Strategic Partnership, bilateral trade, and cooperation in technology, energy, defense, health, agriculture, and culture. The two leaders set a goal to raise trade to \$20 billion in five years. Lula's visit follows Modi's trip to Brazil last year, and the leaders also reviewed global and regional issues and the expansion of digital collaboration.

Pappu Yadav attacks Centre over UGC rules and questions Baramati plane crash

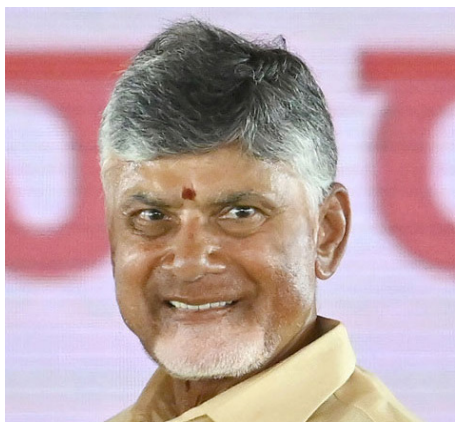


IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Independent Lok Sabha member Pappu Yadav criticized the Union government on Thursday over the Supreme Court stay on the University Grants Commission equity regulations and raised doubts about the Baramati plane crash that killed Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. Speaking in Patna, he accused the ruling party of promoting division and demanded equal opportunity regardless of caste.

Yadav also rejected the crash being treated as a routine accident and called for a central investigation, citing past deaths of senior leaders in similar incidents. He further alleged corruption in the education system and criticized government silence on examination irregularities.

YSR Congress demands clarity from Chandrababu Naidu on Tirupati laddu remarks



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The YSR Congress Party on Friday demanded that Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu clarify his earlier remarks alleging adulteration of Tirupati laddus with animal fat. Party leader Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy said recent laboratory and Special Investigation Team reports confirmed that no animal fat was found in the laddus.

He accused Naidu of politicizing a sensitive religious issue and hurting the sentiments of devotees worldwide. Reddy said the controversy began solely due to the Chief Minister's statement and insisted he either substantiate the claim or issue a public apology, adding that procurement systems were already strengthened during the previous administration.

Baramati plane crash kills Ajit Pawar and four others, black box recovery begins probe

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar was among five people killed on Wednesday when a Learjet 45 aircraft crashed during landing near Baramati. The aircraft was traveling from Mumbai to Baramati for a public meeting amid local body elections. Those killed included Pawar's personal security officer Vidip Jadhav, attendant Pinky Mali, pilot-in-command Sumit Kapur, and second-in-command Shambhavi Pathak.

Emergency services and senior officials reached the site immediately, with bodies shifted to Baramati Medical College for identification. Directorate General of Civil Aviation officials were deployed soon after the crash.

On Thursday, Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu confirmed that the flight data recorder, commonly known as the black box, had been recovered. The Aircraft Accident Investigation



Bureau has launched a formal, time-bound investigation, with authorities assuring a

transparent probe and corrective safety measures based on findings.

Karnataka formalizes paid menstrual leave for women government employees

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Karnataka Education Department on Thursday issued a circular implementing paid menstrual leave for women government employees. Eligible employees between 18 and 52 years of age can take one paid day off each month, totaling 12 days annually. The leave cannot be carried forward or combined with other leave, and no medical certificate is required. Authorities empowered to approve casual leave will also sanction menstrual leave, which must be recorded separately.



The department said the policy aims to improve efficiency and morale among women employees and follows an earlier government decision extending similar benefits across multiple sectors.

AAP seeks answers after ex-Punjab chief minister's bomb blast claim

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday criticized the Congress for remaining silent after former Punjab Chief Minister Rajinder Kaur Bhattal claimed she was advised to allow bomb blasts for political gain. Party spokesperson Baltej Pannu said the allegation was extremely serious and demanded immediate clarification from Congress leaders. He noted that Punjab had suffered deeply due to past violence and said even suggesting the use of terror was unacceptable. Pannu also linked the remarks to previous unresolved incidents and urged full accountability. He questioned why senior Congress leaders had not denied or addressed the claim despite public outrage.

Beating Retreat ceremony formally closes Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Beating Retreat ceremony marks the formal conclusion of India's Republic Day celebrations and reflects the nation's rich military heritage. Speaking ahead of the evening event at Vijay Chowk in New Delhi, Modi praised the discipline, traditions, and valor of the armed forces, calling them central to safeguarding the country.

The annual ceremony features performances by bands from the Army, Navy, and Air Force, blending patriotic and classical compositions in a solemn military tradition. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh confirmed that the ceremony began at 5 p.m. on Thursday, officially bringing the national celebrations to a close.

Delhi Police issued traffic advisories ahead of the event, with restrictions in central areas including Vijay Chowk and Kartavya Path to ensure smooth proceedings and public safety.



Calcutta High Court allows protest march near Kolkata warehouse fire site with limits



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Calcutta High Court on Thursday granted conditional permission to West Bengal Assembly Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari to hold a protest march on Friday near the site of the deadly warehouse fire in Anandapur, on the southern outskirts of Kolkata. The court allowed the march on an alternative route, capped participation at 2,000 people, and directed it to stop 200 meters from Narendrapur Police Station. A five-member delegation may submit a memorandum. Police had earlier denied permission and imposed prohibitory orders around the area.

Shashi Tharoor signals unity with Congress leadership after closed-door talks



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Thursday sought to end speculation about tensions within the party after a closed-door meeting with Congress President Mallikarjuna Kharge and Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi. In a public message, Tharoor described the discussions as warm and constructive and said the leadership was aligned on the party’s future direction. Speaking to reporters later, he dismissed talk of discord and confirmed he would actively campaign for the Congress in the upcoming Kerala Assembly elections.

Mising youth to get dedicated CRPF recruitment drive, says Amit Shah in Assam



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday that the Central government will launch a special recruitment drive to facilitate the induction of youth from Assam’s Mising community into the Central Reserve Police Force. Addressing a large gathering at the Mising Youth Festival in Dhemaji district, Shah described the community and its cultural heritage as integral to Assam’s identity and India’s future. He said the government remains committed to preserving indigenous traditions while expanding opportunities for youth empowerment. Shah also recalled the Mising community’s contribution to India’s freedom struggle and emphasized its close relationship with nature. Highlighting development initiatives, he referred to the upcoming semiconductor plant at Jagiroad, expected to create significant employment in Assam.

AIIMS institutions form national research consortium to boost medical studies

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Twenty All India Institute of Medical Sciences institutions this week signed an agreement to establish a pan-India collaborative research consortium aimed at strengthening biomedical and clinical research. The initiative will promote joint studies, clinical trials,

researcher exchanges, and shared research infrastructure across AIIMS campuses. Officials said the consortium will focus on areas including artificial intelligence in healthcare, cancer treatment, infections, and metabolic disorders. The agreement was signed during AIIMS Research Day and is expected to improve evidence-based healthcare and policy formulation nationwide.



Misa Bharti and Hema Yadav plead not guilty in land-for-jobs case

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Lalu Prasad Yadav’s daughters, Misa Bharti and Hema Yadav, pleaded not guilty on Wednesday in the alleged railways land-for-jobs corruption case. The special court directed the trial to begin on Sunday, March nine. Lalu Prasad Yadav, Rabri Devi, and Tejashwi Yadav were granted exemption from personal appearance for the day. The court has framed charges of corruption and conspiracy, alleging railway jobs were exchanged for land during Lalu Prasad’s tenure as railway minister.



Rajasthan’s Alwar to develop a large biological park with 81 wildlife species

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Rajasthan is set to expand its wildlife tourism footprint with a large biological park planned in the Kati Ghati area of Alwar district. Officials said the park will span nearly 100 hectares, with about 30 percent

developed as a zoological zone and the rest preserved as green space. The project will combine conservation, animal rescue, and tourism facilities, including a safari, a rescue center, and a modern veterinary hospital. The park is expected to house more than 400 animals representing 81 species, making it a major regional attraction.



Delhi court acquits Lieutenant Governor Saxena in Medha Patkar defamation case

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Delhi court on Thursday acquitted Lieutenant Governor V. K. Saxena in a criminal defamation case filed by activist Medha Patkar. The court ruled that Patkar failed to prove that Saxena had made defamatory statements against her personally. It observed that the disputed advertisement criticized the Narmada Bachao Andolan as an organization and did not target Patkar directly. The case dates back over two decades and was transferred from Ahmedabad to Delhi on Supreme Court orders.

Odisha enforces complete ban on gutkha, pan masala, and tobacco products



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Odisha Health and Family Welfare Department on Monday announced a comprehensive ban on gutkha, pan masala, and all products containing tobacco or nicotine. The prohibition covers manufacturing, storage, sale, transportation, and distribution across the state. Officials said the move removes earlier ambiguities and ensures strict enforcement in line with Supreme Court directives. While restrictions on tobacco sales have existed since 2013, the latest notification establishes a clearer legal framework. Health authorities said the decision aims to protect public health and curb substance misuse statewide.

Home Ministry weighs protocol requiring people to stand for ‘Vande Mataram’



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Standing while ‘Vande Mataram’ is played, similar to the protocol followed for the national anthem, may soon become standard practice across India. The Home Ministry is discussing whether existing rules should be extended to the national song, according to sources cited by NDTV. Currently, legal provisions under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act apply only to the national anthem. The discussions follow petitions filed in the Supreme Court and several high courts seeking uniform guidelines. Officials stressed on Monday that no final decision has been taken. ‘Vande Mataram’ was adopted as the national song in 1950 and has historical significance in India’s freedom movement.

Mastercard to cut 4 percent of global workforce

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Mastercard announced on Thursday that a strategic business review will affect about 4 percent of its full-time employees worldwide. The company plans a one-time restructuring charge of roughly \$200 million in the first quarter. CFO Sachin Mehra said the move follows a thorough evaluation of the firm's operations to streamline business functions. Mastercard did not provide specific details on which roles or regions would be impacted.

Mercedes CEO warns EU's relaxed EV targets could reduce impact



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The CEO of Mercedes-Benz, Ola Källenius, said on Thursday that the European Union's recently relaxed targets for electric vehicles could undermine the benefits of the transition. The revised plan allows plug-in hybrids and the use of sustainable fuels beyond 2035. Källenius cautioned that automakers may still face CO2 reduction requirements, potentially shrinking the market. The EU proposals must still be approved by member states, and Mercedes continues to develop its S-class series to maintain momentum in the evolving electric vehicle market.

India's internet users surpass 950 million amid rural and AI growth



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India's internet user base exceeded 950 million in 2025, driven by rapid rural connectivity, short-video consumption, and increasing use of artificial intelligence, the Internet and Mobile Association of India reported. The IAMAI-Kantar study showed 958 million active users, a year-on-year rise of 8 percent.

Rural areas now account for 57 percent of users, with adoption growing nearly four times faster than in urban regions. AI tools such as voice search, chatbots, and image search are used by 44 percent of users, particularly younger demographics. Short videos remain highly popular, with 588 million users consuming clips in 2025.

Venezuela opens oil sector to privatization under acting president

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodríguez on Thursday signed a landmark law opening the nation's oil sector to privatization, reversing more than two decades of socialist state control. The measure, approved by the National Assembly less than two hours before the signing, aims to attract foreign investment to revitalize the country's long-struggling oil industry, which remains central to Venezuela's economy.

The signing follows the seizure of former President Nicolás Maduro in a U.S. military operation earlier this month and comes as the U.S. Treasury eases economic sanctions on Venezuelan oil, expanding opportunities for American energy firms to operate in the country. Rodríguez also spoke with President Donald Trump and Secretary of



State Marco Rubio regarding U.S. oversight of Venezuela's oil revenues. Addressing oil workers and ruling-party supporters, Rodríguez said the reform is about Venezuela's future and ensuring the nation's next generation benefits from its resources.

World Bank ranks India among top five for private infrastructure investment

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India has emerged as a global leader in private infrastructure investment, ranking among the top five countries worldwide for low- and middle-income economies, according to the World Bank. The Economic Survey 2025-26 highlighted that public capital expenditure has steadily increased since FY15, rising nearly 4.2 times from Rs 2.63 lakh crore in FY18 to Rs 11.21 lakh crore in FY26. Key initiatives such as PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, and digital platforms have reduced transaction costs and execution risks.

Infrastructure expansion has been significant, with the National Highway network growing 60 percent, operational high-speed corridors nearly tenfold, and the rail network reaching 69,439 km with 99.1 percent electrification. Airports rose from 74 to 164, domestic passengers are projected to reach 665 million by FY31, and ports have achieved near-global turnaround standards. Renewable



energy capacity more than tripled over the last decade, now contributing nearly 50 percent of total power capacity. The Survey emphasizes that diversified financing and sustained infrastructure growth continue to drive India's economic momentum.

Trump threatens Canada with aircraft tariffs over Gulfstream approvals

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

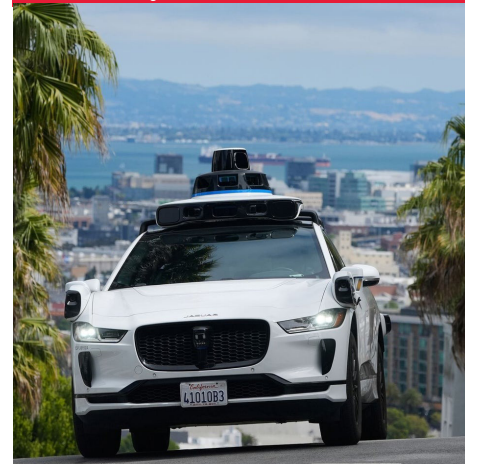
President Donald Trump threatened Canada with 50 percent tariffs on all Canadian-made aircraft and announced the decertification of Bombardier Global Express jets until Canadian authorities certify Gulfstream models. Trump's warning comes amid rising tensions after Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney questioned U.S. trade policies. Bombardier, which has multiple U.S. service centers, said it was in contact with the Canadian government and hoped for a resolution to avoid disruption to air traffic.

More than 5,400 Canadian aircraft, including 150 Global Express jets, operate in the United States, supporting carriers like American Airlines and Delta. Aviation experts warn that mixing safety regulations with political and economic disputes could jeopardize the global aviation system. While the Federal Aviation Administration



regulates U.S. aircraft certifications, it has no legal authority to revoke approvals for economic reasons. The situation highlights the fragility of cross-border trade in aviation amid political tensions.

Waymo aims to launch fully driverless service in London by end of 2026



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

U.S. robotaxi firm Waymo said on Wednesday it plans to launch a fully driverless ride-hailing service in London by the fourth quarter of 2026. The Alphabet-owned company has expanded cautiously in the United States, navigating regulatory hurdles and high technology costs. The British government is creating a regulatory framework to safely accommodate autonomous vehicles. Officials estimate the sector could generate 38,000 jobs and contribute up to \$57.86 billion to the U.K. economy by 2035. Waymo faces competition from Tesla and Wayve, which also aim to introduce autonomous ride services in London next year.

Amazon to cut 16,000 jobs globally amid organizational changes

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Amazons announced on Wednesday it will lay off 16,000 employees globally as part of ongoing organizational changes, marking the second major reduction in three months. Beth Galetti, Senior Vice President of People Experience and Technology, said the cuts follow efforts to reduce layers, increase ownership, and remove bureaucracy. Most U.S.-based employees will have 90 days to apply for new roles internally, with transition support including severance, outplacement, and benefits for those not reassigned. The company will continue hiring in strategic areas critical for growth. Amazon had previously cut 14,000 roles and emphasized that ongoing adjustments are part of optimizing operations rather than a fixed layoff cycle.

India's diesel exports to West Africa rise after EU Russian fuel ban

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India's diesel shipments to West Africa approached record highs after the European Union banned fuel refined from Russian crude, the shipping data showed. Indian exports to the EU averaged 137,000 barrels per day in 2025, but the ban redirected volumes to West Africa, with December shipments reaching 155,000 bpd and January nearing 84,000 bpd. Turkey's diesel exports to the EU also fell sharply. Analysts said the policy is reshaping global oil flows, freeing Middle Eastern supply for Europe. Brent crude traded around \$66.50-\$67.50 per barrel, lifting India's oil and gas index by 3.4 percent, the top gainer among Nifty indices.

Friday, 30 January 2026

Hanwha Aerospace secures \$1.9 billion rocket launcher deal with Norway



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Hanwha Aerospace has won a \$1.9 billion contract to supply K239 Chunmoo multiple rocket launcher systems to Norway, with the official signing expected Friday in Oslo. The agreement includes an offset requirement, mandating industrial cooperation equal to the contract value through technology transfer and local partnerships. South Korea's presidential chief of staff, Kang Hoon-sik, is expected to attend the ceremony, part of efforts to support Korean defense exports. The deal strengthens Norway's long-range strike capability amid heightened European security concerns and follows Hanwha's previous contracts supplying K9 Vidar howitzers to Norway. Analysts say it reflects Hanwha's growing presence in Europe's defense market.

Panama's Supreme Court rules Hong Kong port concession unconstitutional

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Panama's Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that the concession held by a subsidiary of Hong Kong's CK Hutchison Holdings to operate ports at both ends of the Panama Canal was unconstitutional. The decision follows a government audit alleging accounting irregularities and unpaid fees in the 25-year extension granted in 2021, costing the government roughly \$300 million. The ruling supports U.S. efforts to block Chinese influence over the canal. Analysts say the next step is notifying the parties, after which Panama's executive branch, through the Maritime Authority, will decide the ports' future.

U.S. judge dismisses J&J fraud lawsuit over talc bankruptcy strategy

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A U.S. district judge on Thursday dismissed a lawsuit accusing Johnson & Johnson of defrauding cancer plaintiffs by using a bankruptcy strategy to halt lawsuits over talc-based products. The five plaintiffs claimed J&J's maneuvers delayed their cases for years. Judge Michael Shipp ruled the alleged harm was hypothetical because the women first had to prevail in talc litigation. J&J, which stopped selling talc-based baby powder globally in 2023, defended the dismissal, calling the claims meritless. Plaintiffs' attorneys said they are reviewing options for an appeal.

India offers \$100 billion energy investment opportunity, PM Modi tells CEOs

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's growing role in global energy markets on Wednesday, presenting \$100 billion in investment potential in exploration and production during the India Energy Week 2026. He also cited a \$30 billion opportunity in Compressed Bio-Gas. Modi stressed that policy reforms and direct engagement with global CEOs help refine regulations and strengthen India as an investment destination. The roundtable included 27 leaders from firms such as TotalEnergies, BP, Vitol, and ReNew. The Prime Minister emphasized large-scale opportunities across gas-based economy, refinery-petrochemical integration, maritime, and shipbuilding sectors, and



called for innovation and collaboration to meet global energy demand sustainably.

SpaceX explores mergers with Musk companies ahead of IPO

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

SpaceX is in talks to merge with other Elon Musk-led companies, including xAI and possibly Tesla, ahead of a planned public offering later this year. A SpaceX-xAI combination could consolidate Starlink satellites, the X platform, the Grok chatbot, and Starship under one entity, with xAI shares exchanged for SpaceX stock.

The move could support Musk's vision of space-based AI data centers to reduce computing costs and enhance artificial intelligence capabilities. Analysts say such a merger may also strengthen Pentagon contracts and military AI integration. SpaceX's valuation is expected to exceed \$1



trillion, while xAI was valued at \$230 billion in November. No final deal has been signed, and terms remain fluid.

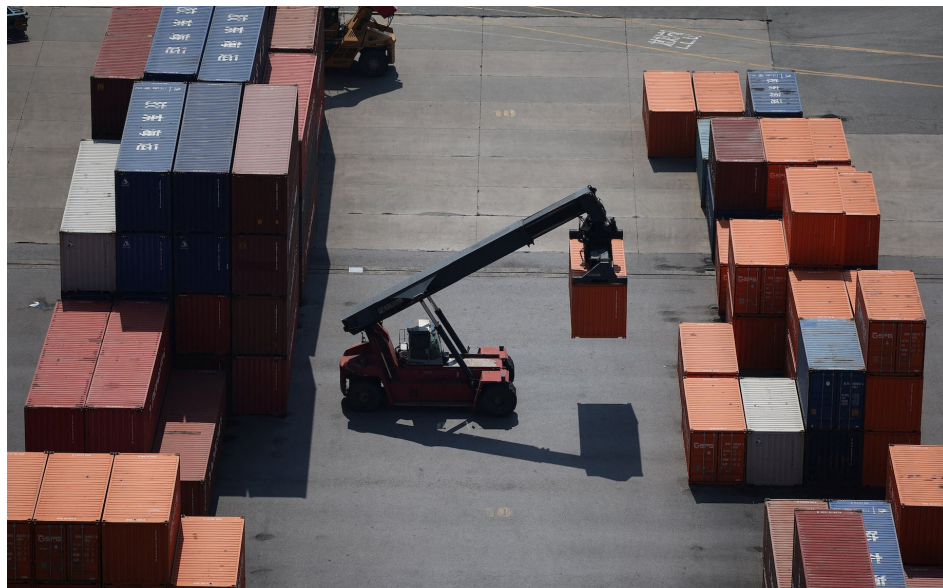
South Korea, US end first day of tariff talks without deal

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

South Korea and the United States concluded the first day of talks over renewed tariff tensions without reaching an agreement. Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan and US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick agreed to reconvene the next day. The discussions followed President Donald Trump's threat to raise reciprocal tariffs on

South Korea from 15 to 25 percent, citing delays in Seoul's legislative approvals of their trade deal.

South Korea has pledged \$350 billion in US investments under the agreement. Kim emphasized Seoul's commitment but did not confirm whether the tariff increase was avoided. He is also scheduled to meet other senior Trump administration officials during his Washington visit.



U.S. and El Salvador sign critical minerals agreement to boost investment



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The United States and El Salvador on Thursday signed a bilateral agreement to encourage investment across the critical minerals supply chain. U.S. firms can now explore, extract, process, and export minerals such as rhenium and silicon, while El Salvador will provide supporting infrastructure. The pact follows the country's December 2024 lifting of a long-standing mining ban and aligns El Salvador with U.S. strategic, regulatory, and trade policies. President Nayib Bukele called it the first reciprocal trade agreement in the Western Hemisphere, emphasizing its economic and symbolic significance for both nations.

Ukraine collaborates with SpaceX to block Russian drone guidance

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Ukraine is working with SpaceX to prevent Russia from using Starlink internet to guide drones, Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov said Thursday. Ukrainian officials recently discovered Starlink terminals on wreckage of long-range Russian drones, including those involved in a deadly train attack on Tuesday. Fedorov thanked Elon Musk and SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell for their swift response. SpaceX has said it does not sell Starlink to Russia. Ukrainian forces continue to rely on thousands of Starlinks for communication and drone operations amid Russia's ongoing attacks.

Microsoft reports record AI spending, slower cloud growth worries investors



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Microsoft on Wednesday revealed record capital spending of \$37.5 billion in its fiscal second quarter, mainly on artificial intelligence, while cloud revenue growth slowed to 39 percent, just above expectations. CEO Satya Nadella disclosed 15 million annual users for M365 Copilot, Microsoft's AI assistant for business. Investors expressed concern as spending rose faster than revenue. Despite a growing cloud backlog of \$625 billion, analysts note Microsoft's reliance on OpenAI is high. The company forecasts slower Azure growth in the current quarter but expects long-term gains from its AI investments.

Australian hockey great and former India coach Michael Nobbs dies at 72



Former Australian hockey international and ex-India men's coach Michael Nobbs died on Thursday after a prolonged illness. He was 72. Nobbs coached India from 2011 to 2013, guiding the team through Olympic qualifiers and helping secure a place at the 2012 London Games. Although India finished last at the Olympics, he played a key role in rebuilding professionalism and fitness standards. Hockey Australia described him as a proud Kookaburra and a respected servant of the sport.

United States batter Aaron Jones provisionally suspended over corruption charges



United States international cricketer Aaron Jones has been provisionally suspended from all forms of cricket after being charged with multiple breaches of anti corruption codes by Cricket West Indies and the International Cricket Council. The charges relate to alleged incidents in the Barbados based Bim10 league and international matches.

Jones has been accused of failing to report corrupt approaches and obstructing investigations. He has 14 days to respond to the charges. The batter has represented the United States in over 50 one day matches and is currently with the national squad at a preparatory camp ahead of the Men's Twenty Twenty World Cup.

Virat Kohli's Instagram disappearance sparks widespread fan speculation

Indian cricket star Virat Kohli set social media buzzing on Thursday night after his official Instagram account suddenly became inaccessible, leaving fans uncertain whether the profile had been deleted, deactivated, or temporarily suspended. Users attempting to view the verified account were met with a message stating that the page was unavailable.

The unexpected disappearance quickly led to intense online speculation, with fans sharing screenshots and theories across platforms. Some suggested Kohli may have taken a voluntary break from



social media, while others pointed to a possible technical issue on Instagram's end. There was also brief speculation about hacking, though no evidence has emerged to support that claim.

Kohli is among the most followed athletes in the world, using Instagram to share cricket updates, brand partnerships, fitness content, and personal moments. As of now, neither Kohli nor his management team has issued a statement, and Instagram has provided no clarification. The mystery continued to dominate online discussions through Friday.

Swiss court reopens path for Jordan Chiles to reclaim Paris Olympic bronze

American gymnast Jordan Chiles may yet regain the bronze medal from the women's floor exercise at the Paris Olympics after Switzerland's top court intervened in the case on Thursday. The Federal Supreme Court ruled that the "highly exceptional circumstances" surrounding the medal decision should be sent back to the Court of Arbitration for Sport for further review.

Chiles had originally been awarded bronze before an appeal by Romania led to the medal being stripped following a scoring dispute. The renewed legal review centers on whether the United States team submitted its appeal within the allowed time frame during the competition.

The decision is rare in Olympic legal cases



and keeps alive the possibility that Chiles could be reinstated as a medalist. The floor exercise podium in Paris had drawn global attention, featuring Chiles alongside gold medalist Rebeca Andrade of Brazil and silver medalist Simone Biles. The final outcome now depends on how the arbitration court evaluates the new evidence.

Gadecki and Peers make Australian Open history with rare mixed doubles title defense

Australia's Olivia Gadecki and John Peers created history on Friday by becoming the first pair in 37 years to successfully defend the Australian Open mixed doubles title. Playing before a packed Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne, the wildcard duo defeated France's Kristina Mladenovic and Manuel Guinard 4 to 6, 6 to 3, 10 to 8 in a dramatic final. The victory made Gadecki and Peers the first team to retain the title since Jana Novotna and Jim Pugh in 1989 and the first Australian pair to achieve the feat since Margaret Court and Ken Fletcher more than six decades ago. Gadecki secured her second Grand Slam title, while Peers claimed his fourth.



After dropping a tightly contested opening set, the Australians settled into the match and leveled proceedings with a strong second set. In the match tiebreak, Peers sealed the title after Guinard sent a final shot into the net, sparking loud celebrations from the home crowd.

Australia hand T20 debuts to Beardman, Edwards, and Renshaw against Pakistan

Australia handed T20 international debuts to Mahli Beardman, Jack Edwards, and Matthew Renshaw on Thursday for the series opener against Pakistan in Lahore. The match forms part of Australia's preparation for the Men's T20 World Cup. Travis Head captained the side with Mitchell Marsh rested. Injuries to several senior players opened opportunities for the trio. Renshaw arrived after a strong Big Bash League season, Edwards impressed as a leading wicket taker, and Beardman earned selection after Under-19 World Cup success.

Bangladesh and Netherlands qualify for 2026 Women's T20 World Cup

Bangladesh and the Netherlands secured qualification for the 2026 Women's T20 World Cup on Tuesday after victories in the Super Six stage of the global qualifiers. Bangladesh defeated Thailand by 39 runs to book their seventh straight appearance at the tournament.

The Netherlands qualified for the first time after beating the United States under the Duckworth Lewis Stern method in a rain affected match. Scotland also stayed in contention with a 39 run win over Ireland. The tournament will be held in England, with the final qualification spots decided later this week in Kathmandu.



Patrick Kane becomes highest scoring US-born player in NHL history

Patrick Kane became the highest scoring United States born player in National Hockey League history on Thursday night, passing Mike Modano with his 1,375th career point. Kane recorded the milestone with an assist during the Detroit Red Wings' 4 to 3 shootout loss to the Washington Capitals. The achievement came midway through the second period and was followed by a brief on ice celebration and a tribute on the videoboards. Modano held the record for more than 18 years. Kane reached the mark shortly after turning 37.



Iceland, Uganda trolls Pakistan amid T20 WC participation uncertainty

Uncertainty over Pakistan's participation in the Twenty Twenty World Cup sparked social media humor this week, with Iceland and Uganda joining the banter. The issue emerged after Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi raised doubts about the team's involvement following Bangladesh's appeal to move matches from India, which was rejected by the International Cricket Council. On Thursday, Iceland Cricket jokingly offered to replace Pakistan before later withdrawing. Uganda Cricket followed with a playful post declaring readiness. A final decision from Pakistan is expected by Friday or Monday.

Para armwrestling receives boost as PAFI earns PCI affiliation



The People's Armwrestling Federation of India received official affiliation from the Paralympic Committee of India on Thursday, marking a major step for para armwrestling in the country. The recognition strengthens pathways for athlete development and international competition. Armwrestling has already featured at the Asian Youth Para Games and is now targeting inclusion in future Asian Para Games. PCI President Devendra Jhajharia praised the move as a milestone for inclusivity and structured growth, bringing Indian para athletes closer to global competition standards.

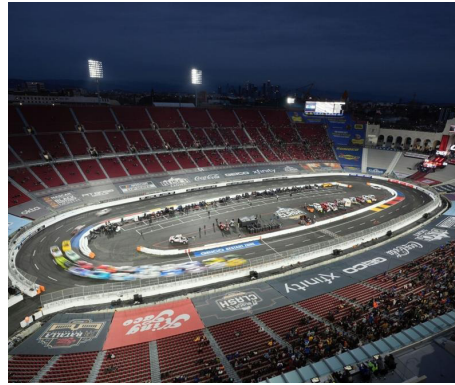
Don Bradman's 1947 Baggy Green cap sells for record 460,000 dollars

A rare Baggy Green cap worn by Australian cricket legend Sir Don Bradman was sold at auction on Monday for approximately 460,000 United States dollars, setting a new record. The cap dates back to the 1947 to 1948 Test series against India and was later gifted by Bradman to Indian cricketer Sriranga Wasudev Sohoni. The cap remained with Sohoni's family for more than seven decades and is in remarkable condition. Experts said its preservation and historical significance drove the price well above previous Bradman memorabilia sales. The buyer has remained anonymous, though the cap is expected to be displayed publicly in the future.

NASCAR revises Bowman Gray Clash schedule as winter storm threatens weekend

NASCAR announced changes on Friday to the schedule for the Clash exhibition race at Bowman Gray Stadium in North Carolina due to continued winter weather concerns. The event had been planned as a two day program, but lingering ice from a previous storm and forecasts of additional snow prompted officials to cancel all Saturday on track activity. The Clash will now run as a one day event on Sunday, weather permitting. NASCAR plans to begin practice sessions in the afternoon, followed by the main event in the evening. Officials remain cautious, noting that the race will depend on how much snow falls on Saturday and whether roads are safe for teams and fans.

Despite cold conditions, NASCAR



expressed confidence that tire grip will be sufficient on the quarter mile track. If Sunday's race cannot proceed, the organization is prepared to reschedule on the next available clear day, with teams set to travel to Florida soon for preparations ahead of the Daytona 500.

Sha'Carri Richardson arrested in Florida on dangerous speeding charge

United States sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson was arrested on Thursday in Orange County, Florida, and charged with dangerous excessive speeding, according to the county sheriff's department. Authorities said Richardson was driving at 104 miles per hour while tailgating and weaving across lanes to pass other vehicles. The 25-year-old is an Olympic gold medalist and won silver in the 100 meters at the Paris Games, along with gold in the women's four by 100-meter relay. United States Track and Field did not immediately comment. Richardson was previously arrested in Seattle last year on a domestic



violence allegation and has also served a past anti-doping suspension.

Coimbatore to build first dedicated Paralympic sports complex

The Tamil Nadu government has approved Coimbatore's first exclusive Paralympic sports complex, marking a major step toward inclusive sports development. The facility will be built at Kavundampalayam and will feature indoor and outdoor training spaces designed specifically for athletes with disabilities. Officials said the complex will support disciplines such as wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, para-athletics, and badminton. It will also include rehabilitation facilities, a gymnasium, medical units, and accessible changing rooms. Construction is expected to begin soon. The project adds to Coimbatore's growing sports



infrastructure and reflects the state's focus on equal opportunities for para-athletes.

International Series confirms October return to India in expanded 2026 schedule



The International Series on Thursday confirmed its return to India, announcing that the second edition will be held in Bengaluru in October. The event will once again take place at Prestige Golfshire Club, following a successful debut last season that featured several top international players. Organizers also unveiled the first nine tournaments of the 2026 season, with stops planned across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The series will begin in Japan in April and conclude in Saudi Arabia in November. Officials said India remains a key growth market, with the series positioned as a major global pathway in men's professional golf.

CAF hands heavy sanctions to Senegal and Morocco after chaotic final



The Confederation Africaine de Football has imposed major fines and suspensions on Senegal and Morocco following disruptions during the Africa Cup of Nations final played on Tuesday. The match was halted after Senegal's coach led players off the field in protest over a penalty decision awarded to Morocco following video review. Senegal coach Pape Thiaw was suspended for five matches and fined 100,000 dollars, while two players received two match bans. Senegal's football federation was fined a total of 615,000 dollars. Morocco's federation was fined 315,000 dollars, and defender Achraf Hakimi received a two-match suspension, with one match suspended for a year.

Tammy Abraham completes permanent return to Aston Villa

England striker Tammy Abraham completed a permanent move back to Aston Villa on Monday, signing a four and a half year contract after joining from Besiktas. The 28 year old returns to English football after spells in Italy and Turkey, with Villa reportedly paying about \$23 million to secure the transfer. Abraham previously played for Villa during the 2018 to 2019 season, scoring 26 goals and helping the club earn promotion to the Premier League. Manager Unai Emery sees him as added support for Ollie Watkins.



Divya Deshmukh to make Norway Chess Women debut in 2026

Indian Grandmaster Divya Deshmukh will make her debut at Norway Chess Women in 2026, becoming the youngest player to compete in the tournament's history. The 19 year old earned her place after winning the FIDE Women's World Cup last year, a victory that also secured her Grandmaster title and qualification for the Women's Candidates Tournament. Organizers confirmed the news on Thursday, praising her rapid rise and recent international success with India. The event will be held in Oslo and features the world's top players.

Ellie Goulding reflects on personal life in upcoming album



Singer-songwriter Ellie Goulding revealed that her forthcoming record unexpectedly became a “divorce album,” reflecting her split from ex-husband Caspar Jopling. Speaking to Nylon magazine, she said the album evolved as a personal journey, blending songs that are reactionary, introspective, and celebratory of new beginnings. Goulding, 39, is now expecting a child with boyfriend Beau Minniear, and her emotional evolution is captured in the album, slated for release early this year. Returning to her roots, she focused on traditional instruments, particularly guitar, in response to the rise of AI music production. Goulding also emphasized the importance of acknowledging the past while creating songs that serve her long-term emotional growth.

Rihanna celebrates 10 years of ‘ANTI’ with Instagram tribute



Rihanna marked a decade since releasing her album ‘ANTI’ with a nostalgic Instagram Reel, highlighting moments from the album’s era. The visual included clips of the singer rehearsing for tours and reflected on the creative team behind the record. Songs such as ‘Needed Me’, ‘Kiss It Better’, and ‘Work’ played in the background as Rihanna expressed gratitude to collaborators. ‘ANTI’ became the longest-charting album by a Black female artist and contributed to Rihanna’s historic record of the most Diamond-certified singles, including ‘Umbrella’, ‘Diamonds’, ‘Stay’, and ‘We Found Love’. The album, released in January 2016, remains her most recent full-length record, cementing her influence in global pop and R&B.

Melania Trump premieres documentary chronicling her return to White House

Melania Trump premiered her documentary, ‘Melania’, on Thursday at the Kennedy Center in Washington, ahead of its global release in more than 1,500 theaters. The film, produced by AmazonMGM Studios at an estimated \$40 million, follows the 20 days leading up to President Donald Trump’s return to the White House, offering an intimate look at her role as first lady. Speaking at the premiere, Melania Trump described the documentary as “beautiful, emotional, fashionable, cinematic,” highlighting her philanthropic initiatives, family life, and efforts to rebuild her White House team.

Director Brett Ratner, attending the event, said documentaries are not expected to be box office hits, noting the focus is on storytelling rather than commercial performance.

The documentary will later stream exclusively on Amazon Prime Video. Melania Trump, who has largely kept a low public profile, said the film aims to show the demands of public life and provide context for her advocacy, including child welfare initiatives and efforts to support foster children. The premiere drew Cabinet members, members of Congress, and conservative commentators.



‘Sinners’ breaks Oscar record with 16 nominations

Ryan Coogler’s blues-infused vampire epic ‘Sinners’ set a new Oscars record, earning 16 nominations at the 98th Academy Awards this week, surpassing the 14 nominations of ‘All About Eve’, ‘Titanic’, and ‘La La Land’. The film, which Coogler described as his most personal, earned nods for best picture, best director, and best screenplay, while Michael B. Jordan received his first best actor nomination.

Paul Thomas Anderson’s ‘One Battle After Another’ followed with 13 nominations, including Leonardo DiCaprio and Benicio del Toro. Other top nominees included ‘Hamnet’, ‘Marty Supreme’, ‘Frankenstein’, and ‘Sentimental Value’. Warner Bros., the



studio behind both leading films, received 33 total nominations, marking a record morning as the company undergoes its sale to Netflix. The Oscars will be held on March 15 at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Bruce Springsteen releases ICE protest song ‘Streets of Minneapolis’

Bruce Springsteen released the new song ‘Streets of Minneapolis’ in response to what he described as “state terror” in Minneapolis. The track, partly acoustic and building into full-band arrangements, honors residents killed by ICE agents, including Alex Pretti and Renee Good. Springsteen dedicates the song to immigrants and community members affected by recent ICE actions, calling the agency “King Trump’s private army from the DHS.” Lyrics depict the tragic scene on the city streets while urging collective action, echoing the structure of



his classic ‘Streets of Philadelphia’. The song was written, recorded, and released within days to respond immediately to events in Minnesota.

Lady Gaga pauses Tokyo show to speak out against ICE



During her Mayhem Ball concert in Tokyo this week, Lady Gaga paused to address ICE’s actions in the United States. The singer condemned the targeting of children and families and highlighted the recent shooting of ICU nurse Alex Pretti by ICE agents in Minneapolis. Gaga dedicated her performance of ‘Come to Mama’ from ‘Joanne’ to those affected, calling for safety, peace, and accountability. She urged global audiences to stand in solidarity with communities under threat. The singer, performing five nights at Tokyo Dome, used the moment to combine her music with activism, joining other celebrities speaking out against the U.S. immigration agency. Gaga is set to perform in St. Paul in April.

Imtiaz Ali’s next film with Diljit Dosanjh to release June 12



Imtiaz Ali’s upcoming drama, starring Diljit Dosanjh, Vedang Raina, Sharvari, and Naseeruddin Shah, will release in theaters on June 12. Produced by Applause Entertainment and Window Seat Films, the film features music by A.R. Rahman with lyrics by Irshad Kamil. Ali described the project as a story of love, longing, and human connection, blending personal and national narratives. The untitled film marks Diljit’s collaboration with Vedang and Sharvari, following his role in Ali’s 2024 biopic ‘Amar Singh Chamkila’. Ali said the story has “a large canvas, yet is very personal,” and teased audiences with the poetic line, “‘Tum mere paas hote ho goya, Jab koi doosra nahin hota’ — Can love really be lost?”

Nicki Minaj declares herself Trump’s number one fan

Rapper Nicki Minaj publicly reaffirmed her support for President Donald J. Trump at a special session in Washington, D.C., calling herself “probably the president’s Number 1 fan.” She defended Trump against what she called bullying and smear campaigns, stating that public criticism only motivates her further. During the event, Trump joked about her wealth and the new Trump Accounts program, which deposits \$1,000 for children born between 2025 and 2028 into individual retirement accounts. Minaj also pledged to contribute between \$150,000 and \$300,000 to fund fans’ Trump Accounts, though details on distribution remain unclear.

Friday, 30 January 2026

King Charles III premieres documentary on environmental legacy



King Charles III and Queen Camilla attended the premiere of 'Finding Harmony: A King's Vision' at Windsor Castle on Wednesday. Narrated by Kate Winslet, the film emphasizes humanity's need to restore balance with nature to combat climate change and build sustainable communities. Charles revisits ideas from his 2010 book 'Harmony: A New Way of Looking at Our World' and reflects on a lifetime of environmental advocacy, from organic farming to sustainable urban planning. The documentary also addresses past media criticism and aims to define his legacy. 'Finding Harmony: A King's Vision' will be available on Amazon Prime from February 6.

Natalie Portman calls out Oscars over lack of women directors



Natalie Portman criticized the Academy Awards for sidelining female directors in the 2026 nominations while attending the Sundance Film Festival in Utah on Sunday. Speaking to 'Variety' during promotions for 'The Gallerist', Portman said many of the year's strongest films were made by women but failed to receive recognition. She noted that Chloé Zhao, nominated for 'Hamnet', is the only woman in the best director category. Portman said structural barriers remain at every stage of filmmaking and stressed that progress will require continued collaboration and solidarity among women in the industry.

Alia Bhatt to produce young adult rom com 'Don't Be Shy'



Alia Bhatt will produce the coming of age romantic comedy 'Don't Be Shy' through Eternal Sunshine Productions, the company she co runs with sister Shaheen Bhatt, the makers announced on Thursday. The film, written and directed by Sreeti

Mukerji, will stream on Prime Video. It follows 20 year old Shyamili Das as her carefully planned life unravels. Bhatt said the project stood out for its sincerity and emotional honesty. The film features music by Ram Sampath and is positioned as a warm, female led youth story.

Judd Apatow urges Americans to act amid criticism of Trump

Filmmaker Judd Apatow renewed his criticism of President Donald Trump while speaking to 'Variety' this week, urging Americans to take responsibility during what he described as a dangerous political moment. Apatow cited immigration raids and the Minneapolis shooting involving

Immigration and Customs Enforcement as reasons for concern. He warned against public complacency and called on citizens to think long term and make sacrifices. Apatow has repeatedly spoken out against Trump, including during a recent awards ceremony, framing his activism as a moral obligation rather than political theater.



KRK remanded to police custody in Oshiwara firing case

A Mumbai court sent actor Kamaal Rashid Khan to police custody until Monday in connection with a firing incident in Oshiwara, police said on Saturday. Investigators allege Khan discharged two rounds while cleaning his licensed firearm at home, with bullets striking a nearby residential building. No injuries were reported. Khan told the court the firing was accidental. Police are examining the motive and verifying his statements. The weapon, licensed in Uttar Pradesh, had been retrieved after election restrictions were lifted earlier this month.

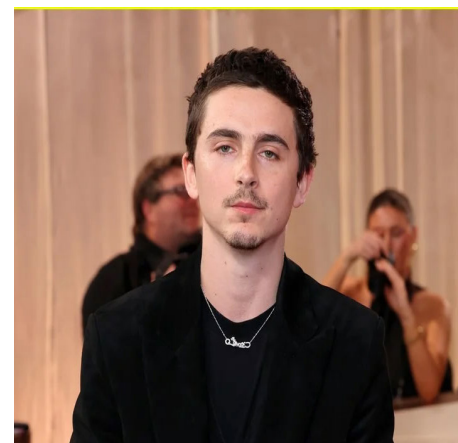


Reggae legend Sly Dunbar dies at 73



Two time Grammy winning drummer Sly Dunbar, half of the iconic duo Sly and Robbie, died at the age of 73, his wife confirmed on Monday. Dunbar shaped reggae, dancehall, and pop music, playing on classics by Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Grace Jones, and Bob Dylan. Known as part of the 'Riddim Twins', he co founded Taxi Records and helped launch numerous artists. Tributes poured in from across the music world, with many crediting Dunbar's drumming as foundational to modern global rhythms.

Timothée Chalamet becomes youngest man with three Oscar acting nominations



Timothée Chalamet made Oscar history on Thursday by becoming the youngest male actor to earn three acting nominations at age 30. His latest nod is for 'Marty Supreme', joining earlier nominations for 'Call Me by Your Name' and 'A Complete Unknown'. Chalamet also received a best picture nomination as a producer, making him the youngest person ever double nominated for acting and producing in the same year. If he wins, Chalamet would become the second youngest best actor winner after Adrien Brody.

Padma awards to honor Dharmendra and Satish Shah posthumously

Veteran actors Dharmendra and Satish Shah will be honored posthumously with Padma awards, officials announced on Saturday. Dharmendra will receive the Padma Vibhushan, while Satish Shah will be conferred the Padma Shri. Malayalam cinema icon Mammooty and singer Alka Yagnik will receive the Padma Bhushan. Dharmendra, a defining star of Hindi cinema, passed away in November, while Satish Shah, celebrated for 'Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi' and 'Sarabhai vs Sarabhai', died in October. The awards recognize their lasting cultural and artistic contributions.

आंध्र प्रदेश की आराधना यात्रा

सोमाराम (सोमेश्वर) मंदिर, भीमावरम

IndoUS Tribune की 'यात्रा और दर्शन' श्रृंखला की आंध्र प्रदेश मंदिर यात्रा आज अपने पंद्रहवें और अंतिम पड़ाव पर पहुँचती है। तिरुमला तिरुपति देवस्थानम से आरंभ हुई यह आध्यात्मिक यात्रा, आंध्र प्रदेश के विविध, प्राचीन और श्रद्धा से परिपूर्ण मंदिरों से गुजरते हुए अब हमें पंचाराम क्षेत्र के दिव्य धाम — सोमाराम (सोमेश्वर) मंदिर, भीमावरम तक ले आई है।

यह केवल एक यात्रा का समापन नहीं, बल्कि शैव परंपरा, पौराणिक इतिहास और चंद्र-तत्व से जुड़े अद्भुत आध्यात्मिक अनुभव का चरम बिंदु है। पश्चिम गोदावरी ज़िले के भीमावरम नगर में स्थित यह मंदिर भगवान शिव के सोमेश्वर स्वरूप को समर्पित है और पंचाराम क्षेत्रों में एक विशिष्ट स्थान रखता है।

सोमाराम मंदिर का पौराणिक एवं ऐतिहासिक महत्व
सोमाराम मंदिर, भगवान शिव के पाँच पवित्र पंचाराम क्षेत्रों में से एक है। पौराणिक मान्यता के अनुसार, यहाँ प्रतिष्ठित शिवलिंग की स्थापना चंद्र देव ने की थी, इसी कारण भगवान शिव यहाँ सोमेश्वर स्वामी के नाम से पूजित हैं।

एक प्रमुख कथा के अनुसार, राक्षस राजा तारकासुर के वध के समय उसके कंठ में स्थित शिवलिंग पाँच भागों में विभक्त हो गया। ये पाँचों भाग अलग-अलग स्थानों पर प्रतिष्ठित हुए, जिनसे पंचाराम क्षेत्र अस्तित्व में आए:

- ▶ अमराराम — अमरावती
- ▶ द्राक्षाराम — पूर्व गोदावरी
- ▶ सोमाराम — भीमावरम
- ▶ क्षीराराम — पालकोल
- ▶ भीमाराम — समरलकोटा

एक अन्य कथा त्रिपुरासुर संहार से जुड़ी है, जिसमें शिवलिंग के अवशेषों से इन पाँच पवित्र शिवालयों की स्थापना मानी जाती है।

चंद्र प्रभाव से बदलता शिवलिंग:

एक अद्भुत विशेषता

सोमाराम मंदिर की सबसे विलक्षण विशेषता है यहाँ



का शिवलिंग, जो चंद्रमा की कलाओं के अनुसार अपना रंग बदलता है:

- ▶ पूर्णिमा के दिन शिवलिंग श्वेत (सफेद) दिखाई देता है
 - ▶ अमावस्या को यह श्याम (काला) हो जाता है
- यह दुर्लभ विशेषता सोमाराम मंदिर को भारत के सबसे विशिष्ट और रहस्यमय शिवालयों में सम्मिलित करती है।

मंदिर परिसर और स्थापत्य वैभव

मंदिर के प्रवेश द्वार पर भव्य गोपुरम और सामने

चंद्रकुंडम (सोमा गुंडम) नामक पवित्र पुष्करिणी स्थित है। मंदिर परिसर में:

- ▶ विशाल नंदी प्रतिमा
- ▶ भगवान श्री राम, हनुमान, कुमारस्वामी, गणेश, सूर्य और नवग्रहों के मंदिर स्थित हैं
- ▶ शिव गर्भगृह के ऊपर स्थित देवी अन्नपूर्णा मंदिर, जहाँ देवी पुरुषों की भौति यज्ञोपवीत धारण किए हुए हैं — जो अत्यंत दुर्लभ स्वरूप है

भगवान सोमेश्वर की अर्धांगिनी राजराजेश्वरी अम्मावारु भी यहीं विराजमान हैं।

पूजा, दर्शन और उत्सव

दर्शन समय:

- ▶ प्रातः 5:00 बजे से 11:00 बजे तक
- ▶ सायं 4:00 बजे से 8:00 बजे तक

प्रमुख पर्व:

- ▶ महाशिवरात्रि (फरवरी-मार्च)
- ▶ शरन्नवरात्रि (सितंबर-अक्टूबर)

कैसे पहुँचें

- ▶ **सड़क मार्ग:** APSRTC बसें पालकोल्लू, राजमहेन्द्रवरम और विजयवाड़ा से

- ▶ **रेल मार्ग:** भीमावरम रेलवे स्टेशन से लगभग

2 किमी

- ▶ **वायु मार्ग:** निकटतम हवाई अड्डे — राजमहेन्द्रवरम और विजयवाड़ा

निकटवर्ती दर्शनीय स्थल

- ▶ द्वारका तिरुमला (छिन्ना तिरुपति)
- ▶ दिंडी बैकवॉटर्स
- ▶ पीठापुरम एवं द्राक्षारामम
- ▶ भद्राचलम श्री सीतारामचंद्र स्वामी मंदिर

समापन: एक दिव्य यात्रा का पूर्ण विराम और नई शुरुआत का संकेत

सोमाराम (सोमेश्वर) मंदिर के दर्शन के साथ

IndoUS Tribune की आंध्र प्रदेश मंदिर यात्रा अपने पवित्र समापन पर पहुँचती है। इन पंद्रह पड़ावों में हमने अनुभव किया कि कैसे आस्था, इतिहास और स्थापत्य एक-दूसरे में गुंथे हुए हैं — और कैसे मंदिर आज भी भारतीय सभ्यता की आत्मा बने हुए हैं।

IndoUS Tribune अपने सभी पाठकों का हृदय से आभार व्यक्त करता है कि आपने इस आध्यात्मिक यात्रा में हमारा साथ दिया। आशा है कि यह श्रृंखला आपको भारत की दिव्य सांस्कृतिक धरोहर के और निकट ले गई होगी।

अब अगली यात्रा:

अरुणाचल मंदिर यात्रा: जहाँ

आस्था सूर्योदय के साथ जागती है

अगले अंक से IndoUS Tribune एक नई आध्यात्मिक यात्रा की शुरुआत कर रहा है — 'अरुणाचल प्रदेश के मंदिरों की यात्रा'।

भारत के पूर्वोत्तर छोर पर स्थित अरुणाचल प्रदेश — जहाँ भारत सबसे पहले सूर्य का स्वागत करता है — आस्था, प्रकृति और आदिम परंपराओं का एक अनोखा संगम है। पाशुरीम कुंड की तपस्वी ऊर्जा से लेकर मालिनीतन की पुरातन कथाओं तक, यह यात्रा उन मंदिरों से परिचित कराएगी जिनकी कहानियाँ कम कही गई हैं, पर जिनकी शक्ति गहराई से अनुभूत होती है।

जहाँ मार्ग कठिन हैं, पर आस्था अडिग है।

जहाँ मंदिर केवल संरचनाएँ नहीं, बल्कि प्रकृति के साथ संवाद हैं।

अरुणाचल मंदिर यात्रा — शीघ्र ही IndoUS Tribune में।

तब तक, भगवान सोमेश्वर की कृपा आप सभी पर बनी रहे। हर हर महादेव।

यही शुभकामना।



'Atithi Devo Bhava'

The simple meaning of the guest-ethic in Indian culture

● By: Dr. Avi Verma

The famous Upanishadic dictum "Atithi Devo Bhava" teaches us that a guest is to be regarded as God. Serving a guest is considered equivalent to worshipping the Divine. According to Sage Suta, there is no duty greater than hospitality and no deity greater than a guest. Whoever comes to the doorstep of our home should be welcomed, to the best of one's ability and circumstances—not merely as a social obligation, but as a sacred religious duty.

In Indian culture, the service of a guest is called Atithi Yajna (the sacrificial offering to a guest). It is regarded as an essential part of a householder's daily life and is included among the Pancha Maha Yajnas (the five great daily duties). While honoring a guest, one should not consider their caste, stage of life, age, or status. A guest should be seen as a manifestation of God. Very few cultures in the world demonstrate such a high level of reverence and sanctity toward guests.

According to Maharshi Shatatapa (Laghu Shatatapa, verse 55), a true guest is one who arrives uninvited, without self-interest, at any time and from any place. A person whose arrival is pre-announced is not considered a true atithi. In the Mahabharata, the noble Vidura advises King Dhritarashtra that when a virtuous guest arrives, one should first offer them a seat, bring water to wash their feet, inquire about their well-being, and then provide food as needed.



The Vedas declare that one who honors a guest is freed from sins (Atharva Veda 9.7.8). Welcoming a guest at one's doorstep is considered equivalent to offering oblations to the gods. According to the Mahabharata, those who provide a guest with water, oil, a lamp, food, and shelter never go to Yamaloka (the realm of death).

The scriptures further explain that by offering a seat to a guest, Brahma is pleased; by washing their hands, Shiva; by washing their feet, Indra and other deities; and by feeding them, Lord Vishnu Himself. Thus, a guest represents

the combined form of all the gods. The Manusmriti states that a householder should offer the same food to a guest that they consume themselves. Hospitality brings an increase in good fortune, fame, longevity, and happiness.

The Mahabharata and Ramayana provide many inspiring examples of Atithi Dharma: King Shibi offering his own flesh to protect a dove, the sacrifice of Moradhwaja, Mother Kunti sending Bhima to protect a Brahmin, and offering one's own meal to a starving outcaste during times of famine. The Taittiriya Upanishad even describes hospitality as a

sacred vow. In the Shanti Parva of the Mahabharata, a warning is given that if a guest leaves a home hungry and disappointed, the merit of that household is destroyed and the householder suffers. The guest takes away his merit and leaves his sins behind in that home.

The Atharva Veda clearly states that one should not eat before serving a guest, as the guest is learned in the Vedas and worthy of worship. Therefore, it is the duty of all of us to uphold Atithi Dharma and keep alive this महान (great) tradition of Indian culture.



Washington State and Northwest mark India's 77th Republic Day with Senate resolution, proclamations, cultural celebrations, and consular inauguration

By: Vandana Jhingan

The 77th Republic Day of India was celebrated across Washington State and the US Northwest with a series of official recognitions, cultural events, and diplomatic initiatives. The Washington State Senate passed Resolution SR-8674 in Olympia, honoring India's democratic traditions, the contributions of Indian Americans, and shared priorities in trade, agriculture, technology, and emerging sectors. Sponsored by Indian American Senator Manka Dhingra and supported by Senator Vandana Slatter, the resolution received bipartisan approval, marking a historic acknowledgment by the legislature.

Several Northwest states, including Alaska, Nebraska, Oregon, South Dakota, and Washington, issued proclamations celebrating India's Republic Day. Leaders including Governors Greg Gianforte, Larry Rhoden, and Jim Pillen, as well as Bill Gates and US Rep. Kim Schrier, extended congratulations and highlighted India's innovation and bilateral collaboration.



On Jan 26, the Indian Consulate hosted a flag unfurling atop Seattle's Federal Reserve building, featuring excerpts from India's President's address. The occasion was attended by Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson and a 30-member delegation from Montana. The new co-located Indian Consular Application Center was inaugurated, enhancing operational efficiency for consular services.

Cultural performances included

patriotic songs, traditional Kuchipudi and Bharatnatyam dances, and a showcase of eight classical Indian dance forms. The evening concluded with a grand reception at Bell Harbor Conference Center, attended by First Lady Colleen Ferguson, Lt Gen Matthew W. McFarlane, Attorney General Nick Brown, King County Executive Girmay Zahilay, Seattle Deputy Mayor Brian Surratt, Seattle Police Chief Shon Barnes, and other city and tribal leaders.



Six newly elected Indian American city council members were recognized, and the One District One Product exhibition from all 28 Indian states was showcased, highlighting India's cultural and economic heritage.

FIA marks India's 77th Republic Day in Massachusetts with focus on democracy, unity, and shared values

By: Vandana Jhingan

Massachusetts celebrated India's 77th Republic Day as the Foundation of Indian Americans New England hosted a community event at the Academy of Creative Arts, honoring India's freedom fighters and the framers of its Constitution. The gathering marked the historic adoption of India's Constitution, which established the nation as a constitutional republic and guaranteed fundamental rights to its citizens.



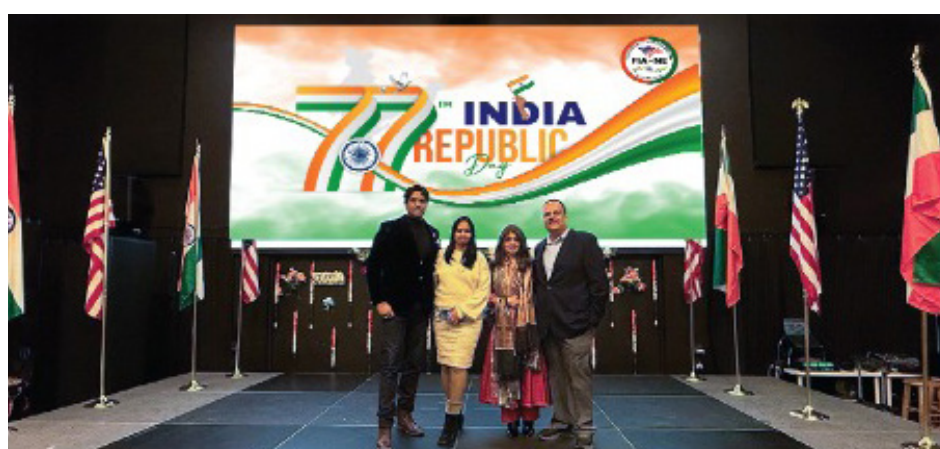
FIA New England President Abhishek Singh said Republic Day serves as a reminder of the responsibility to uphold freedom, equality, and justice for future generations, urging the community to protect unity and integrity. Attendees observed a moment of silence to honor martyrs of both India and the United States, followed by the singing of the national anthems. Executive Vice President Sanjay Gokhale called on the community to work toward eliminating hunger, poverty, and

inequality while strengthening peace and inclusion. Community leaders Rakesh and Aditi Soni highlighted the shared democratic journeys of India and the United States, while entrepreneur Devendra Patil reflected on India's continued progress as the United States approaches its 250th anniversary in 2026.

Speakers including Mohan Nannapaneni, Java and Hetal Joshi, and Jayesh Patel emphasized constitutional values such as



religious freedom, cultural and educational rights, and legal protections. FIA board members Shova Sharma and Anand Sharma thanked community supporters and dignitaries for their continued guidance. The event was documented by photographer Rasik Mehta, capturing a celebration rooted in heritage, civic responsibility, and unity.





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Mata Bhagat: Avi Verma

Invest India Business Forum in Seattle highlights Indian exports and spurs Washington State's largest-ever trade mission to India

By: Vandana Jhingan

The Consulate General of India in Seattle hosted the second edition of the Invest India Business Forum at the Bell Harbor International Conference Center, spotlighting India's growing investment opportunities and export potential across key sectors. The event was organized in partnership with the Montana World Affairs Council and Zoho and drew senior executives and leaders from the Greater Seattle region, including representatives from Microsoft, Salesforce, Amazon, and T Mobile.

Industry experts presented on opportunities in artificial intelligence, agri technology, quantum computing, photonics, healthcare, and higher education, outlining India's progress and its expanding role as a global investment destination.

As a follow-up to the forum, Greater Seattle Partners and the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce announced that they will lead Washington State's largest trade mission to India from Wednesday through February 7, 2026. The delegation will include more than 30 members from the Port of Seattle, the City of Bellevue, the mayor of Redmond, and senior leadership from Microsoft, Amazon, and Boeing.



The forum also showcased Indian export-ready products, including Bhagwa variety pomegranates, Araku coffee, wines, spirits, and One District One Product items from all 28 Indian states. Providence CEO



Eric Wexler highlighted India's healthcare potential and the company's new global capability center in Hyderabad, while Zoho demonstrated India's push toward digital self-reliance through locally developed



artificial intelligence solutions. The forum aimed to deepen economic ties between India and the US Pacific Northwest by advancing trade, tourism, and technology cooperation.









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Organizer: Dr. Avi Verma



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India-Africa: Reinforcing partnerships



● By: Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia

Discussing a partnership between India, a country, and Africa, a continent of 54 countries, may sound asymmetrical. Still, two factors justify doing so: empathy and support for Africa in India are matched by admiration and respect that most Africans feel for India's success as the world's largest democracy and the fastest-growing large economy. Each, home to 1.4 billion people, can help the other secure its vision of good governance and prosperity. Hence, the evolution of the partnership between India and Africa in the 2020s is a subject of global interest.

India-Africa partnership needs to be assessed in its four vital dimensions: multilateral, continental, regional, and bilateral.

First, the multilateral dimension begins with the UN, where, for decades, India and Africa have collaborated fruitfully to pursue shared goals, including decolonization, economic development, peacekeeping, and UN reform. Even today, India participates in the UN's peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Western Sahara. In an age when multilateralism is under severe stress, the two sides continue to coordinate to keep UN reform, particularly of the Security Council, on the agenda. Global issues such as assistance to Africa for development, debt relief, a just energy transition, and inclusive growth are supported through

proactive Indian diplomacy.

A significant contribution by India was its firm leadership, as the G20 president in 2022–23, in ensuring that Africa's long-pending request for full G20 membership for the African Union (AU) was accepted. In addition, when BRICS undertook its first expansion, India had the privilege of supporting the entry of Egypt and Ethiopia into this influential forum.

Second, the continental dimension assumed greater substance with the launch of the India-Africa Forum Summit in 2008. Two more summits were held in 2011 and 2015. It was decided that the fourth summit would take place in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and other factors prevented this, but now official indications suggest that the next summit may be held sometime during 2026. It is about time, because geopolitics has been changing rapidly to the detriment of the interests of the Global South. India, as 'the voice' of the Global South and Africa, as the heart of the Global South, must create an opportunity for a candid and comprehensive dialogue with a view to developing a mutually acceptable strategy for their shared goals.

Third, the regional dimension of India-Africa partnership refers to India's past efforts to cultivate cooperative ties with select Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to diversify and deepen economic cooperation. These were pushed by apex Indian business chambers, such as the CII and FICCI, through their periodic interactions with EAC, COMESA, and SADC. Fresh momentum needs to be created by providing political leadership

to such business initiatives. Experts believe that selected RECs remain useful platforms for increasing trade, investment, and collaboration in critical minerals and for introducing digital technologies into Africa.

Fourth, the bilateral channel for consolidating relations between India and African countries remains the most important. Keeping this in view, the vastness of the continent, and the substantial number of countries involved, India opened 18 new Embassies on the continent in recent years. They are now operational, connecting Indian authorities, businesses, think tanks, and others with their counterparts in Africa.

Political and diplomatic dialogue has been conducted through an ongoing exchange of high-level visits. This was resumed after a three-year hiatus caused by COVID-19. A total of 12 VVIP visits were arranged by the Indian side during 2022–25, during which the country's President, Vice President, or Prime Minister held discussions with leaders of 17 African countries. The list demonstrated that India's interests extended to the West, North, and the Horn of Africa, even as it maintained its traditional diplomatic outreach in Eastern and Southern Africa.

In addition, when it came to helping cope with the Covid pandemic, India was found at the forefront, supplying vaccines, medicines, and medical equipment to nations in all parts of Africa. This contrasted with the regrettable practice of certain Western countries, which saw their

surplus vaccine stocks lying idle, rather than being shared with African people when they needed them most.

Two areas of this partnership require particular attention. One, trade and economic cooperation are the top priority for both sides. India's trade with Africa was estimated at \$103 billion in FY2025. New Delhi has set the target to raise it to \$200 billion by 2030. India's cumulative investment of \$80 billion in Africa also needs to be increased and diversified. For this purpose, a practical roadmap is required from business leaders and governments.

The other area is of soft power – culture, education, skill development, and thought leadership provided by universities, think tanks, media, and NGOs. A concerted plan must be devised to enhance interactions at the level of the people. A total of 2.8 billion people deserve to know and relate to each other far better than they do today.

The multi-dimensional India-Africa partnership has a promising future. Still, the leading actors in both regions need to devote more time, attention, and financial resources to advancing it to the next level.

Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia is a Distinguished Fellow at Gateway House, Mumbai. He is a former Indian High Commissioner to Kenya, South Africa, and Lesotho. He served as Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) during 2012–15. His book India-Africa Relations: Changing Horizons (Routledge, 2022) received critical acclaim.

India and the Global South

By: Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar

India's relations with countries of the Global South have deep roots in shared histories, common struggles, and mutual aspirations for development and self-reliance. Over the years India's role has evolved from being a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to becoming a pivotal player in contemporary South-South cooperation.

India's partnership with the Global South was propelled to a new level by Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he organized the first Voice of the Global South Summit (VOGSS) on 12-13th January, 2023 within a few weeks of India taking over the Presidency of the G20. This Summit was followed by another later during the year and a third one in 2024.

In addition to articulating the interests, priorities and aspirations of the Global South through several VOGSSs and raising these issues at all relevant fora, India also "Walks the Talk" and extends all possible assistance to countries of the Global South.

Background

India's role within the Global South is pivotal, leveraging its growing economic power, democratic framework, and strategic geopolitical positioning to advocate for equitable global governance.

India's development assistance programs to members of the Global South underscore its role as a partner in progress. Through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program, India has provided training, capacity building, and technical assistance to over 160 countries. This program covers a wide range of areas, including healthcare, education, agriculture, and information technology, thereby contributing to human resource development in the Global South.

The policy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The world is one family)

The spirit of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" has served as the guiding philosophy of India's foreign policy for the last more than a decade. This policy witnessed its fullest expression during India's Chairmanship of the G20 in 2023 when it adopted the motto of "One Earth, One Family, One Future" for its Presidency, and made sure that all decisions emanating from the deliberations fully reflected this commitment.

Current status

In recent years, India's "Global South" partnership has matured into a core pillar of its foreign policy. One of the most consequential achievements of India in its G20 Presidency was the inclusion of African Union, a body comprising 54 African countries, as a full-fledged member of the G20. This issue had been hanging fire for many years and it fell to India, with its commitment to the interests of the Global South, to bring it to fruition by evolving the requisite consensus on this important subject.



India has been able to significantly enhance its engagement with the Global South because its economy has grown significantly in recent years. When PM Modi assumed power in 2014, India's economy was the 10th largest in the world. Today it is the 4th largest with prognosis to emerge as the third largest by 2027. Today India is the fastest growing major economy with its GDP growth registering an impressive 8.2% in the last quarter. India is expected to grow from a US\$4 trillion economy today to more than US\$10 trillion by 2035.

India's increased economic strength has inter alia enhanced its capacity to play a much more active role in global affairs and lend a helping hand in times of need to those in difficulty. During the Covid-19 pandemic, India supplied medicines and vaccines, most of them gratis, to several partners, particularly from the Global South. India provided medicines to more than 150 countries, and more than 300 million vaccine doses under its Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine Friendship) initiative to more than 100 countries. Because of its economic heft, India could come to the assistance of Sri Lanka to the tune of US\$4.5 billion when the latter's coffers were empty in 2022 and to the support of Afghanistan, Maldives etc. with financial support, food supplies and medicines when these countries had their backs to the wall. This has also enabled India to emerge as the First Responder in times of need and when calamities like earthquakes, floods etc. have struck in its neighbourhood and beyond.

Key pillars of engagement

India's "Global South Partnership" today is defined by four distinct areas of cooperation:

A. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) & "The India Stack"

India has moved from domestic achievements to global outreach.

- **Fintech Diplomacy:** UPI (Unified Payments Interface) is now operational or in pilot stages across several Global South nations, including Namibia, Sri Lanka, and parts of Southeast Asia.
- **Social Impact Fund:** India's \$25 million commitment to a Social

Impact Fund helps smaller nations build their own digital identity (Aadhaar-like) and payment systems to promote financial inclusion.

B. Health & pharmaceutical leadership

Reaffirming its title as the "Pharmacy of the World," India has evolved from providing medicines and vaccines in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic to building Health Resilience.

- **Generic medicines:** Providing affordable, high-quality generic drugs to nations in Africa and the Caribbean.
- **Regulatory capacity:** India is now actively training drug regulators in Global South countries to help them establish their own pharmaceutical safety standards.

C. The Global Development Compact

Proposed by Prime Minister Modi in late 2024, this compact focuses on:

- **Trade for development:** Reducing barriers for Least Developed Countries (LDCs).
- **Concessional finance:** Offering project-specific grants rather than the "debt-trap" loans often associated with some other major powers.

D. Climate justice & energy transition

India champions the principle of "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities" (CBDR).

- **International Solar Alliance (ISA):** With 121 member countries, many of which are from the Global South, the

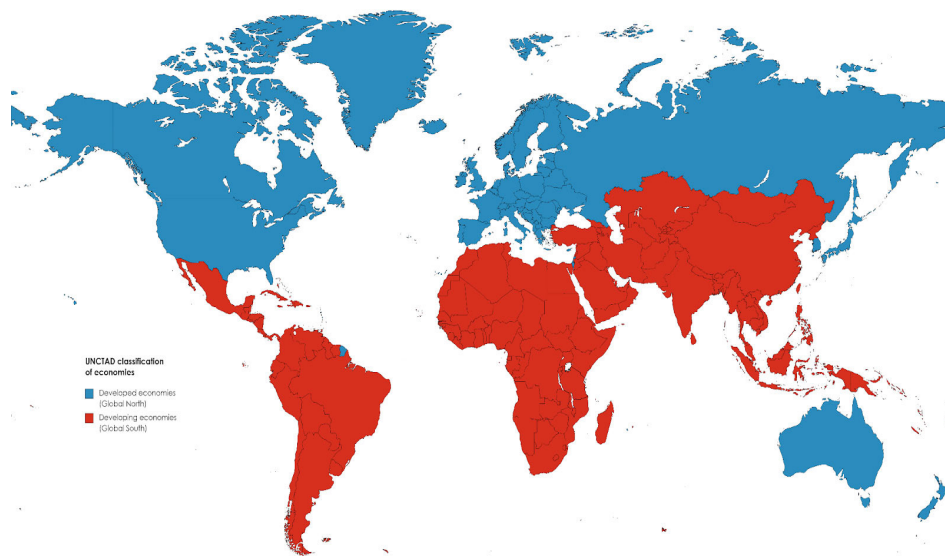
ISA underscores India's commitment to addressing climate change and promoting renewable energy.

- **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment):** India encourages a shift toward sustainable consumption, a narrative that resonates with developing nations that are not the primary cause of climate change but have to endure its worst effects.

Conclusion

India's geopolitical dynamics with the Global South have evolved significantly over the years, reflecting its growing economic power, strategic interests, and aspirations to be a major player on the global stage. India's proactive engagement with the Global South underscores its commitment to a multipolar world where developing nations have a significant voice in global affairs. Through sustained efforts in diplomacy, economic cooperation, and strategic partnerships, India is poised to play a pivotal role in the evolving dynamics of the Global South.

As both a leader and a partner, India continues to play a crucial role in shaping the future of the Global South. Through sustained cooperation, mutual respect, and shared aspirations, India and the Global South can collectively navigate the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.





Universal artificial blood: Where science stands today

● By: Dr. Avi Verma

For decades, the idea of artificial blood, a safe, universally compatible substitute for donated human blood, has been a long-sought goal in medicine. Such a product could help avert global shortages, eliminate the need for blood-type matching, and save countless lives in emergencies ranging from trauma care to battlefield injuries. Today, science is closer than ever before to realizing this vision, with significant progress in Japan, promising research in the United States, and emerging discussions in India.

Japan at the forefront as universal artificial blood enters human trials

Japan currently leads the world in artificial blood research, with scientists conducting the first modern human clinical trials of a truly universal blood substitute. This work is centered at Nara Medical University, where a team led by Professor Hiromi Sakai has developed an innovative product based on hemoglobin vesicles, tiny microscopic particles engineered to transport oxygen without the complex components of whole red blood cells.

Hemoglobin, the protein that carries oxygen in normal red blood cells, is purified and encapsulated inside a lipid membrane that mimics the cell's structure. This design has several important advantages:

Universal compatibility: Hemoglobin vesicles lack ABO and Rh blood group antigens, meaning they can be transfused into any patient without blood-type matching.

Oxygen delivery: The vesicles carry oxygen through the bloodstream in a manner similar to natural red cells. **Extended storage:** Unlike donated blood, which must be refrigerated and used within about six weeks, these artificial cells may be stored for up to two years at room temperature or longer under refrigeration, potentially transforming logistics in emergency settings.



Reduced infection risk: Removing cellular components lowers the risk of immune reactions and infectious disease transmission.

In March 2025, Japan began administering the hemoglobin vesicle product to healthy adult volunteers in doses ranging from 100 to 400 milliliters as part of a Phase Ib clinical trial designed to evaluate safety, tolerability, and how the artificial cells behave in the body. Early results have been encouraging, showing that the vesicles remain in circulation and do not elicit major adverse effects at these doses.

If the trials continue to demonstrate safety and acceptable physiological performance, Japanese researchers estimate that clinical use, especially in emergency medicine, disaster response, and military applications, could realistically begin by around 2030.

United States: Decades of research with cautionary lessons

The United States has a long history in artificial blood research, though progress has been slower and more cautious than

in Japan. During the 1990s and early 2000s, various hemoglobin-based oxygen carriers were tested as potential blood substitutes. Products such as PolyHeme and HBOC-201 demonstrated the ability to transport oxygen but revealed significant drawbacks in human trials, including vasoconstriction, increased cardiovascular risk, and inflammatory responses.

These findings prevented regulatory approval and led to the discontinuation of most early programs. The Food and Drug Administration has since adopted a cautious stance, supporting research aimed at understanding and reducing toxicity risks.

Newer efforts such as ErythroMer, developed with support from the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense, seek to overcome earlier limitations. ErythroMer is a polymer-coated hemoglobin powder that can be freeze-dried, stored, and rapidly reconstituted, with promising animal study results showing improved oxygen delivery and lower toxicity. However, as of early 2026, no artificial blood product has entered advanced human trials or gained approval in the United States.

India focuses on strengthening traditional supply systems

India currently does not have active clinical trials involving artificial or universal blood substitutes. Earlier exploratory research did not develop into sustained programs due to cost constraints, regulatory complexity, and unresolved safety concerns.

India's strategy remains focused on expanding voluntary blood donation, strengthening blood bank infrastructure, and improving screening and storage systems to meet high demand from trauma care, maternal health, and surgery.

Artificial blood remains a topic of scientific interest rather than active clinical development.

Why artificial blood has been so challenging

Artificial blood research faces persistent hurdles, including toxicity of free hemoglobin outside red blood cells, ensuring safe oxygen delivery across varied conditions, and avoiding immune reactions. The hemoglobin vesicle approach pursued in Japan is promising because it closely mimics natural red cells, but larger trials are essential before widespread use.

A future still unwritten but filled with hope

Japan's trials suggest that a safe, type-neutral, shelf-stable blood substitute may be within reach, potentially transforming emergency care by the end of this decade. Research in the United States continues to refine next-generation approaches, while India focuses on optimizing existing systems. As challenges are addressed, a once fictional idea is becoming a tangible scientific reality with the potential to save millions of lives.

Disclaimer

The information presented in this article is for educational and informational purposes only. Artificial or universal blood products discussed here are experimental and are not approved for routine clinical use in most countries. Ongoing research and clinical trials are required to establish safety, effectiveness, and long-term outcomes. This article does not constitute medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment recommendations. Readers should consult qualified healthcare professionals for personal medical guidance and rely on approved medical practices and regulatory authorities for clinical decisions.



Personal finance insights: News & Features

● Dr. K C Gupta, YBB Personal Finance

CONTRARIAN INDICATORS

AAII Bull-Bear Spread +10.5% (above average)
CNN Fear & Greed Index 53 (neutral)
NYSE %Above 50-dMA 73.61% (overbought)
SP500 %Above 50-dMA 67.40% (positive)

ICI Fund Allocations (Cumulative), 11/30/25
OEFs & ETFs: Stocks 61.55%, Hybrids 4.05%, Bonds 17.36%, M-Mkt 17.04%

INTEREST RATES

CME FedWatch
Cycle peak 5.25-5.50%
Current 3.50-3.75%
FOMC 1/28/26+ hold
FOMC 3/18/26+ hold

Treasury
T-Bills 3-mo yield 3.70%, 1-yr 3.53%;
T-Notes 2-yr 3.60%, 5-yr 3.84%, 10-yr 4.24%; T-Bonds 30-yr 4.82%;
TIPS/Real yields 5-yr 1.38%, 10-yr 1.92%, 30-yr 2.56%
FRNs Index 3.623%

Bank Rates www.depositaccounts.com/

Stable-Value (SV) Rates, 1/1/26
TIAA Traditional Annuity (Accumulation) Rates
Restricted RC 5.00%, RA 4.75%
Flexible RCP 4.25%, SRA 4.00%, IRA-101110+ 3.50%
TSP G Fund 4.250% (previous 4.125%)

India Fear & Greed MMI 10.00 (extreme fear)
Weekly ETFs: INDA -3.05%, INDY -2.65%, EPI -3.04%, INDH -1.92%, SPY -0.35%

The data above are as of Sunday preceding the publication date.

ECONOMY

German Allianz & (Reliance) Jio Financial



Services (JFSL) have formed three 50-50 joint-ventures (JVs) for general insurance, life insurance & reinsurance. These JVs will offer digital interfaces & predictive data analytics (AI) to improve insurance experience. Some existing Allianz operations in India will be consolidated under these JVs.

Reliance Industries (Mukesh Ambani) has developed the "Jio" brand (jio means to live in Hindi) for several current or former (but spun off) operations - Jio Platforms (JPL; e-commerce holding company), Jio Financial Services (JFSL), Jio Infocomm (telecom), JioStar (media), etc.

Other multinational insurers in India include AIG (US), AXA (France), General Re (US), Lloyd's of London (UK), MetLife (US), Munich Re (Germany), Nippon Life (Japan), Prudential (UK), Sun Life (Canada), Swiss Re (Switzerland),

Zurich (Switzerland), etc.

World Bank regional classifications moved Pakistan out of South Asia (new SA - India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka) & into Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan & Pakistan (new MENAAP). These classifications are based on multiple considerations of geography, economics & cross-border activities. In some respects, Pakistan was #2 within the old-SA, but will be #1 in the new MENAAP.

SPECIAL TOPIC - INDIAN TRADE DEALS

US President TRUMP isn't happy with the progress of US-India trade negotiations & has threatened to raise tariffs on India even higher than the current 50% (base 25% + penalty 25%). There is also a bill moving through US Congress that will impose up to 500% tariffs & secondary sanctions on countries that aren't aligned with US foreign policies - called Donroe Doctrine by media after the old Monroe Doctrine. Additional Iran related tariffs have also been floated. India shouldn't be affected by Greenland related tariffs (now withdrawn).

Ignore the noise that US-India trade deal was almost done in 2025 pending only PM MODI's phone call to Trump. It was a one-sided term-sheet put out by US that India couldn't possibly accept. The leaders of countries don't talk to finalize deals until their teams have reached agreement on 99% of issues. Subsequently, a quick-staircase trade deal approach was mentioned by the US Commerce Secretary LUTNICK. So, there may have been a missed opportunity when US was looking for countries to announce deals in 2025, but India took the path of slow-

walking, stalling & challenging US on some other trade issues at WTO that were easily stonewalled.

The US Supremes have yet to rule on legality of tariffs under emergency orders. High tariffs on India & restrictions & high fees for H-1B visas have had the unintended effect of many US companies (Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, Microsoft, etc) continuing to invest in India through direct investments, joint-ventures & GCCs (global capability centers). Indian global exports are also rising. The exports to US haven't collapsed although several Indian industries have been hurt. But there wasn't any big shock to Indian economy, markets or exports.

India has taken steps such as tax reforms, relaxing rules for foreign investments, monetary easing (by RBI) & adjusting the RBI balance sheet. India has also been rushing trade deals with other countries in reaction to the US-India trade deal being in limbo & high US tariffs. Trade deals done in 2025: United Kingdom (CETA), Oman (CEPA), New Zealand (FTA), the EFTA bloc (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein; TEPA signed in 2024, effective in 2025)

Trade deals pending in 2026: Chile, EU (01/27/2026; "mother of all deals"), Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU - Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan), Kyrgyzstan, Mercosur trade bloc (South America - Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, etc), Mexico, US

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Everything you need to know about IUHS School of Medicine

● By: Dr. Avi Verma

1. Location: Our study centre is based on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts, but there is no requirement to travel there. The administrative office is in Winnipeg, Canada.

2. Program Structure & Exams:

- ▶ **Preclinical Phase (Years 1 & 2):** Fully online, divided into 11 study blocks. The first block is 12 weeks, the rest are 8 weeks each. After completion, students take the IUHS Exit Exam, and U.S. students also prepare for Step 1.
- ▶ **Clinical Phase (Years 3 & 4):** 80 weeks of rotations—48 weeks core, 32 weeks electives. Students then take the IUHS Exit Exam 2 and officially graduate. U.S. students also take Step 2 before graduation.

3. Assessments:

- ▶ End-of-block graded exams
- ▶ DxR Clinician virtual patient simulation graded assignments
- ▶ Non-graded DAR exams (at the end of Blocks 3, 6, 9) to identify

knowledge gaps.

- ▶ Lectorio self-assessments which are mandatory but not graded.

4. Teaching methods:

- ▶ **Systems-based learning:** Integrates anatomy, pathology, and pharmacology within each body system.
- ▶ **Problem-based learning:** Encourages critical thinking and challenges students to draw on all the knowledge they have acquired as they would in a real-life scenario when treating a patient.
- ▶ **Spaced repetition:** Reinforces knowledge through periodic review, enhancing long-term retention.

5. Clinical rotations:

- ▶ U.S. students can complete all rotations at the main affiliated hospital in Chicago, Illinois with additional sites in Texas, West Virginia, California, Nevada, Missouri and Arizona (subject to availability). Clinical rotation preparation starts around Block 8.
- ▶ Australian students have a



dedicated clinical director assisting them with the arrangements for clinical placements.

6. DxR Clinician: is a medical education software designed to help students develop clinical reasoning and diagnostic skills. It provides virtual patient cases that simulate real-life medical scenarios, allowing students to practice taking patient histories, ordering diagnostic tests, making differential diagnoses, and developing treatment plans.

Key Features:

- ▶ Interactive case-based learning with simulated patient encounters
- ▶ Clinical reasoning training to improve diagnostic accuracy
- ▶ Access to medical history, physical exams, and lab results
- ▶ Immediate feedback on decision-making and reasoning DxR Clinician is integrated into IUHS's problem-based learning (PBL) and case-based learning (CBL) curricula to enhance students' ability to apply medical knowledge in real world scenarios.

7. Live lectures: Learn from top-tier professors who also teach at prestigious universities through live, interactive lectures. Sessions are scheduled on weekdays, and if you miss one, you can easily catch up with recorded lectures available in the virtual library at your convenience.

8. Question and Concept Sessions:

In addition to live lectures, students can participate in weekly live Q&C sessions with the academic advisor for their current block of study. These sessions provide valuable support for students studying from home, fostering engagement with both peers and faculty.

9. Lectorio: is a digital learning platform providing medical education resources. It offers a comprehensive, AI-driven learning system designed to support medical education through high-quality video lectures, question banks, and advanced learning tools.

Key Features:

- ▶ Comprehensive Medical Curriculum Support – Covers

preclinical and clinical subjects aligned with USMLE, NBME, and other global medical exams.

- ▶ High-Quality Video Lectures – Taught by expert professors from leading medical institutions.
- ▶ AI-Powered Adaptive Learning – Personalized study recommendations based on student performance.
- ▶ Question Banks & Clinical Case Scenarios – USMLE-style questions, explanations, and performance tracking.
- ▶ Spaced Repetition & Smart Recall – Helps reinforce learning and improve long term retention.

Lectorio supplements the education delivered, improves student performance, and provide flexible, self-paced learning opportunities.

10. Mentorship: IUHS integrates the Integrated Clinical Medicine program into the preclinical years of the MD curriculum, allowing students to gain early exposure to clinical settings. This hands-on experience gives IUHS students a competitive edge over their peers from other universities.

IUHS students become comfortable and confident in a clinical environment before starting clinical rotations having developed the necessary clinical skills. Working alongside a local physician mentor, each student spends 20 hours per month shadowing and discussing cases with their mentor, a doctor from their own community. Under the guidance of IUHS's clinical director, students select a mentor who fits their needs and location. This early integration of clinical skills enhances learning, bridging the gap between theory and practice, and making the transition to full-time clinical training more seamless and rewarding.

11. Get in Touch: You can ask me anything about IUHS if you still have more questions!

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your dream of becoming a medical
doctor into reality.*

*For more information and to apply,
visit www.iuhs.edu*



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Winter dressing, rethought in color!



Winter is not over yet, and neither is the case for dressing well. While heavy coats and layers still rule the day, the late winter moment is quietly becoming the most interesting time to experiment with color. The Spring 2026 runways may be months away in real life, but they are already offering fresh ways to rethink winter staples.

This season, designers are pairing rich, saturated shades in ways that feel warm rather than flashy. Think deep purple with bright red, cobalt blue with Kelly green, or maroon softened by baby blue. These combinations bring energy to winter dressing without sacrificing sophistication.

The trick lies in texture and layering. Thick knits, structured wool coats, and corduroy trousers anchor bold colors and make them feel seasonally appropriate. Neutral bases like black, beige, gray,



and khaki keep these palettes grounded, allowing color to stand out without overwhelming the look.

Luxury houses leaned into restraint. Oversized coats carried the color story, while the rest of the outfit stayed streamlined. Accessories followed suit, often sticking to a single bold shade or a muted complement.

Even classic winter palettes are getting a subtle update. Navy with maroon feels fresher when worn in relaxed silhouettes. Soft pink paired with dark gray adds warmth without leaning springlike. Red remains a winter hero, especially when styled with earthy neutrals.

As winter winds down, color becomes the easiest way to refresh familiar pieces. No wardrobe overhaul required, just a confident mix and a good coat.

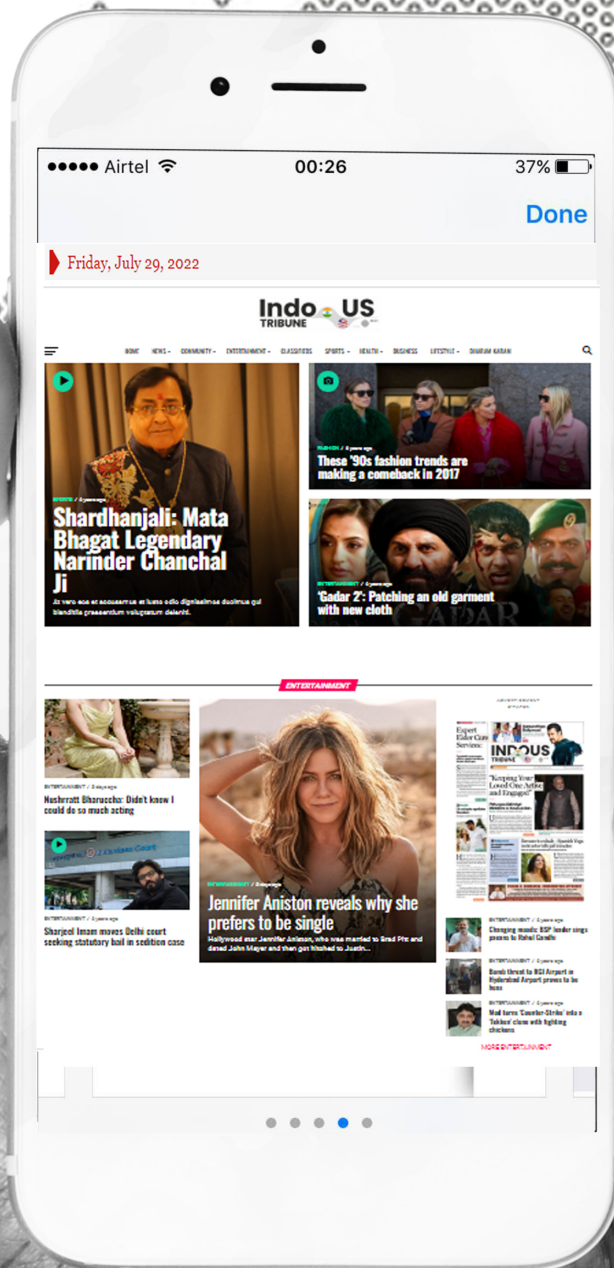


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