

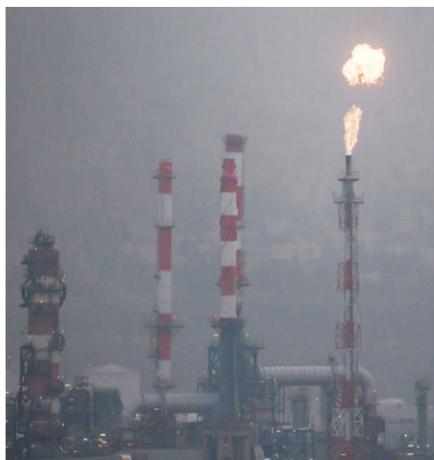
Iran says friendly nations including India allowed safe passage through Strait of Hormuz



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Iran has said it will allow vessels from five "friendly" countries, including India, Russia, China, Pakistan and Iraq, to pass safely through the Strait of Hormuz despite heightened tensions in West Asia. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the strategic waterway has not been fully closed, but restrictions apply to countries viewed as hostile or involved in the ongoing conflict. He said ships linked to the United States, Israel and certain Gulf states would not be permitted transit. Araghchi added that Iran has demonstrated control over the crucial maritime chokepoint and rejected claims that earlier warnings of a partial blockade were a bluff. The Strait of Hormuz remains one of the world's most important energy routes, carrying a large share of global oil shipments and making access a critical geopolitical issue.

## Trump extends pause on Iran energy strikes as fragile talks aim to prevent wider escalation



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump said on Thursday he would extend the pause on United States attacks targeting Iran's energy facilities by ten days, pushing the deadline to early April at Tehran's request. The original pause, announced on Monday, had been due to expire on Friday.

The decision comes as Washington signals interest in a negotiated end to the conflict that began on a Friday in late February with coordinated United States and Israeli strikes. Trump said discussions are progressing well, although Iran has publicly denied direct negotiations. The extension follows a period of heightened disruption in global energy markets, with Iran restricting shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

Oil prices rose sharply on Thursday, while major United States stock indexes declined. Trump also cited Iran's decision to allow several oil tankers to pass through the strait as a factor in granting additional time.



# IndoUS TRIBUNE

A VENTURE OF ANSAL MEDIA GROUP OF USA, LLC

VOL: 03 • ISSUE: 21 27 MARCH 2026 MIDWEST EDITION www.indoustribune.com We serve community first

## US survey ranking of Narendra Modi as top global leader draws BJP praise

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday welcomed a United States-based data analytics firm's survey that ranked Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the world's most popular leader. According to the Morning Consult Global Leader Approval Rating, conducted between March 2 and March 8, Modi secured a 68 percent approval rating, placing him ahead of global counterparts. Party leaders said the result reflects his long-standing leadership and governance record. Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said Modi has remained highly popular since his tenure as Gujarat chief minister and continues to enjoy global recognition. Uttar Pradesh minister Danish Azad Ansari said India's global standing has strengthened under Modi's leadership, while Bharatiya Janata Party parliamentarian Praveen Khandelwal said international surveys consistently reflect



his popularity. Maharashtra minister Girish Mahajan also congratulated the

prime minister, calling him the most widely admired global leader.

## Modi-Trump call spotlights west Asia crisis as leaders push for secure Strait of Hormuz and de-escalation

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United States President Donald Trump held a phone conversation on Tuesday focused on the escalating situation in West Asia, with particular emphasis on energy security and the strategic Strait of Hormuz. According to United States Ambassador to India Sergio Goro, the two leaders discussed the broader regional conflict and the importance of keeping the vital maritime route open and accessible amid rising tensions. Prime Minister Modi reiterated India's support

for de-escalation and an early restoration of peace, while underlining that the Strait of Hormuz remains crucial for global energy flows and stability.

The call comes against the backdrop of intensifying unrest in West Asia following recent strikes involving the United States and Israel on Iran, followed by retaliatory attacks across the region, which have rattled energy markets and heightened global concern. Both leaders agreed to remain in close contact as the situation develops and continues to impact international security and economic stability.



## India rejects Pakistan remarks on separatist case, calls it interference in internal matters



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India on Wednesday strongly rejected Pakistan's comments on the sentencing of Kashmiri separatist leader Asiya Andrabi, saying Islamabad has no authority to comment on India's internal or judicial matters. The Ministry of External Affairs said Pakistan's statement reflects its continued support for terrorism and urged it to address its own human rights record instead. The reaction came after a Delhi court sentenced Andrabi to life imprisonment for conspiracy and terrorism-related offences, along with prison terms for her associates. The court found that the banned organization she led promoted secessionist ideology and incited unlawful activities against the state. Prosecutors said evidence included speeches and online content glorifying militancy. The court observed that such actions threatened India's unity and integrity and warranted strict punishment. Andrabi was arrested in 2018 following a National Investigation Agency probe into alleged terror-linked activities.

### North Korea and Belarus sign pact to deepen cooperation amid shifting global alliances

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**N**orth Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko signed a friendship treaty in Pyongyang this week, strengthening ties across multiple sectors.

The agreement covers cooperation in diplomacy, agriculture, education, and public health, reflecting closer alignment between the two nations. Both leaders emphasized shared positions on international issues during the visit.

The meeting comes as both countries remain under international sanctions and maintain strong ties with Russia. North Korea previously supported Moscow's war efforts, while Belarus has played a strategic role since the invasion began in early 2022. The pact highlights evolving geopolitical alliances amid ongoing global tensions.

### IOC bans transgender women from female Olympic categories in sweeping policy change

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he International Olympic Committee has announced a ban on transgender women and differences in sex development athletes competing in female categories at future Olympic Games, including the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. The decision, confirmed Thursday, follows a policy shift led by IOC President Kirsty Coventry, who said the change aims to protect fairness and safety in women's sports. Athletes seeking to compete in female events will be required to undergo a one-time genetic screening to determine biological sex. The move has sparked debate across the sporting world, with supporters calling it necessary for competitive integrity and critics warning it could harm inclusion and athlete rights.

### Air Canada chief faces resignation calls after English-only crash condolence sparks backlash in Quebec

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**ir Canada chief executive Michael Rousseau has faced widespread calls to resign after delivering an English-only condolence message following a deadly plane crash in New York on Sunday. Quebec's legislature overwhelmingly passed a motion urging his removal, citing disrespect for the French language and grieving families. Rousseau apologized, saying his inability to speak French had distracted from the tragedy and pledging to continue improving his language skills. However, lawmakers rejected the apology as insufficient. The motion also called for future Air Canada leaders to be fluent in French. The controversy intensified in Canada's predominantly French-speaking province, where leaders emphasized the airline's Montreal base and the importance of bilingual leadership in a country with two official languages.

### Jaishankar engages Canada, Japan and South Korea as G7 ministers tackle global crises

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**E**xternal Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a series of bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Canada, South Korea and Japan on Thursday on the sidelines of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in France, discussing ways to strengthen cooperation and advance shared priorities. In talks with Canada's foreign minister, he focused on deepening bilateral engagement and exchanged views on developments in West Asia. He also met South Korea's foreign minister, expressing optimism about expanding the partnership between the two countries, and later held discussions with Japan's foreign minister on continued cooperation and regional issues.

Jaishankar's meetings came as G7 and partner nations gathered to address major global challenges, including the war in Ukraine and escalating tensions in West Asia. Discussions are expected to cover support for Ukraine, increased pressure on Russia, and efforts to ensure energy and capability assistance.

On West Asia, ministers are exploring

de-escalation pathways, protection of civilians, and the restoration of maritime and trade routes, alongside concerns over Iran's nuclear and ballistic programs. The agenda also includes instability in regions such as the Indo-Pacific, Sudan, Haiti, Gaza, Venezuela and Cuba, as well as coordinated action on drug trafficking and critical mineral supply chains.



### Zelensky deepens Gulf outreach as Ukraine trades drone expertise for critical defense support

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**U**krainian President Volodymyr Zelensky arrived in Saudi Arabia on Thursday for an unannounced visit, signaling Kyiv's expanding security role in the Middle East amid the Iran conflict. The trip follows his recent disclosure that Ukraine is assisting Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, and Jordan in countering drone attacks and strengthening air defense systems.

Kyiv, now a leading developer of cost-

effective drone interceptors shaped by its war with Russia, is offering battlefield-tested expertise in exchange for advanced air defense systems, particularly Patriot missiles. Zelensky has warned that U.S. redeployment of such systems to the Middle East could create shortages for Ukraine.

The visit comes as Ukraine also explores a potential role in securing the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global oil route. Meanwhile, European allies intensified efforts on Thursday to curb Russia's "shadow fleet" of tankers, which continue to fund Moscow's war through sanctions evasion.



### Jaishankar says India will deepen cooperation with Russia under BRICS chairmanship

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**E**xternal Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Monday that India, during its BRICS chairmanship, will work closely with Russia to address shared challenges through a humanity-first and people-centric approach, speaking virtually at a conference titled 'India and Russia: Towards a new bilateral agenda.' He reaffirmed the longstanding strategic partnership, noting that President Vladimir Putin's December

2025 visit to India expanded cooperation into areas such as skilled mobility, health, food safety, maritime cooperation, fertilizers, commerce, academia and media. Both countries aim to raise bilateral trade from 68.7 billion dollars to 100 billion dollars by 2030 and advance the Eurasian Economic Union free trade agreement while reducing barriers. He highlighted cultural ties, new consulates in Russia, and cooperation through BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Group of Twenty and the United Nations.

### Maduro challenges US charges in court as tensions mount over controversial detention



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**V**enezuelan President Nicolas Maduro appeared in a New York court on Thursday for his second hearing following his detention by United States forces earlier this year. His lawyers argued that restrictions preventing him from accessing Venezuelan state funds violate his constitutional rights and sought dismissal of charges including drug trafficking. The judge questioned the funding limitations but declined to dismiss the case. Maduro has maintained he was forcibly taken from Caracas on a Friday in early January and continues to assert he is Venezuela's legitimate leader. The arrest triggered international criticism. On Thursday, protesters gathered outside the courthouse demanding his release, as the case continues to draw global political attention.

### Human rights group flags rising abductions of minority girls after Hindu teenager goes missing in Sindh

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** human rights organisation has raised concern over the abduction of a 15-year-old Hindu girl in Pakistan's Sindh province, warning of a broader pattern of violence against minority communities. The Voice of Pakistan Minority said Miran Meghwar was allegedly taken from her home in Mirpurkhas by two identified individuals, and her whereabouts remain unknown despite a police case being registered. The group said the incident reflects the vulnerability of minority girls in rural Sindh and delays in justice. The Meghwar family has urged authorities and civil society to help secure her safe recovery. Locals have also demanded swift action, citing eroding trust in law enforcement. The group highlighted concerns over abductions, forced marriages and conversions of underage Hindu girls.

### Search underway for missing aid boats bound for Cuba as humanitarian concerns grow

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**M**exico's navy launched a search and rescue operation on Thursday for two sailboats carrying humanitarian aid to Cuba after they failed to arrive as scheduled. The vessels departed from Isla Mujeres last week with nine crew members on board and were expected to reach Havana earlier in the week. Authorities said there has been no communication from the boats. The mission is part of a grassroots initiative delivering food, medicine, and essential supplies to Cuba, which is facing severe economic hardship and power shortages. A third vessel from the convoy arrived safely on Tuesday. Officials are coordinating with international agencies as search efforts continue.

## Afghanistan releases American academic Dennis Coyle after year-long detention

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Afghan authorities have released American academic Dennis Coyle after holding him for more than a year, with officials saying the decision coincided with the Eid al-Fitr holiday marking the end of Ramadan. Coyle was detained in January 2025 on allegations of violating unspecified laws, though no formal charges were ever publicly disclosed. Afghanistan's Taliban-run foreign ministry said his release followed an appeal from his family and a ruling that his time in custody was sufficient. Officials also said mediation efforts by the United Arab Emirates and Qatar helped facilitate the process. Coyle has since arrived in the United States and reunited with his family. The case comes amid ongoing tensions between Washington and Kabul over allegations of wrongful detention, which Afghan authorities deny, insisting arrests are carried out under domestic law.

## Russia and Ukraine claim gains on frontline as stalled peace efforts face renewed pressure

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Russia and Ukraine both reported fresh battlefield gains on Thursday, underscoring the continuing intensity of fighting along the eastern front. Russia's Defense Ministry said its forces captured a village in the Kharkiv region, while Ukrainian military units claimed they had retaken territory in the Dnipropetrovsk region. The competing accounts could not be independently verified.

The developments come as Ukraine prepares for a potential new Russian

offensive in the spring, amid signs that United States backed peace efforts are faltering. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Wednesday that proposed security guarantees may be tied to territorial concessions in the Donbas region.

Fighting remains concentrated along a heavily fortified front line stretching hundreds of miles, with both sides seeking incremental advances. Recent Ukrainian gains in southern sectors have raised hopes in Kyiv, but the broader conflict remains unresolved with no immediate breakthrough in diplomacy.



## Australia warns fuel supply pressures may worsen in coming months

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has warned that while fuel supply remains stable in the short term, conditions are expected to become more difficult in the coming months. Speaking in Canberra on Thursday, he said the government is working on a comprehensive plan to address supply pressures and is engaging with regional partners, including Malaysia and Southeast Asian nations. Energy Minister Chris Bowen said current supplies of petrol, diesel, and oil remain unchanged, but acknowledged shortages in some regional areas due to rising demand. The government has also called a national cabinet meeting to prepare for potential disruptions. Officials noted that Australia relies heavily on imported fuel, with limited domestic refining capacity, making it vulnerable to global supply shocks. Opposition leaders have urged temporary tax relief on fuel to ease cost pressures.

## Trump's signature to appear on paper currency in a first for a sitting president

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

President Donald Trump's signature will appear on U.S. dollar bills, marking the first time a sitting president's signature has been included on paper currency. The Treasury Department announced the decision on Thursday, saying it is part of commemorations for the nation's 250th anniversary. Traditionally, U.S. currency bears the signatures of the treasury secretary and the treasurer. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent praised the move as recognition of Trump's economic leadership. The change comes as inflation and living costs remain major voter concerns. It also follows other efforts to feature Trump on commemorative coins and government branding. Officials say the currency redesign still requires standard approvals before release.

## Court rulings against Meta and Google challenge legal shield in growing tech liability battle

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Juries in two United States cases this week found Meta and Google liable for harm caused to young users, setting up a significant legal challenge to long standing protections for technology companies. On Wednesday in California, a jury awarded \$6 million to a plaintiff who linked social media use to mental health issues. On Tuesday, another jury ordered Meta to pay \$375 million in a separate case involving child safety failures. The rulings question the scope of Section 230, a law that has historically shielded platforms from liability for user generated content. Both companies said they will appeal, with the outcomes likely to influence thousands of similar lawsuits.



## Rapper-turned-politician Balendra Shah takes oath as Nepal's youngest prime minister

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Rapper-turned-politician Balendra Shah was sworn in as the prime minister of Nepal on Friday, marking a major political shift following months of unrest and youth-led protests. The 35-year-old leader of the Rastriya Swatantra Party took the oath of office at the President's Office in Sheetal Niwas in Kathmandu on Friday. He was appointed as Nepal's forty-seventh prime minister by President Ram Chandra Paudel under Article 76 (1) of the Constitution. Shah becomes the youngest prime minister in decades and the first from the Madhes region to hold the position. His party won 182 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives in the March 5 elections, securing a clear majority. The polls followed the September 2025 Gen Z protests that led to the ouster of K. P. Sharma Oli's government. The ceremony included Hindu and Buddhist rituals, with priests and monks chanting hymns, conch shells being blown, and the presence of diplomats and senior officials.

## Hawaii flooding forces mass evacuations as storms batter Oahu and Maui

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

More than 5,500 people have been evacuated as the Hawaiian island of Oahu experienced its worst flooding in over two decades, authorities said on Saturday. Heavy rain and thunderstorms continued to lash Hawaii, with officials warning that Oahu and Maui County remain at high risk. Hawaii Governor Josh Green said additional rainfall of up to six inches was expected on Oahu over the weekend, while some areas of Maui could see up to twelve inches. More than 230 people have been rescued, and no fatalities have been reported so far, though several serious injuries have occurred. Officials also warned that a 120-year-old dam on Oahu was at risk of imminent failure, prompting evacuation orders downstream. The National Guard has been deployed to assist emergency operations.

## Deported Venezuelans allege torture and abuse in El Salvador prison as rights case escalates

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A group of Venezuelan migrants deported by the United States has filed a petition accusing El Salvador of systemic human rights abuses inside its notorious Cecot mega-prison. The case, submitted this week to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, details allegations of beatings, sexual assault, sleep deprivation, and medical neglect during their detention. The 18 men were among hundreds transferred to the facility in 2025 without formal charges. Many claim they were wrongly labeled as gang members, citing weak evidence such as tattoos. Testimonies describe prolonged confinement in windowless cells, limited access to food and water, and constant exposure to bright lights.

Several detainees reported lasting



physical and psychological trauma after their release months later. Rights groups argue that both U.S. and Salvadoran authorities must be held accountable for the transfers and alleged abuses. The petition seeks reparations, public acknowledgment, and guarantees against similar actions in the future.

## European Union to challenge China's trade practices at World Trade Organization meeting

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The European Union is set to raise concerns over China's trade practices at a World Trade Organization meeting this week, citing the impact of cheap imports on European industry. EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic said the bloc will push for reforms to address global overcapacity and create a more balanced trading system. He argued that China's rapid economic rise has significantly altered global trade dynamics, requiring updated rules and stronger enforcement. The European Union has reported a widening trade deficit with China, driven by a surge in low-cost exports. Officials also highlighted disruptions caused by global tariffs and shifting trade flows.



**Published Weekly by:**  
Ansal Media Group  
of USA, LLC

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# India's calculated neutrality amid the West Asia conflict



**Dr. Avi Verma**

The West Asia conflict, triggered by U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iranian facilities in late February 2026, has rapidly escalated into a widening geopolitical crisis with serious regional and global consequences. Rising civilian casualties, damage to critical infrastructure, and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz — a key global energy corridor — have fueled market volatility, driving oil prices higher and deepening concerns across import-dependent economies, including India.

**Peace talks: Between rhetoric and reality**

Diplomatic efforts remain fluid and uncertain. U.S. officials, including former President Donald Trump, have spoken about a proposed 15-point ceasefire and broader peace framework aimed at de-escalation and protection of maritime trade routes. However, Iran has firmly denied that formal negotiations are underway, insisting that any future dialogue must be based on strict conditions, including full respect for its sovereignty. This gap between public messaging and political reality underscores the fragility of current peace efforts. At the same time, regional players such as Pakistan have stepped in as intermediaries, facilitating backchannel communications between involved parties. Their role highlights how certain states gain strategic relevance by acting as informal conduits during high-stakes conflicts.



**India's neutrality: Principle over opportunism**

From India's perspective, the crisis demands caution rather than alignment. New Delhi has adopted a position of principled neutrality, consistently calling for de-escalation, dialogue, and restraint without taking sides in the conflict. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has made India's stance explicit, stating that the country will not act as a "go-between" in negotiations, rejecting transactional mediation roles that compromise strategic credibility. This approach reflects a deliberate calculation to preserve balanced relations with the United States, Israel, Gulf partners, and Iran, all of which are important to India's energy security and broader foreign policy interests.

**Pakistan versus India: Contrasting diplomatic roles**

Pakistan's emergence as a backchannel facilitator underscores its longstanding positioning as an intermediary in U.S.–Iran communication channels. While this places Islamabad briefly in the diplomatic spotlight, India has chosen restraint over visibility. By avoiding immediate mediation, India seeks to protect long-term diplomatic capital rather than engage in short-term transactional influence. This ensures that its relationships with key global and regional partners remain stable and uncompromised.

**Strategic implications for India**  
**Potential gains:**

- ▶ Sustained credibility with competing global

and regional powers

- ▶ Greater flexibility to participate meaningfully when formal negotiations mature

**Key risks:**

- ▶ Exposure to volatile energy markets and regional instability
- ▶ Perception of reduced diplomatic activism, partly offset by its consistent neutrality
- ▶ India's approach reflects a broader strategy rooted in consistency and long-term positioning rather than reactive diplomacy.

**Patience as a strategic asset**

India's refusal to assume an immediate mediator role should not be interpreted as disengagement. Instead, it reflects a calibrated strategy that balances concern for regional stability with the need to preserve trust across multiple stakeholders. By maintaining principled neutrality while advocating dialogue and restraint, India positions itself as a credible and steady voice in an increasingly fragmented geopolitical landscape. In a crisis defined by urgency and competing narratives, India's strategy is built on patience. When conditions eventually align for substantive negotiations, its restrained yet consistent diplomacy is likely to carry lasting influence.

Best Regards,  
Dr. Avi Verma.  
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IndoUS Tribune

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## Russia reportedly seeks oligarch funding as war costs strain national budget

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**R**ussian President Vladimir Putin has reportedly asked wealthy oligarchs to contribute to the country's defense budget as the war in Ukraine continues into its fourth year. According to reports on Thursday, at least two business leaders indicated willingness to support military financing after discussions with the Kremlin. Russia's defense spending has surged, while sanctions and discounted energy exports have widened fiscal pressure. Officials are also considering additional taxes and revenue measures to stabilize the economy. The government has already increased borrowing and adjusted tax policies in recent years. Despite financial strain, Putin is expected to continue military operations until Russia secures remaining objectives in eastern Ukraine's Donbas region.

## Jewish volunteer ambulances set on fire in London in apparent antisemitic attack

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**B**ritish police are investigating an arson attack on ambulances belonging to a Jewish volunteer emergency service in north London as a suspected antisemitic hate crime. The incident took place early Monday in Golders Green, an area with a large Jewish community. CCTV footage reportedly shows three hooded individuals pouring accelerant onto the vehicles before setting them on fire and fleeing the scene. Four ambulances were damaged, and explosions from gas cylinders caused additional destruction to nearby buildings. No injuries were reported. Counterterrorism police are leading the investigation and are also examining a possible online claim of responsibility. Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the attack as deeply disturbing and said antisemitism has no place in society. Community leaders warned of a rise in antisemitic incidents across the United Kingdom since the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

## Brussels launches investigation into Snapchat over child safety concerns

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**B**russels has opened a formal investigation into Snapchat over concerns that the social messaging platform may be exposing children to grooming, sexual exploitation, and other online criminal activity. The European Commission said it suspects the app is being misused by adults posing as minors to target children, and that it may also be enabling access to drugs and age-restricted products such as alcohol and vaping devices. Regulators also questioned whether Snapchat is effectively enforcing its minimum age requirement of 13 and whether its safety tools are sufficiently clear and accessible. In a separate action on Thursday, the commission also targeted four pornography websites for failing to prevent minors from accessing adult content. Both probes fall under the European Union's Digital Services Act, which allows penalties of up to six percent of global turnover.

## Europe raises alarm over alleged Russian support to Iran ahead of critical G7 talks

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**E**uropean officials said on Thursday they will press the United States over allegations that Russia is supporting Iran in targeting American forces in the Middle East conflict. The issue is expected to feature prominently during discussions on Friday at the Group of Seven foreign ministers meeting in France, attended by Secretary of State Marco Rubio. European leaders cited intelligence suggesting Russia has provided satellite imagery and drone related assistance to Tehran, claims that Moscow has denied. The concern comes as the conflict, which began on a Friday in late February, continues to escalate and disrupt global energy flows. Officials warned that the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East are



increasingly interconnected, requiring coordinated international pressure. European diplomats also signaled the need for greater clarity from Washington on its military strategy and diplomatic efforts as tensions continue to strain global alliances.

## Finland court ruling on lawmaker's remarks ignites debate over free speech and hate laws

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**F**inland's Supreme Court on Thursday convicted Päivi Räsänen of inciting hatred over statements describing homosexuality as a "developmental disorder." The 3-2 ruling overturned earlier lower court acquittals and fined her about \$1,950 for republishing the remarks on social media and her website in recent years. Räsänen, a Christian Democrat, said she may appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. The case drew support from the U.S.-based Alliance Defending Freedom, which framed it as a free speech issue. The verdict prompted criticism from several Finnish government ministers, who called for clearer laws on speech restrictions. However, Prime Minister



Petteri Orpo declined to comment on the ruling, emphasizing that politicians should not interfere in judicial decisions.

## Drone incursions in Baltics spark security concerns amid regional tensions with Russia

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**E**stonia and Latvia reported separate drone-related incidents on Wednesday, raising fresh security concerns along their borders with Russia. Latvian authorities said a drone entered their airspace from Russia and later crashed in the Kraslava region, with wreckage recovered and no casualties reported. Officials confirmed that investigations are ongoing, with initial assessments suggesting possible links to the wider regional conflict.

In Estonia, a drone reportedly struck the chimney of the Auvere Power Plant near Narva, close to the Russian border, though no major damage or injuries occurred. Estonia's Internal Security Service said another drone also fell in Latvia, describing the incidents as consequences of Russia's ongoing military actions. Baltic officials said there was no immediate threat to civilians or critical infrastructure but warned of increasing risks from cross-border aerial activity and pledged to strengthen airspace monitoring and response capabilities.

## United States signals shift in NATO relations and Ukraine military support

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he United States has signaled a shift in its global military priorities, raising concerns among NATO allies while indicating a possible redeployment of resources from Ukraine to the Middle East. President Donald Trump criticized NATO members for not providing sufficient support during recent tensions involving Iran, calling the alliance ineffective and warning that Washington would remember the lack

of assistance. He also suggested that U.S. military stockpiles allow flexibility to shift equipment between regions. Officials said the United States continues to support Ukraine but is increasingly selling weapons through NATO rather than supplying them directly. Defense and State Department officials described the Iran operation as part of a broader effort to address global security threats. The remarks reflect a potential realignment of U.S. strategic focus toward the Middle East while reassessing commitments in Europe.

## Danish election ends in deadlock as prime minister's future hangs in balance



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**D**enmark's parliamentary election held on Tuesday produced an inconclusive result, leaving Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen's political future uncertain. Her center-left Social Democrats lost support compared with the 2022 vote, while neither the left-leaning nor right-leaning blocs secured a majority in the 179-seat parliament. Attention has now shifted to centrist party leader Lars Løkke Rasmussen, whose small Moderate party holds a key swing position that could determine whether Frederiksen forms a third government. Frederiksen said she is ready to continue leading, arguing that Denmark needs stable governance amid global instability. Opposition figures, however, signaled resistance to another coalition with her party. The result reflects voter concern over domestic issues such as inflation and pensions, even as foreign policy tensions, including disputes involving the United States and Greenland, played a lesser role in the campaign.

## China's dominance in rare earth supply chains sparks US national security alarm



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**U**nited States lawmakers and experts have warned that heavy dependence on foreign critical minerals, particularly from China, poses a major national security risk and requires urgent supply chain reform. At a House subcommittee hearing, lawmakers highlighted vulnerabilities in access to minerals such as lithium, copper and rare earth elements, which are essential for defense systems, electronics and clean energy technologies. Officials said the United States imports a significant share of key minerals and is fully dependent on external sources for several of them, while China controls much of global processing capacity. Experts told the panel that China has effectively gained leverage over global supply chains, creating potential choke points during crises. Witnesses urged faster development of domestic mining, processing and allied cooperation to reduce risks. They also called for improved data, streamlined permitting and stronger industrial policy. Despite differences, lawmakers agreed that securing mineral supply chains is essential for economic growth and military readiness.

**India and Cambodia expand cooperation across culture, trade, and capacity building**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and Cambodia held a series of high-level meetings from Saturday to Monday in Phnom Penh, focusing on expanding cooperation across trade, culture, and capacity building. Ministry of External Affairs Secretary East P Kumaran met Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Prak Sokhonn and discussed strengthening multifaceted bilateral ties. He also met Culture Minister Phoeurng Sackona, reviewing heritage conservation projects, including ongoing restoration work at Angkor Wat and Ta Prohm temples led by India's Archaeological Survey.

Kumaran visited key cultural sites and a textile museum highlighting shared civilisational heritage. Earlier, he met senior Cambodian officials to review training programs for diplomats and explore deeper collaboration in investment and rural development. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening people-to-people ties and expanding development partnerships.

**India highlights South-South cooperation for science and technology partnerships**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India on Tuesday reaffirmed its commitment to South-South cooperation, with Ministry of External Affairs Secretary South Neena Malhotra emphasizing collaboration in science and technology with Global South partners. Speaking at a session in New Delhi with diplomats, she highlighted India's focus on affordable healthcare, smart agriculture, and sustainable water and marine resource management. The initiative, organized with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, aims to develop scalable solutions for shared development challenges. Malhotra said India seeks to expand innovation-driven partnerships that benefit developing countries. The event also reflected India's broader global approach, with leadership stressing the importance of ensuring that technological advances and innovation support wider regional development and strengthen cooperation across the Global South.

**India and Iceland advance parliamentary and economic cooperation in Reykjavik talks**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and Iceland discussed strengthening bilateral ties during a series of meetings in Reykjavik on Monday and Tuesday, focusing on parliamentary exchanges, trade, and cooperation in renewable energy. Secretary West in the Ministry of External Affairs Sibi George met Icelandic Parliament Speaker Thorunn Sveinbjarnardottir on Tuesday, where both sides explored issues of mutual interest across bilateral, regional, and multilateral platforms, with emphasis on strengthening parliamentary engagement.

On Monday, the two countries held the fourth Foreign Office Consultations, co-chaired by Sibi George and Iceland's Permanent Secretary of State Martin Eyjólfsson. They reviewed the full scope of relations and agreed to expand cooperation in trade and investment, geothermal energy, fisheries, and people-to-people ties. Officials highlighted progress under the



India-European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement and discussed global and regional developments. Earlier, Sibi George also met Iceland's Foreign Minister Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir to review growing cooperation in clean energy and other key sectors.

**India and Japan deepen strategic partnership through Northeast connectivity push**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Northeast India has emerged as a key focus area in India-Japan cooperation, aligning India's Act East Policy with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision, according to a report published on Tuesday. The region is being developed as a strategic hub for connectivity, trade, and regional integration, supported by Japanese investment and infrastructure projects. Japan has invested more than \$2 billion across multiple initiatives, including road networks, highway upgrades, and major bridge projects such as the Dhubri-Phulbari Bridge linking Assam and Meghalaya.

The partnership also includes projects like the Gelephu-Dalu Corridor connecting Bhutan, India, and Bangladesh, aimed at boosting regional trade links. Both countries are working through initiatives such as the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative to strengthen economic security in critical



sectors. The report highlighted that cooperation in defence technology, green energy, and expanded people-to-people exchanges is expected to further reinforce India-Japan ties as key Indo-Pacific partners.

**INS Trikand visit strengthens India-Seychelles defence cooperation with exercise Lamitiye**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Indian Navy warship INS Trikand completed a port visit to Seychelles from Sunday to Thursday, reinforcing defence cooperation between the two countries through joint training and operational engagement. During the visit, the ship's commanding officer met senior Seychelles officials and India's high commissioner, and essential spares were handed over to local authorities as part of ongoing support.

The frigate also participated in the first tri-services edition of Exercise Lamitiye 2026, involving the Indian Army, Air Force, Navy, and Seychelles Defence Forces. Activities included boarding drills, maritime operations, and coordinated landing exercises on Praslin Island. Senior Seychelles defence officials observed the drills, which focused on improving interoperability and maritime readiness. The exercise



reflects growing strategic ties and India's commitment to security cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

**India and United Kingdom advance defence cooperation in training and intelligence**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

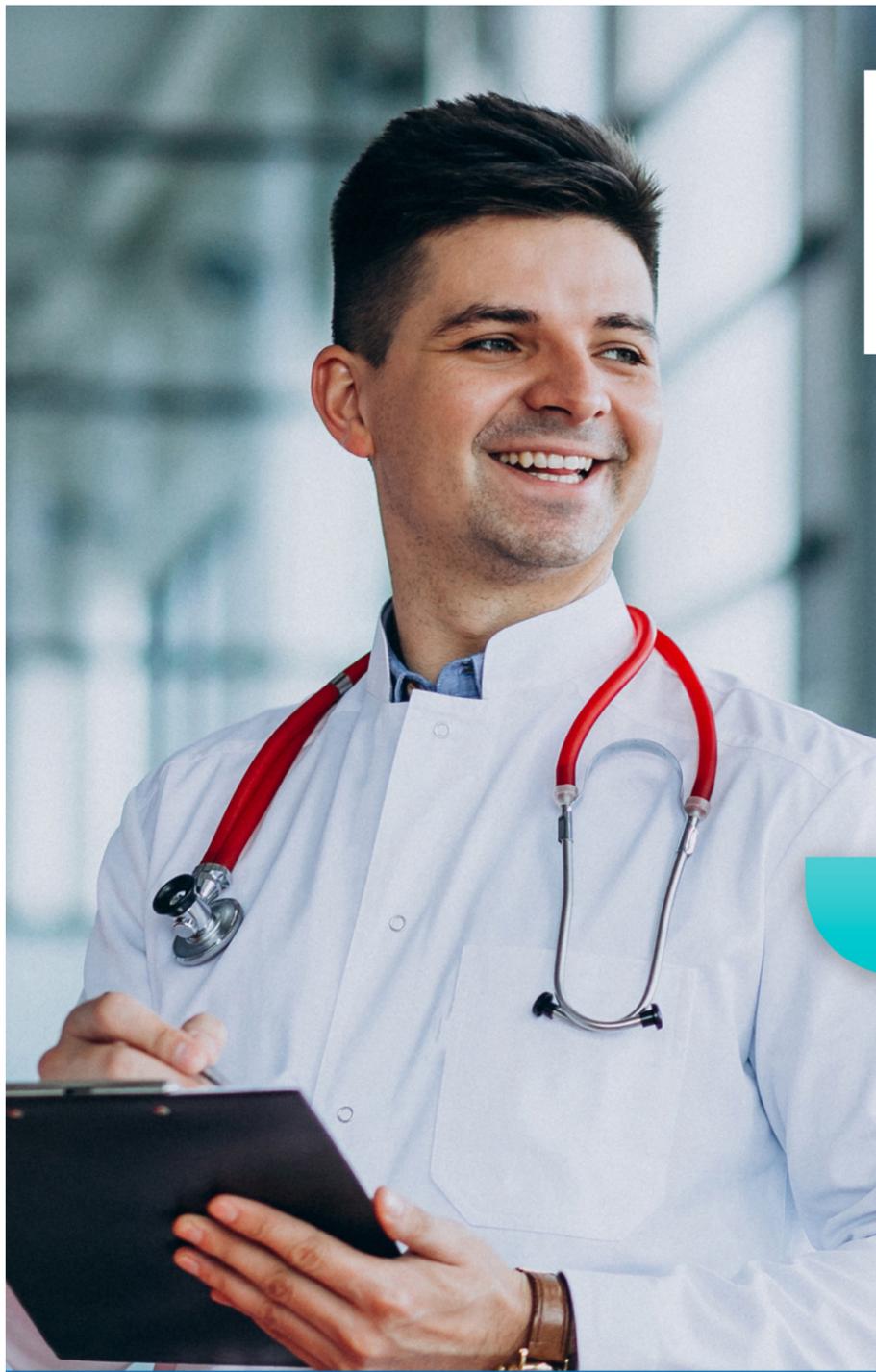
Senior defence officials from India and the United Kingdom met in New Delhi on Tuesday to review progress in military cooperation, focusing on training exchanges, intelligence sharing, and joint operational engagement. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan held discussions with Royal Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal Sir Harvey Smyth during his official visit. Both sides highlighted progress made during recent military subgroup meetings and expressed commitment to deepening interoperability between their armed forces. The meeting was attended by senior diplomatic and military officials from both countries. Earlier engagements included discussions on enhancing air force coordination and strengthening operational ties. Both nations reaffirmed their shared goal of building a future-ready defence partnership with expanded collaboration across key strategic domains.

**India and Kazakhstan explore deeper defence ties in niche security areas**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India and Kazakhstan discussed expanding defence cooperation in New Delhi on Wednesday, focusing on emerging security challenges and specialized domains such as counter-unmanned aerial systems and training exchanges. Chief of Integrated Defence Staff Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit met Kazakhstan's Deputy Defence Minister Major General Zhazykbayev Shaikh-Khassan, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to strengthening military ties. The Kazakh official also held separate discussions with the Chief of Army Staff earlier in the week, where both armies explored deeper engagement and professional collaboration. Relations between the two countries, established in the early nineteen nineties, are built on longstanding historical ties and defence cooperation agreements. Both sides emphasized continued engagement through joint training, exchanges, and capacity building initiatives to enhance strategic partnership.



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**Trump administration targets medical school admissions in new discrimination probe**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Trump administration on Thursday opened investigations into admissions policies at several major United States medical schools over possible race-based discrimination. The review includes Ohio State University, the University of California, San Diego, and Stanford University. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhillon said the probes examine whether admissions practices violate federal anti-discrimination laws. Schools have been asked to submit seven years of applicant data, including test scores, zip codes, diversity-related internal communications, and correspondence with pharmaceutical companies. The deadline for submission is April 24.

**CDC reports COVID-19 variant BA.3.2 detected across multiple US states**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that a COVID-19 variant known as BA.3.2 has been detected in twenty-five US states through clinical samples, wastewater testing, and traveler screenings. The variant has also been identified in more than twenty countries, according to a March report. Officials said BA.3.2 contains spike protein mutations that may allow some immune evasion, but its severity is not yet known. The CDC emphasized that COVID-19 activity in the United States remains low, with declining hospitalizations and respiratory illness levels. Health officials said continued monitoring is needed to assess whether the variant could affect future seasonal waves or vaccine effectiveness.

**Minnesota election office subpoenaed in federal probe into voter eligibility**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**M**innesota's Secretary of State office has received a grand jury subpoena as part of a federal criminal investigation into whether non-citizens are registered or have voted, according to sources. The Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security are leading the probe, which seeks records linked to more than 125 individuals. No charges have been filed. The case is separate from a civil lawsuit seeking broader voter registration data from Minnesota and other states. The state office did not confirm the subpoena but said it is aware of reports. The review follows a March 2025 directive from President Trump ordering scrutiny of voter rolls nationwide.

**Senate passes limited homeland security funding bill to end 40-day shutdown**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Senate on early Friday unanimously approved a measure to reopen most of the Department of Homeland Security after a 40-day government shutdown, but excluded funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention and deportation operations and parts of Customs and Border Protection. The vote came after a marathon overnight session and extended bipartisan negotiations that lasted several weeks. The package passed by voice vote at about 2:20 a.m. and now heads to the House, where its fate remains uncertain.

The shutdown has left many Transportation Security Administration employees unpaid, causing staffing shortages and airport delays of up to four hours. Hours before the vote, President



Donald Trump announced he would order immediate pay for Transportation Security Administration officers, a move that could ease disruptions. Senate leaders said the agreement would reopen most of the government, while Democrats insisted immigration enforcement reforms remain unresolved.

Republicans and Democrats remain divided over funding for enforcement agencies, with further House consideration expected later in the week.

**Trump swears in Markwayne Mullin as Homeland Security chief, signals tougher immigration push**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**D**onald Trump on Wednesday swore in Markwayne Mullin as Secretary of Homeland Security at the White House, calling him a "great American patriot" and reaffirming a hardline stance on immigration. Trump praised Mullin's congressional record and his role in advancing border security measures, saying he had been a key partner in tackling migrant crime and illegal drugs. Mullin, who has served in Congress for 13 years, becomes the first member of the Cherokee Nation to hold a Cabinet post. Trump also highlighted his business background and sports career.



The ceremony was attended by senior officials and family members. Trump used the occasion to criticize Democrats over funding disputes and immigration policies, while pledging continued deportation efforts and stricter border enforcement under Mullin's leadership.

**Federal judge temporarily blocks Pentagon action against Anthropic in AI dispute**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**federal judge in California on Thursday temporarily blocked enforcement actions against Anthropic while its lawsuit against the Department of Defense proceeds, issuing a one-week stay. Judge Rita Lin granted the injunction as the Northern District of California reviews claims that the government violated Anthropic's First Amendment rights

by labeling it a supply chain risk and restricting use of its Claude artificial intelligence system.

The dispute stems from Anthropic's refusal to allow its model to be used in fully autonomous weapons or domestic surveillance. The judge suggested the government may have acted without sufficient national security justification and questioned whether the designation was punitive rather than protective.

**Justice Department and Michael Flynn reach undisclosed settlement in long legal fight**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Department of Justice and former national security adviser Michael Flynn reached an undisclosed financial settlement on Wednesday, ending a long-running dispute tied to the Russia investigation. Flynn had sought fifty million dollars in damages, but the final agreement did not disclose a payout amount.

The case stemmed from the FBI's Crossfire Hurricane investigation into alleged ties between the Trump campaign and Russia during the twenty sixteen election. Flynn claimed he was wrongfully targeted for politically motivated actions. A Justice Department spokesperson said the settlement addresses what it described as a historic misuse of federal authority. Flynn's legal team called the outcome a partial correction of injustice.

**DOJ sues SeaWorld parent over walker ban, alleges disability discrimination**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Department of Justice on Thursday filed a lawsuit against United Parks and Resorts, the parent company of SeaWorld and Busch Gardens, alleging that its ban on wheeled walkers with seats violates federal disability rights law. The civil rights division asked for a jury trial in Orlando, arguing the policy discriminates against visitors with mobility disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The complaint also seeks policy changes and financial damages for guests who were denied entry with rollators since the ban was introduced in November at several parks in Orlando and Tampa. The department said some visitors, including military veterans, were stopped at security checkpoints and refused access. United Parks and Resorts rejected the allegations, saying the restriction was introduced after repeated safety incidents and that alternative mobility options are provided at no cost. The case is pending in federal court.

**About 300 protesters rally outside Houston energy conference**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**bout 300 protesters gathered on Monday outside a hotel hosting the CERAWEEK energy conference, chanting slogans demanding cleaner air and criticizing large fossil fuel companies. The demonstration took place as global energy executives and government officials, including United States Energy Secretary Chris Wright and Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, attended the annual industry event. Protesters from dozens of organizations accused the energy sector of contributing to pollution and public health concerns, saying communities are bearing the consequences of heavy industrial activity. Organizers said the rally was aimed at pressuring industry leaders gathered inside the conference venue. Police officers were deployed around the area to manage crowds as attendees entered the building. The conference brings together major oil, gas and power executives from around the world to discuss energy markets and policy trends.

**US judge blocks Trump administration policy allowing detention of refugees after one year**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**federal judge in Boston on Monday blocked a Trump administration policy that would have allowed detention of refugees who had lived in the United States for more than one year without obtaining green cards. Judge Richard Stearns ruled that the policy misinterpreted immigration law and could not be enforced. The decision came after lawsuits from refugees and advocacy groups arguing the rule could have affected more than 100,000 people. The policy, part of an initiative called Operation Parris, had instructed immigration authorities to detain refugees still awaiting permanent residency status. The ruling halts enforcement pending further proceedings.

Friday, 27 March 2026

### New Jersey federal court ends standoff by appointing career prosecutor as US attorney

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Federal judges in New Jersey on Monday appointed veteran prosecutor Robert Frazer as the state's new United States attorney, with agreement from President Donald Trump's administration, ending a months-long dispute that had disrupted criminal cases. Frazer, a 20-year veteran of the office, was chosen after negotiations between the district court and the Justice Department. The position had been vacant after courts ruled the administration improperly extended former Trump lawyer Alina Habba's interim tenure. A subsequent attempt to divide leadership among three officials was also struck down. The appointment restores stability to ongoing prosecutions in the state.

### US aviation regulator probes close call between United jet and army helicopter in California

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Federal Aviation Administration said on Thursday it is investigating a near collision between a United Airlines passenger jet and a United States Army Black Hawk helicopter near John Wayne Airport in California on Tuesday night. The United Boeing 737, arriving from San Francisco, was on final approach when the helicopter crossed its path, with both aircraft reportedly separated by about 525 feet vertically. The plane carried 162 passengers and six crew members and landed safely after pilots responded to a cockpit alert. The California Army National Guard said the helicopter was on a routine training flight.

### Elon Musk challenges jury verdict in Twitter investor fraud case



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Elon Musk's legal team has challenged a federal jury verdict that found him liable for misleading Twitter investors before his acquisition of the company, arguing that the trial process was compromised. In a letter to the judge, Musk's attorney said the jury's damages calculations improperly highlighted the figure four dollars and twenty cents in blue ink, calling it a symbolic reference that undermined fairness. The jury had ruled that Musk's 2022 posts about fake accounts on Twitter influenced the company's stock value, though it rejected some broader fraud claims. Musk's lawyers have vowed to appeal, calling the outcome a miscarriage of justice. Investors argue Musk intentionally weakened Twitter's market value to lower his purchase price. The final damages will be determined in a separate claims process that could reach billions of dollars.

### Senate clash erupts as Republicans call Trump probe a 'modern Watergate'

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A heated Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing on Tuesday saw Republicans accuse federal investigators of abusing power in probes involving Donald Trump, calling it a "modern Watergate." Senator Ted Cruz alleged the Justice Department authorized sweeping surveillance, including subpoenas for thousands of communications and records tied to Republican figures.

Republicans claimed investigators accessed phone data of lawmakers and political allies, raising concerns about overreach. Democrats rejected the allegations, calling the claims politically motivated and defending the probes as standard law enforcement practice. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse said subpoenas for phone records are routine



in criminal investigations.

Former federal officials testifying at the hearing denied any political bias, emphasizing that investigations are driven by evidence. The clash underscored deep partisan divisions over the legitimacy of the Trump-related inquiries.

### Trump predicts historic midterm win as he attacks Democrats and touts record

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Donald Trump on Wednesday projected a sweeping Republican victory in upcoming midterm elections while sharply criticizing Democrats during a House Republican dinner in Washington. He claimed Republicans would "defy history" and secure a major mandate, citing past electoral wins and strong fundraising, including \$37 million raised at the event.

Trump highlighted his administration's policies on immigration, crime, and the economy, claiming reduced illegal entries and improved enforcement at airports. He also pointed to military actions against Iran and said Tehran was seeking negotiations.



The president accused Democrats of blocking key legislation on border security and voter identification, and framed the election as a referendum on his leadership. The midterms later this year will determine control of Congress and shape future policy direction.

### Epstein survivors sue Trump administration and Google over alleged release of private data

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A group of survivors of Jeffrey Epstein has filed a class action lawsuit against the Trump administration and Google, alleging that sensitive personal information was improperly exposed in the public release of investigative files.

The plaintiffs claim the Department of Justice, under the administration of Donald Trump, disclosed identifying details of roughly 100 survivors when publishing Epstein-related documents, violating federal privacy protections.

The lawsuit argues that although some information was later removed, the material continues to circulate online, including in search results and artificial intelligence-generated summaries. Survivors say this has led to harassment, threats, and renewed emotional trauma.

The complaint seeks at least \$1,000 in damages per survivor from the government, along with punitive damages from Google, and a court order requiring the removal of all identifying content. The Justice Department and Google have not issued immediate responses to the allegations.



### Humanoid robot joins Melania Trump at White House event promoting artificial intelligence education



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

A humanoid robot joined United States First Lady Melania Trump on Wednesday at a White House event promoting the use of artificial intelligence in education during the Fostering the Future Together summit. The robot, introduced as Figure 03, accompanied her through a red carpet hallway before addressing attendees in multiple languages. Trump said artificial intelligence will soon expand beyond mobile devices into humanoid systems capable of supporting personalized learning in schools. The event brought together global first spouses and technology leaders to discuss innovation in education. Trump also highlighted partnerships between government, industry and financial institutions to expand artificial intelligence applications, while warning about risks associated with emerging technologies. The appearance comes as the administration increases focus on artificial intelligence policy, with senior technology executives appointed to advisory roles to guide national strategy in the sector.

### California renames Cesar Chavez Day as farmworkers day amid abuse allegations



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

California Governor Gavin Newsom on Thursday signed a bill renaming Cesar Chavez Day as Farmworkers Day following allegations of sexual abuse against the labor leader.

The state senate passed the legislation ahead of the 31 March holiday, which had long honored Chavez for his role in building the farmworkers movement. Lawmakers said the change recognizes agricultural workers rather than a single figure.

The decision follows a report detailing allegations against Chavez involving women in the United Farm Workers movement. Several US cities and institutions have also begun reassessing Chavez memorials, while officials emphasized continued respect for farm labor contributions.

**Singapore man charged after children rode on car boot**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** man of Indian origin has been charged in Singapore for allegedly driving a luxury sports car with his two young children sitting on the rear boot, putting them at serious risk. Authorities said the incident occurred on October 20, 2025, in an upscale residential area. The children, aged eight and seven, were reportedly unrestrained while the vehicle was in motion. He faces one charge of committing a rash act endangering children below fourteen years of age. Police have stressed that children must be properly secured inside vehicles and never placed in unsafe positions. His lawyer told the court he may consider an early guilty plea, and the case will be heard again on April 22. If convicted, he could face jail, fines, or both, with harsher penalties because children were involved.

**Missing Sikh youth reported in Brampton as police seek public help**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** 21-year-old Sikh man of Punjab origin has been reported missing in Brampton, Canada, after he was last seen near Steeles Avenue West and Mavis Road. Police said he was on foot at the time of disappearance and may be using public transport. He is described as around five feet five inches tall, slim, with short facial hair, and was wearing an orange turban, black hoodie, and light-colored pants while carrying a black backpack. Authorities have appealed to the public for any information that could help locate him. Friends and family are deeply concerned and assisting in the search. Police continue to investigate and are monitoring transit routes in case of sightings.

**Amritsar youth killed in Canada in suspected targeted shooting**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** 22-year-old man from Amritsar was shot dead in Edmonton, Canada, during what his family believes may have been a targeted attack. The incident occurred on March 14 when he was traveling with friends, reportedly en route to celebrate his birthday. Family members said a vehicle began following their car, later blocking their path before an occupant opened fire. He suffered a fatal gunshot wound to the neck and died at the scene. The victim had been living in Canada for several years, working in construction on a valid permit. His family has urged authorities to investigate thoroughly and has expressed concerns about possible hate motivation, noting that he was an Amritdhari Sikh who wore a turban.

**Southern California Indian dance academy to perform at Disney Diwali festival**

● Staff Writer, IndoUS Tribune

**A** Southern California-based Indian dance academy has been selected to perform at the Diwali Dance Fest at Walt Disney World, marking a major milestone for the Santa Clarita group. The Ghungroo Dance School was chosen from 25 teams out of more than 400 applicants, reflecting its growing recognition and strong performance record, according to a statement issued on Monday.

Founded by instructor Jini Valiaveetil, the academy offers weekly training in Bollywood and semi-classical dance for children and adults. Its teaching team includes specialists in classical Indian dance and modern Bollyhop, a fusion of Bollywood and hip-hop, helping it connect with younger, diverse audiences.

The group regularly performs at major cultural events across



Southern California, including temple inaugurations and Indian Independence Day celebrations. It also participates in community outreach initiatives,

including collaborations with CRY America supporting underprivileged children in India through cultural programs.

**UK court rejects Nirav Modi's attempt to reopen extradition appeal**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**F**ugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi has suffered a setback after the High Court of Justice in London rejected his petition seeking to reopen his extradition proceedings to India. The court ruled that his application did not meet the threshold for exceptional circumstances required to revisit a prior decision approving his extradition.

Modi had argued that a recent United Kingdom judgment in another case should

apply to his situation, claiming he could face a risk of mistreatment if extradited.

The Crown Prosecution Service, supported by India's Central Bureau of Investigation, opposed the claim during the hearing. The court noted that earlier rulings had already found no legal barrier to extradition based on assurances from Indian authorities. Modi is wanted in India in connection with the Punjab National Bank fraud case and has been in United Kingdom custody since his arrest in 2019.



**Canada Police retract claims linking Lawrence Bishnoi, Indian agencies to killings on Canadian soil**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Royal Canadian Mounted Police commissioner has clarified that current investigations in Canada have found no evidence linking the Government of India or any foreign entity to organized killings or "transnational repression" on Canadian soil. In an interview, Commissioner Mike Duheme said ongoing criminal probes do not show any verified connection between foreign governments and recent violent incidents, marking a shift from earlier statements in 2024 that suggested stronger suspicions.

He emphasized that while such cases can be complex, investigators must rely on concrete evidence rather than assumptions.



The clarification comes amid renewed diplomatic engagement between Canada and India, including recent exchanges of high commissioners and a visit by the Canadian prime minister to India. The commissioner also noted that some individuals may be falsely using the name of the Lawrence Bishnoi network, without proven direct operational links to the gang.

**US-based Punjabi sisters scale Africa's highest peak**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**wo sisters of Punjabi origin, now based in the United States, have successfully climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, reaching the summit of Africa's highest peak. The achievement was celebrated in Ludhiana, where their family and community members honored them at a special event. The sisters, who studied in India before moving abroad for higher education, have long been passionate about trekking and mountaineering. Prior to this ascent, they had also reached Everest Base Camp and climbed peaks in North America. Family members said they have remained deeply connected to their cultural roots while pursuing academic and outdoor excellence. Their mother expressed pride, saying the sisters continue to uphold their heritage and values while gaining international recognition through their achievements.

**United States lawmaker pushes resolution labeling 1971 Pakistan atrocities as genocide**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** United States lawmaker has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives calling for the 1971 atrocities in present-day Bangladesh to be recognized as genocide committed by the Pakistani military and its allies. The resolution, moved on Monday by Representative Greg Landsman, focuses on Operation Searchlight launched on March 25, 1971, which led to widespread killings of civilians, political leaders, and minorities, particularly Bengali Hindus. It also cites the "Blood Telegram" sent by United States diplomat Archer Blood, which described the violence as systematic and included concerns about targeted attacks on Hindus. The measure urges the House to formally condemn the actions and calls on the United States President to recognize the crimes as genocide and crimes against humanity. It states that entire communities were targeted through killings, sexual violence, forced conversions, and displacement during the conflict in then East Pakistan.

### Indian-origin man in United States faces 39 charges for raping and drugging minors



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An Indian-origin liquor store owner in Washington state, United States, is facing 39 criminal charges including rape, sex trafficking, and child exploitation in an expanding case involving multiple survivors. Authorities allege that Kulvir S Brar used social media platforms, including Snapchat, to target underage girls as young as 13, offering drugs, alcohol, and other incentives in exchange for sexual activity and explicit images. Investigators say the abuse took place over an extended period, with at least eight confirmed survivors, though the number may be higher. Brar was first arrested in early December 2025 and rearrested in mid-March this year as new allegations emerged. A court has set his jury trial for September 28, 2026, while earlier hearings have been rescheduled. Prosecutors also recovered drugs, weapons, and related materials during searches.

### India's global diaspora grows into \$730 billion economic force, report says



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India's diaspora, now more than 35 million people spread across over 200 countries, is evolving into a major global economic force with a combined annual income of about \$730 billion, according to a new report released on Monday. The Indiaspora study titled India and its Diaspora: Partners in Progress says the community is no longer defined only by remittances but is increasingly shaping investment flows, technology partnerships, and global networks. It notes that while remittances remain important, the broader potential of the diaspora is still underutilized due to policy and structural barriers in India. The report was highlighted at the Indiaspora Forum 2026 in Bengaluru, where speakers emphasized rising political influence, including more than 350 Indian-origin candidates contesting United States elections in a recent cycle. It also featured insights from global leaders such as Indra Nooyi and Vinod Khosla, underscoring a shift toward deeper collaboration between India and its overseas community.

### Massachusetts temple visit by congressman highlights growing diaspora engagement

● Staff Writer, IndoUS Tribune

United States Congressman Jim McGovern visited the Sri Lakshmi Temple in Massachusetts, where he engaged with community members in what organizers described as a historic moment for Hindu American outreach. The March 21 visit in Ashland is being highlighted as the first instance of a sitting United States Congressman visiting a Hindu temple in the state, reflecting expanding political engagement with diverse faith communities.

McGovern, who chairs the House Rules Committee, discussed civic participation, inclusion, and interfaith understanding during the visit. Community leaders said the event underscored growing representation and recognition of Hindu American contributions in public life. He also honored a local percussionist for decades of cultural service and was presented with religious symbols during Navaratri celebrations. Organizers emphasized themes of pluralism, hospitality, and unity, while attendees highlighted stronger civic participation by the Indian American diaspora across New England.



### Indian killed in Abu Dhabi due to falling debris from intercepted missile; toll rises to seven

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An Indian-origin man was killed in Abu Dhabi after falling debris from an intercepted ballistic missile struck a populated area on Thursday amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, authorities said. Another Indian national was injured, along with individuals of Emirati and Jordanian nationality, while another person of Pakistani origin was also reported dead. The incident occurred on Sweihan Street after air defence systems intercepted incoming missiles, but debris caused damage to vehicles and nearby areas. Officials said injuries ranged from moderate to serious. With this death, the total number of Indians killed in the regional conflict has risen to at least seven. The Abu Dhabi Media Office said air defences had engaged multiple missiles and drones during ongoing threats, and emergency protocols



were activated following the interception. Authorities continue to assess damage and provide medical assistance to the injured.

### Indian-origin county judge in United States convicted of money laundering, sentencing on June 16

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An Indian-origin county judge in Texas, United States, has been convicted of money laundering after a jury found him guilty in a campaign finance case, with sentencing scheduled for June 16. K P George, the Fort Bend County judge, was accused of transferring more than 46,000 dollars from his campaign account into personal accounts and using the money for private expenses, including a home-related payment. Prosecutors said the funds were misused, while the defence argued they were repayments for personal loans made to his campaign. The jury delivered its verdict after hours of deliberation, and George was taken into custody in court



before being released on bond the same evening. He faces a possible sentence of two to ten years in prison and a fine of up to 10,000 dollars. He is expected to be removed from office after sentencing.

### Indian-origin Mrs South Africa steps down months after historic win, leaves legacy of climate advocacy

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Vrushka Singh, the first Indian-origin winner in the 24-year history of Mrs South Africa, has stepped down just four months after her historic crowning, citing personal and family reasons. The 39-year-old chemical engineer and climate change consultant announced her decision on Monday, saying it was entirely personal and made with her family's needs in mind. She expressed gratitude for the platform and the women she worked alongside, adding that she leaves with appreciation for the organisation's mission and values. Singh's win in November 2025 was widely regarded as a milestone for representation of the Indian-origin community in South Africa.

During her brief reign, Singh focused on environmental sustainability and social impact, using her professional background to highlight how climate change disproportionately affects women and children in vulnerable communities. Through her foundation, Climate Axis, she promoted energy conservation, waste reduction, and community resilience programmes, while also advocating for education access in underserved areas, anti-human trafficking efforts, disability inclusion, wildlife conservation, and cancer awareness initiatives. She also encouraged women to balance corporate careers with personal passions and challenged stereotypes around age and motherhood. The Mrs South Africa organisation said it respects her decision and confirmed that First Princess Carika Bebb will now serve as Mrs South Africa 2026, with all scheduled programmes continuing as planned.

### Eleven Indian nationals arrested in United States over fake robbery visa fraud scheme

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Eleven Indian nationals have been arrested in the United States over allegations that they staged armed robberies to fraudulently obtain immigration benefits under a visa program designed for crime victims, authorities said on Monday. Federal investigators in Massachusetts said the group allegedly orchestrated at least six fake robberies at convenience stores, liquor shops, and fast food outlets, where one individual acted as a fake armed robber while others posed as victims. The staged incidents were reportedly recorded on surveillance cameras, and participants allegedly delayed calling police to make the events appear genuine.

Authorities said some accused were arrested in Massachusetts, while others were taken into custody in Kentucky, Missouri, and Ohio before appearing in federal courts. The case involves charges of conspiracy and visa fraud, carrying penalties of up to five years in prison and fines of up to \$250,000 if proven. Officials stressed that the accused are presumed innocent until proven guilty.



### Slovenia's Freedom Movement narrowly wins election but falls short of majority



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**S**lovenia's ruling Freedom Movement, led by Prime Minister Robert Golob, narrowly won the parliamentary election on Sunday, according to preliminary results. With nearly all votes counted, the centre-left party secured 28.6 per cent, just ahead of the opposition Slovenian Democratic Party led by Janez Jansa at 28.2 per cent. Turnout stood at about 68 per cent. The Freedom Movement is projected to win 29 seats in the 90-member National Assembly, short of a majority. Coalition partners are also expected to fall short, leaving negotiations with smaller parties likely. President Natasa Pirc Musar will nominate a prime minister candidate in coming weeks.

### Death toll from Colombian military aircraft crash rises to 66

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he death toll from a Colombian military aircraft crash in the Putumayo region rose to 66 on Monday, with 57 others injured, local media reported citing military sources. The C-130 Hercules transport plane had 114 passengers and 11 crew members on board when it went down during takeoff from Puerto Leguizamo. Authorities have deployed investigators to determine the cause. President Gustavo Petro said the fate of more than 40 people remains unconfirmed and criticised outdated military systems. Defence Minister Pedro Sanchez said rescue teams are at the site and support protocols have been activated for victims and families.

### Starmer says Britain not being targeted by Iran amid rising tensions

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**B**ritish Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Monday that there is no indication Iran is targeting mainland Britain, while stressing efforts to avoid escalation in the Middle East. Speaking in London, he said security assessments show no direct threat but emphasized protecting British interests. His comments followed reports of Iranian missile activity near a US-British base in the Indian Ocean. Starmer also warned that any move involving the Strait of Hormuz requires careful planning. He said Britain's priority remains de-escalation and cost-of-living stability. Meanwhile, protests continued across London against Western strikes on Iran amid rising tensions.

### Canada advances law to ban public display of Khalistan terror symbols

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**C**anada's House of Commons has passed the Combatting Hate Act, a new law that would criminalise the public display of symbols linked to designated terrorist organisations, including groups associated with the Khalistan movement, when used to promote hatred. The bill cleared its third reading on Tuesday with a vote of 186 to 137 and now moves to the Senate for review before becoming law.

The legislation creates a new Criminal Code offence targeting the wilful promotion of hatred against identifiable groups through symbols connected to listed terrorist entities. It specifically includes flags linked to Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation, both designated as terrorist organisations in Canada and India.

The bill also strengthens penalties for hate-motivated crimes and introduces offences for obstructing access to places



of worship and community institutions. While Indo-Canadian, Jewish, and Hindu groups have welcomed the move, citing long-standing concerns over intimidation and vandalism, critics argue it could raise free speech issues. The law was introduced amid improving India-Canada relations under Prime Minister Mark Carney, who took office in March 2025.

### Israel launches fresh strikes on Iran as diplomatic efforts stall and regional tensions widen

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**I**srael launched a new wave of strikes on Iran early Friday, including targets in Tehran, as diplomatic efforts to end the conflict showed no progress, according to reports. The strikes came ahead of a planned United Nations Security Council consultation on attacks involving civilian infrastructure, while Iran and the United States remained deadlocked over ceasefire conditions.

Air raid alerts sounded across Israel as the military intercepted incoming missiles. Iran continued drone and missile attacks toward Gulf Arab states, with warnings reported in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Smoke was also seen rising over Beirut, though Israel did not confirm responsibility for strikes there.

The United States has proposed a 15-point ceasefire framework, delivered via intermediaries, but Iran rejected the offer and put forward its own proposal.



As tensions escalate, the United States has also deployed additional troops to the region. Rising casualties, disrupted shipping routes, and surging oil prices have deepened concerns about a widening regional conflict.

### Iran appoints Zolqadr as new security council chief after Larijani's killing

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

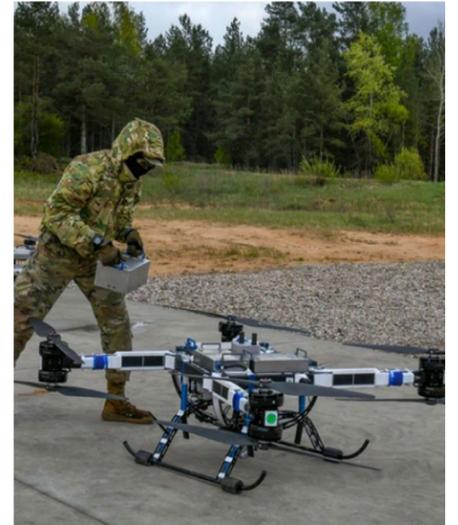
**I**ran has appointed Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr as the new Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council following the killing of Ali Larijani in an Israeli attack last week, state-linked media reported on Tuesday. The appointment was confirmed through a statement by Mehdi Tabatabai, an aide in the Iranian president's office, and approved by Iran's top leadership before a decree by President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Zolqadr, a veteran Islamic Revolution Guards Corps commander, has held senior roles in Iran's military, security, and judicial institutions, including service in the Expediency Council and as a former deputy chief of staff of the armed forces. His appointment comes amid heightened



regional tensions following Israel's claim that it killed Larijani, a senior Iranian security figure.

### US Army launches digital marketplace to speed up drone procurement



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he United States Army has launched a digital marketplace to accelerate procurement of drone systems and expand access for military units and allies on Tuesday. Developed with Amazon Web Services, the platform allows users to compare, evaluate, and purchase vetted unmanned aerial systems. Officials said it will reduce delays and improve transparency in defence acquisitions. Senior Army leaders said the system reflects a shift toward faster, more competitive procurement. The platform will also support foreign military sales and be showcased at upcoming defence symposiums. Officials said drones are increasingly central to modern warfare across surveillance and combat operations.

### Bangladesh marks Genocide Day recalling 1971 military crackdown



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**B**angladesh observed Genocide Day on Wednesday, marking the anniversary of the 1971 military crackdown by Pakistani forces during Operation Searchlight. The night of March 25 is remembered as the "Black Night," when troops targeted Dhaka University, police lines, and civilian areas, killing thousands, according to historical accounts. The assault triggered the Bangladesh Liberation War, which ended in December 1971 with independence after Pakistan's surrender. Leaders including President Mohammed Shahabuddin described the events as one of the nation's darkest chapters and urged unity in honouring victims. The crackdown remains a defining moment in Bangladesh's independence history.

### Tourists gather at Cambodia's Angkor Wat for rare equinox sunrise

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

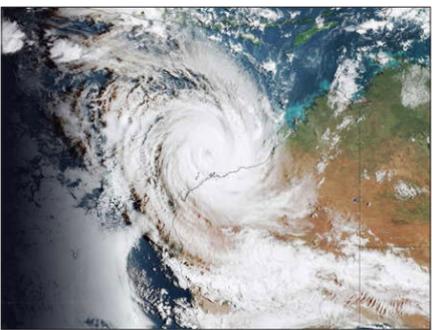
Large crowds gathered at Cambodia's Angkor Wat on Sunday to witness the rare equinox sunrise aligning with the temple's central tower. Tourism officials said both domestic and international visitors captured the spectacle, which occurs twice a year during the spring and autumn equinoxes. Authorities described the event as a unique blend of astronomy, faith, and heritage. Angkor Wat, part of the UNESCO-listed Angkor Archaeological Park, is Cambodia's top tourist attraction. Officials said nearly one million international tourists visited the site in 2025, generating significant ticket revenue. The phenomenon highlights the site's cultural and historical significance.

### UN experts call for probe into Pakistan airstrike on Kabul rehabilitation centre

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

United Nations experts on Wednesday called for independent investigations into Pakistani airstrikes on a drug rehabilitation facility in Kabul that reportedly killed and injured hundreds. The experts urged both Pakistan and Afghan authorities to agree to a ceasefire and ensure accountability for violations of international law. They said recent clashes have caused civilian casualties, displacement, and damage to infrastructure. The March 16 strike on the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital was strongly condemned, with calls for transparent investigations. The experts stressed that civilian protection and adherence to international humanitarian law must be prioritised amid escalating cross-border tensions.

### Severe cyclone Narelle threatens Australia's northwest coast



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Australian authorities issued emergency warnings on Thursday as Tropical Cyclone Narelle intensified into a severe Category 4 system approaching the northwest coast. The Bureau of Meteorology said the storm was strengthening off Western Australia's Pilbara region and could bring destructive winds up to 275 kilometers per hour and heavy rainfall. Emergency services warned of possible threats to lives and property across a 600 kilometer coastal zone, including Karratha. Schools were closed and flights cancelled in Port Hedland as precautions increased. The cyclone had previously impacted Queensland and the Northern Territory, causing flooding but limited structural damage.

### Gulf of Mexico oil spill spreads over 600 kilometers, affects protected reserves

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

An oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has spread more than 600 kilometers, affecting seven protected natural reserves in Veracruz and Tabasco, Mexican authorities said on Thursday. Officials said the leak originated from a vessel that has not yet been identified, along with two natural seepage sources, while ruling out severe environmental damage so far. The Navy

said satellite analysis and inspections point to three sources, including an anchored ship near Coatzacoalcos and natural crude seepage sites in Veracruz and the Bay of Campeche. Authorities confirmed that the source remains active, with increased flow in recent weeks. Around 430 tons of hydrocarbons have been collected, and six wildlife species, including turtles and birds, have been contaminated. Cleanup operations continue across affected coastal and marine areas.

### Norovirus outbreak in Osaka schools sickens more than 600 students and staff

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

More than 600 students and staff members across multiple schools in Kumatori Town in Japan's Osaka region have fallen ill in a widespread food poisoning outbreak, public broadcaster NHK reported on Thursday. A total of 633 people from eight elementary and junior high schools have shown symptoms including vomiting and diarrhea since last week. Health officials detected norovirus in some patients as well as in employees of a company supplying bread used in school lunches. Investigators have linked the



outbreak to contaminated bread served across the schools. Local authorities have ordered a five-day suspension for the food supplier as they continue their probe into the source and spread of the infection.

### Costa Rica agrees to accept weekly United States deportee transfers under migration deal

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Costa Rica has agreed to accept 25 migrants deported from the United States each week under a migration arrangement linked to Washington's third-country deportation policy, officials said on Thursday. The agreement comes as the United States expands partnerships with countries across the Americas and Africa to receive non-citizen deportees. Costa Rican authorities described the pact as nonbinding and said deportees will be processed under national migration laws with safeguards against return to countries where they could face persecution. The deal was signed during a recent visit by a United States envoy. The move has drawn criticism from



rights groups, which warn of legal uncertainty and detention risks for migrants transferred abroad under such agreements.

### Venezuela pitches oil sector reforms to global investors at Miami summit

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodríguez has highlighted investment opportunities in the country's oil sector during a Saudi-backed summit in Miami, presenting reforms aimed at attracting foreign capital. Speaking virtually from Caracas on Wednesday, she said the country now offers legal stability, international arbitration options, and safeguards for investors following recent economic restructuring. Rodríguez projected strong economic growth in the coming years, emphasizing efforts to diversify Venezuela's economy and restore confidence in its energy industry. She did not mention former President Nicolás Maduro but focused on reforms



following major political and policy shifts in recent months. Venezuela holds the world's largest oil reserves but has seen production fall sharply over the past two decades due to sanctions, corruption, and mismanagement, reducing output to a fraction of historic levels.

### Malaysia shifts tourism strategy as West Asia tensions disrupt travel routes

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Malaysia is exploring alternative transit routes and strengthening its focus on Asian markets to maintain tourist arrivals amid disruptions caused by tensions in West Asia, according to the Tourism Ministry.

Deputy Secretary General Chua Choon Hwa said traditional Middle East transit hubs used by long-haul travelers have been affected, prompting a review of routing options. Authorities are prioritizing regional markets less exposed to the conflict. Despite challenges, Malaysia remains optimistic about its Visit Malaysia 2026 goals, with tourist arrivals rising more than 30 per cent year-on-year in early 2026, supported by strong holiday demand.

### Sri Lanka issues energy saving guidelines as west Asia tensions strain fuel imports

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Sri Lanka has issued nationwide guidelines urging government institutions to reduce fuel and electricity use amid potential disruptions to fuel imports linked to escalating tensions in West Asia. Officials have been directed to cut vehicle use, rely on public or shared transport, and prepare daily travel plans. Energy-saving steps include limiting air conditioning, using natural light, and reducing elevator use. Authorities have also advised turning off streetlights in low-security areas and allowing remote work where possible. The measures come as fuel prices rise sharply, with repeated hikes in recent weeks adding pressure on households and transport costs.

### US airports face rising delays as staffing shortages hit security operations



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Airports across the United States are experiencing growing delays as a partial shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security disrupts Transportation Security Administration staffing. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy warned that the situation is worsening, citing absenteeism and financial strain on unpaid workers. More than 10 per cent of officers have missed shifts on some days, while hundreds have resigned since the shutdown began. Major airports are reporting severe staff shortages during peak travel periods, leading to long security lines. Authorities are considering deploying Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel to support screening operations and ease congestion.

## Jammu and Kashmir assembly adjourned after uproar over Israel-Iran tensions

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**O**n Friday, the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly was adjourned for half an hour after heated protests erupted during the budget session. Members from both ruling and opposition parties raised slogans condemning the Israeli attack on Iran, while Bharatiya Janata Party legislators protested separately demanding the establishment of a national law university in Jammu. Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather repeatedly appealed for order but was unable to control the disruption during the Question Hour. The session had resumed after a five-week recess following its earlier sitting in February. The ongoing budget session is scheduled to continue until April 4, with time allocated for private members' bills and resolutions. The assembly has 90 members representing both the Kashmir and Jammu regions, with several parties represented across the House.

## Kashmir donation drive for Iran raises concerns over large-scale fund collection

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A** large-scale donation campaign in Jammu and Kashmir supporting Iran has reportedly mobilized contributions estimated between 500 crore and 600 crore rupees, according to Shia cleric Aga Syed Mudasar Rizvi. He said the funds have been collected across communities, including Shia, Sunni, and non-Muslim donors, reflecting widespread humanitarian sentiment. Contributions have taken multiple forms such as cash, gold, vehicles, utensils, and household goods. Some professionals have also transferred money directly to the Iranian embassy. Rizvi described the effort as a collective expression of solidarity with people affected by the ongoing conflict in Iran. Authorities are reviewing the scale and flow of donations amid concerns over transparency and oversight, given the unusually large volume of contributions being reported across the region in a short period.

## Intelligence Bureau warns of charity scam exploiting Iran conflict for donations

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**T**he Intelligence Bureau has issued an alert regarding fraudulent groups collecting donations under the guise of humanitarian relief for people affected by the Iran conflict. Officials said these groups use emotionally charged narratives and manipulated images of war zones to persuade people to donate. Similar scams were reported during earlier international conflicts and typically disappear after collecting funds. Authorities noted that the highest level of such activity has been detected in Jammu and Kashmir, where individuals have been conducting door-to-door fundraising campaigns. Donations collected reportedly include cash, gold, and household items, with total amounts running into crores of rupees. Officials are investigating how the funds are being used and whether they are linked to wider networks. The groups are believed to rely heavily on offline methods to avoid digital tracking.

## Akali Dal accuses Punjab Congress of split over CBI probe demand in official's death case

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**S**hiromani Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia on Wednesday accused the Punjab Congress of contradicting its own stance over demands for a Central Bureau of Investigation probe into the death of government official Gagandeep Randhawa. Reacting to Congress state president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring's remarks, Majithia alleged that Warring was aligning with the state government to avoid an

investigation, a claim Warring has not responded to. He also said this contradicted Leader of Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa's demand for a probe. Majithia further claimed that Congress MPs had failed to formally approach the Union Home Ministry despite signals that a written request could trigger a probe. He urged the Congress high command to clarify its position, alleging a possible understanding between the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party. He also warned that inaction would raise questions about political collusion.



## Amit Shah welcomes Gujarat Uniform Civil Code Bill as step toward equal laws

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**U**nion Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday welcomed the passage of the Uniform Civil Code Bill 2026 in the Gujarat Assembly, calling it a step toward equal laws for all citizens. He said the country should not function on appeasement but on the principle of uniform legal rights. Gujarat became the second state after Uttarakhand to clear the legislation, which proposes a common legal framework for marriage, divorce, inheritance and maintenance across communities. Shah praised Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and lawmakers who supported the bill, saying it reflects a long standing commitment of the Bharatiya Janata Party. The law includes provisions



for compulsory registration of marriages and divorces, uniform grounds for divorce, monogamy rules, and equal inheritance rights for women. It also introduces penalties for fraud and coercion in marriage and mandates registration of live-in relationships.

## Parliament approves Finance Bill 2026, clears path for Union Budget implementation

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**P**arliament on Friday approved the Finance Bill 2026, with the upper house returning it to the lower house through a voice vote, completing the legislative process required to implement the Union Budget 2026-27 from the new financial year beginning on April 1.

The lower house had passed the bill on Wednesday along with 32 amendments. The upper house cleared it after a brief discussion and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's response to questions raised by members of parliament during the budget debate.

The Union Budget 2026-27 sets total expenditure at 53.47 trillion rupees, an increase of 7.7 percent over the current financial year. It includes a capital outlay of 12.2 trillion rupees for major infrastructure projects aimed at boosting growth and employment, an increase of 2.2 trillion

rupees over the previous fiscal year. The finance minister said an infrastructure risk development fund would be created to speed up large-scale projects. She also projected a reduction in the fiscal deficit to 4.3 percent of gross domestic product in 2026-27, as the government continues fiscal consolidation while supporting growth and stability.

She added that net borrowing would stand at 11.7 trillion rupees in fiscal year 2027, with gross market borrowing projected at 17.2 trillion rupees. The debt to gross domestic product ratio is expected to decline to 55.6 percent, down from 56.1 percent in 2025-26, helping reduce interest payments and freeing resources for development.

The budget prioritizes infrastructure expansion in highways, ports, railways, and power, along with boosting manufacturing in seven key sectors and strengthening small and medium enterprises.

## Adani Ports launches India's first port of refuge to strengthen maritime safety

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**dani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited announced on Friday that it has operationalized India's first Port of Refuge to improve maritime emergency response and safety. The system is designed to provide shelter for vessels in distress to stabilize conditions, protect lives, and reduce environmental damage. The initiative is supported by a partnership with SMIT Salvage, part of Royal Boskalis Westminster, and the Maritime Emergency Response Centre. Two ports, Dighi on the west coast and Gopalpur on the east coast, will serve as designated refuge locations offering salvage, firefighting, pollution control, and emergency coordination services for shipping routes.

## Delhi speaker highlights revival of public accounts committee oversight after 15 years

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**D**elhi legislative assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta said on Friday that the Public Accounts Committee reports have been adopted by the House after a gap of more than fifteen years. He said earlier governments failed to present Comptroller and Auditor General reports, which weakened legislative oversight. Gupta noted that all pending audit reports have now been tabled and referred to relevant committees for review. He added that the committee has already submitted reports on health, excise, and pollution issues within a year. Departments have begun corrective action based on recommendations, and officials have been directed to submit action reports within the prescribed timeline.

## Kiren Rijju assures no lockdown and urges states to prevent fuel hoarding



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**U**nion minister Kiren Rijju said on Friday that there is no lockdown in the country and urged state governments to prevent panic and hoarding of fuel. He praised the prime minister for reducing excise duties on petrol and diesel, calling it a significant decision taken amid global energy supply concerns. Rijju said India depends heavily on imported fuel and the government aims to ensure affordability and stability for citizens. He added that petrol duty has been reduced and diesel has been made duty free. He also stressed coordinated action between the center and states to ensure smooth fuel distribution nationwide.

Friday, 27 March 2026

## Man arrested in Rajasthan for alleged reconnaissance of strategic sites for Pakistan-based handler

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Rajasthan police arrested a twenty-year-old man on Friday for allegedly conducting reconnaissance of sensitive locations across multiple Indian states and sharing videos with a Pakistan-based handler.

Officials said the accused maintained contact through social media platforms and sent footage of crowded and strategic sites in Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, and Haryana. Investigators also recovered chats and an edited image showing the accused alongside the handler.

Police said the suspect used digital communication tools to transmit location details and routes. Authorities added that the arrest is part of a wider investigation into an alleged cross-border espionage network operating through online channels.

## Supreme Court challenges anticipatory bail in POCSO case against Hindu seer

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Spiritual leader Ashutosh Brahmachari Maharaj has moved the Supreme Court challenging the Allahabad High Court's decision granting anticipatory bail to Jyotish Peeth Shankaracharya Swami Avimuktshwaranand Saraswati and his disciple Mukundanand Giri in a child sexual abuse case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences law. The Special Leave Petition seeks cancellation of the relief granted on Thursday, arguing that the order should be set aside. The High Court had allowed pre arrest bail citing inconsistencies in prosecution claims, delay in filing the complaint, and contradictions in statements. It also directed cooperation with investigation and barred media interaction during proceedings. The case stems from allegations leading to an investigation in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj area.

## Ashok Gehlot criticizes government over global crisis preparedness and foreign policy remarks

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Thursday criticized the Union government over its handling of global crises, saying rising tensions over oil and gas required better preparedness and public communication. Speaking at Jaipur Airport, he warned that governments must prepare in advance and keep citizens informed during conflicts, stressing that delays could cause hardship. He also questioned recent foreign policy messaging, saying remarks by former United States President Donald Trump toward Prime Minister Narendra Modi were inconsistent. Gehlot further criticized the use of the term brokerage in diplomacy, referring to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's comments, and said such language was inappropriate. He urged global peace amid fears of wider conflict.

## India classifies energy data as national security amid global oil supply disruption

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India has classified energy-related operational data as a matter of national security and directed all entities across the oil and gas value chain to submit detailed information to the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell. The order, issued on Wednesday by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, requires refiners, importers, pipeline operators, storage facilities, and distributors to provide frequent and in some cases daily updates. The data includes production, imports, inventory levels, transportation, and consumption patterns. The move comes amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, which has disrupted global supplies of oil,



natural gas, and liquefied petroleum gas. India, which relies heavily on imports for its energy needs, aims to create a centralized real-time monitoring system to improve decision-making, prioritize critical sectors, and respond quickly to supply disruptions affecting the economy.

## Chhattisgarh passes strict anti-exam malpractice law with up to ten-year jail term

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

On Friday, the Chhattisgarh legislative assembly passed a comprehensive bill aimed at preventing paper leaks and other malpractices in public recruitment and entrance examinations. The law proposes strict punishment, including imprisonment of up to ten years and fines up to one million rupees for individuals and organized groups involved in cheating networks.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said the legislation sends a strong warning to the exam mafia and is intended to restore trust in the recruitment system. He added that it also protects students' futures and ensures fairness. The law allows cancellation of results, bans candidates from examinations for up to three years, and includes whistleblower protection. It also regulates all stages of examination conduct, including question paper preparation, distribution, and evaluation.



## Senior manager of Power Grid Corporation arrested in bribery case

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Central Bureau of Investigation arrested Uday Kumar, senior general manager of Power Grid Corporation of India, on Thursday in Rajasthan's Ajmer region in connection with an alleged bribery case involving 250,000 rupees.

Officials said Kumar was allegedly caught accepting the bribe from an executive of Mumbai-based KEC International to extend official favors to the company. Suman Singh of KEC International was also arrested in Sikar, where both were reportedly meeting to exchange the bribe amount. Investigators said the First Information Report names five individuals and includes KEC International as an accused entity. The case is under active investigation, and authorities are examining the involvement



of other officials linked to procurement and contract-related decisions. The company has not issued any public response so far regarding the allegations.

## Election Commission reviews Assam poll readiness, emphasizes violence free elections



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

The Election Commission of India on Wednesday conducted a high level review of election preparedness in Assam ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls scheduled for April 9. The Commission held training and assessment sessions with district election officials, police chiefs and senior administrators, focusing on law and order, logistics, electronic voting machine management and polling staff training. It reiterated that elections must be violence free, intimidation free and inducement free. Officials were directed to ensure timely voter information slips, real time turnout updates and accessibility measures, including Braille enabled materials. Special attention was given to riverine and remote polling stations to ensure safety and smooth conduct of voting across the state.

## Prime Minister Modi calls for 'Team India' approach to address West Asia crisis

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday chaired a video conference with chief ministers and lieutenant governors to review India's preparedness amid the evolving situation in West Asia and its potential impact on the economy, energy security, and supply chains.

He called for a "Team India" approach, stressing priorities such as economic stability, energy security, protection of citizens' interests, and resilience in supply chains and industry. He urged states to ensure smooth supply chains and take strict action against hoarding and profiteering.

The prime minister highlighted the need for advance planning in agriculture, including monitoring fertilizer storage and distribution ahead of the upcoming Kharif season. He also called for strong coordination across governments, with special focus on border and coastal states, and warned against misinformation, urging timely communication through control rooms and helplines.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said steps had been taken to ensure fuel and gas availability. Chief ministers supported the Centre's measures and expressed confidence in supply stability. The prime minister reiterated that India would navigate the crisis through collective effort.

**Jefferies exits HDFC Bank, trims India exposure as shares fall**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**G**lobal brokerage Jefferies has exited its position in HDFC Bank and reduced exposure to India across several equity portfolios following the resignation of part-time chairman Atanu Chakraborty earlier in the week. In its latest “Greed and Fear” report, strategist Chris Wood said the bank has been removed from its Asia ex-Japan, global, and international long-only equity portfolios. Jefferies added HSBC with a four percent weighting in place of HDFC Bank. The firm also cut India and Australia exposure in its Asia Pacific portfolio while increasing Taiwan’s allocation. HDFC Bank shares fell as much as three percent, extending recent losses amid governance concerns and investor sentiment pressure.

**Apple expands American manufacturing program with new suppliers**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**A**pple on Thursday expanded its American Manufacturing Program by adding Bosch, Cirrus Logic, TDK, and Qnity Electronics to its United States supply chain strategy. The company said the initiative will boost domestic production of advanced components used in Apple devices globally and create new manufacturing jobs. Apple plans to invest four hundred million dollars in the expansion through 2030 as part of its broader six hundred billion dollar commitment to United States manufacturing. Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook said the partnerships strengthen American innovation and supply chain resilience. New collaborations include semiconductor work in Washington and New York, along with sensor production and materials development for future Apple products.

**India reports record food output and rising agricultural exports**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**I**ndia recorded a record foodgrain output of 357.73 million metric tons in the agricultural year 2024 to 2025, marking a sharp rise from the previous year, according to an official report released on Thursday. Growth was driven by higher production of rice, wheat, maize, and millets. Agricultural exports also climbed steadily, rising from 34.5 billion dollars in fiscal year 2020 to 51.1 billion dollars in fiscal year 2025. Rice, pulses, and millets saw strong global demand, while processed food exports increased their share of the total agricultural basket. Horticulture production also expanded significantly, reflecting India’s growing shift toward high-value and diversified crop output.

**Wall Street falls to its worst drop since the Iran war as the Nasdaq sinks 10% below its record**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**G**lobal markets on Thursday declined sharply as rising oil prices and bond yields heightened investor concerns over the ongoing Iran conflict. The S&P 500 fell 1.7 percent, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 469 points. The Nasdaq Composite slid 2.4 percent, entering correction territory after falling more than 10 percent from its recent high.

Oil prices surged, with Brent crude rising about 4.8 percent to \$101.89 per barrel as concerns grew over disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. Donald Trump said on Thursday that Iran had allowed oil tankers to pass but warned that negotiations must progress quickly.

Technology stocks led the downturn, while rising Treasury yields added pressure on borrowing costs. Markets across Europe and Asia also fell, reflecting growing global economic uncertainty.



**Southeast Asia accelerates nuclear push as AI demand rises and Iran conflict shakes energy markets**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**S**outheast Asian nations are fast-tracking nuclear energy plans as rising electricity demand from artificial intelligence data centers and instability linked to the Iran conflict reshape global energy priorities. Countries including Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines are either reviving dormant nuclear programs or setting fresh capacity targets.

Vietnam is advancing Russian-backed nuclear projects, Indonesia aims to deploy small modular reactors by the 2030s, Thailand has set long-term capacity goals, and the Philippines is reviving its nuclear ambitions after decades of delay.

The shift comes as oil price volatility highlights the region’s dependence on fossil fuel imports. Analysts say Southeast Asia could become a major hub for nuclear expansion as governments seek



cleaner, more stable, and long-term energy security solutions.

**BBC appoints ex-Google executive Matt Brittin as director-general amid Trump lawsuit pressure**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**F**ormer Google executive Matt Brittin has been appointed as the new director-general of the BBC, stepping in at a critical moment for the broadcaster. He will take charge on May 18 as the organization faces financial uncertainty, governance reforms, and a \$10 billion defamation lawsuit filed by Donald Trump. Brittin previously led Google’s operations across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa and is seen as a transformation-focused leader.

His appointment follows the resignation of former BBC chief Tim Davie after controversy over a documentary involving edited excerpts of a Trump speech. The BBC has apologized for the editing but rejects the defamation



claim and is seeking dismissal in a US court. BBC leadership said Brittin’s experience will help guide the organization through reform and funding challenges.

**Volkswagen software tie-up with Rivian clears key investment milestone after winter testing**



● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**V**olkswagen’s software partnership with Rivian reached a key milestone on Friday after successful winter testing of the first vehicles using their jointly developed software system. The achievement clears an important hurdle in the collaboration, which is central to Volkswagen chief executive Oliver Blume’s turnaround strategy for the German automaker. The completion of testing triggers progress toward the next tranche of investment funding for Rivian under the agreement. The partnership aims to integrate advanced vehicle software architecture across future electric models. Volkswagen said the results demonstrate technical readiness for broader deployment, strengthening confidence in the joint development program as both companies work to accelerate next-generation vehicle software capabilities.

**Italy investigates Sephora and Benefit over marketing skincare to children**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**I**taly’s competition authority on Friday launched an investigation into Sephora and Benefit Cosmetics over alleged marketing practices targeting children.

Regulators said campaigns encouraged minors, including those under 10, to buy skincare products, raising health concerns. Authorities also cited inadequate warnings for products not meant for young users and the use of young influencers to drive sales. Inspections were carried out on Thursday.

The companies said they would cooperate with the investigation as scrutiny of child-focused marketing grows.

**Epic Games cuts more than 1,000 jobs amid slowing growth in gaming industry**

● IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

**E**pic Games said on Tuesday that it will lay off more than 1,000 employees, or about one-fifth of its workforce, as it responds to slower industry growth and rising costs. The company said the decision is not related to artificial intelligence but reflects broader challenges, including weaker consumer spending and increased competition from social media and other entertainment platforms. Epic, best known for Fortnite, also cited difficulties in rebuilding its mobile business after legal disputes with Apple and Google. Chief executive Tim Sweeney said the gaming industry is facing major disruption but also long-term opportunity. The company said it expects to focus resources on core development and future growth areas following the restructuring.

SoftBank secures \$40 billion loan to deepen OpenAI bet



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

SoftBank Group said on Friday it has secured a \$40 billion bridge loan to expand its investments in OpenAI and support general corporate needs, underscoring its push into artificial intelligence. The unsecured loan, maturing in March 2027, was arranged with lenders including JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Mizuho Bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, and MUFG Bank. The group, led by Masayoshi Son, has already committed \$30 billion to OpenAI through Vision Fund 2. OpenAI, backed by Microsoft, has gained global prominence with ChatGPT, fueling intense competition among tech firms investing in generative artificial intelligence.

LIC faces \$8.5 billion tax demand, plans to appeal

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Life Insurance Corporation of India said on Wednesday it has received an income tax demand of about \$8.5 billion, including interest, for the financial year 2021 to 2022, and will challenge the order. The demand follows adjustments such as treating interim bonuses, negative reserves, and losses from the Jeevan Suraksha Fund as income, along with disallowed deductions and interest on delayed tax payments. LIC said the order would not materially affect its operations and that financial exposure is limited to the assessed tax and interest. The disclosure was made under regulatory requirements, and the company confirmed it has informed stock exchanges. Shares closed higher on the National Stock Exchange after the announcement.

India-Taiwan trade rises 17 percent to \$12.5 billion

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Trade between India and Taiwan grew 17 percent in 2025 to reach \$12.5 billion, according to data released on Wednesday. India exported \$3.3 billion worth of goods including mineral fuels, metals, chemicals, and plastics, while Taiwan exported \$9.2 billion, led by electronic integrated circuits and machinery. Officials highlighted Taiwan's strength in semiconductors, artificial intelligence servers, and edge computing, noting expanding collaboration in technology and manufacturing. Taiwanese firms are increasing investments in India's electronics and automotive sectors, while Indian companies are exploring opportunities in Taiwan's technology industries. More than 300 Taiwanese companies now operate in India, with both sides seeking further trade expansion.

India pushes for Global South priorities in world trade reform talks

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

India on Thursday called for World Trade Organization reforms centered on transparency, inclusiveness, and development priorities for the Global South. Speaking at a ministerial conference in Cameroon, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said reforms must protect the rights of developing countries and ensure consensus-based decision-making.

He emphasized urgent resolution of issues such as food security stockholding, cotton subsidies, and fisheries support with special treatment for poorer nations.

Goyal also called for restoring a binding dispute settlement system and warned against unilateral trade measures. He said emerging technologies and digital trade rules must ensure equitable growth and avoid placing additional burdens on developing economies.



Nokia appoints new India leaders to strengthen telecom and enterprise focus

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Nokia announced on Thursday that it will appoint Samar Mittal as India Country Business Leader and Vibha Mehra as India Country Manager, effective April 1, as part of a broader strategy to strengthen its operations in India. Mittal will oversee business strategy, focusing on expanding partnerships with telecom operators and growth in cloud, artificial

intelligence, and enterprise sectors. Mehra will manage Nokia's overall country presence, including communications, government relations, public engagement, and corporate responsibility programs. The company said the leadership changes reflect its long-term commitment to India's digital development. Both executives bring decades of industry experience and are expected to coordinate efforts to enhance Nokia's market position and strategic growth in the region.



OpenAI shuts down Sora video app amid deepfake and content concerns

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

OpenAI announced on Tuesday that it is shutting down its Sora video application, which allowed users to create and share artificial intelligence-generated short videos. The app, launched in September, quickly gained popularity but also drew criticism from experts and advocacy groups over misuse risks, including deepfakes and nonconsensual content. OpenAI said it will provide guidance on preserving user-generated material before the platform is fully discontinued. The company had previously restricted certain depictions of public figures after backlash from estates and performers' unions.

While Sora was intended to compete with short-form video platforms such as TikTok and



Instagram, concerns over intellectual property and safety ultimately led to its shutdown, according to the company's statement.

Warner Bros shareholders set to decide on \$110 billion Paramount merger



IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Warner Bros. Discovery said on Thursday that its shareholders will vote on the proposed \$110 billion merger with Paramount Skydance on Wednesday, April 23, moving the deal closer to completion. The merger is expected to combine major film studios, television networks, and streaming platforms, potentially reshaping the global entertainment industry. Paramount has also committed to paying a quarterly "ticking fee" to Warner Bros shareholders starting in October if the deal is delayed. Even if investors approve the transaction, it will face intense scrutiny from regulators in the United States and Europe over concerns that the combined entity could reduce competition or raise prices. The deal would further strengthen the position of David Ellison, who led Skydance's acquisition of Paramount, although officials have said the review will not be fast-tracked due to political ties.

Pernod Ricard and Brown-Forman explore merger amid industry slowdown

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

French spirits giant Pernod Ricard and Brown-Forman said that they are in talks over a potential merger that could combine the world's second-largest spirits maker with the leading producer of American whiskey. The discussions come as the industry faces slowing demand, tariff pressures, and rising competition from alternatives such as cannabis-based drinks. Brown-Forman shares rose about 9 percent, while Pernod Ricard fell nearly 6 percent. Both companies have announced restructuring efforts, including job cuts. Analysts say the deal could deliver cost savings despite overlapping markets in the United States and Europe, though it may not fully resolve long-term growth challenges.

Blackstone invests \$250 million in UAE tech platform despite regional tensions

IndoUS Tribune Newsdesk

Blackstone said this week it invested \$250 million in Advanced Digital Gaming Technology, a United Arab Emirates-based payments and data platform, marking the first private equity-backed inbound deal in the Gulf since the Iran war began. The conflict, triggered on a Friday in late February by coordinated United States and Israeli strikes on Iran, has disrupted travel, shipping, and energy markets. The platform, developed with partners including Raya Holding, NRT Technology, and Sightline Payments, will focus on regulated digital markets across the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. Blackstone said it sees strong long-term opportunities in the region despite short-term geopolitical and economic uncertainty.

**Norris backs McLaren revival after China failure exposes early season struggles**



**L**ando Norris said in Japan on Thursday that McLaren can still return to the top despite a challenging start to the season. The Briton finished fifth in the opening race in Australia but endured a major setback on Sunday in China when both McLaren cars failed to start due to technical issues. Norris said the team has since worked closely with Mercedes High Performance Powertrains to understand and resolve the problem. While McLaren currently ranks third behind Ferrari and Mercedes, he believes the car has strong potential. Drawing confidence from their comeback title success in 2024, Norris said the focus is on podiums before returning to race wins.

**Candidates tournament opens under geopolitical shadow as veterans battle rising generation**



**T**he Candidates tournament begins on Sunday in Western Cyprus, featuring a mix of seasoned players and emerging talent. Top seed Fabiano Caruana faces Hikaru Nakamura in a key opening round, with both aiming for another chance at the world title against India's Gukesh Dommaraju later this year. Younger players such as R Praggnanandhaa add fresh competition to a shifting field. The event unfolds amid geopolitical tension following recent incidents in the region, with Koneru Humpy withdrawing from the women's tournament citing safety concerns. Organizers said security measures are in place. The competition retains its traditional classical format, emphasizing long, high pressure games.

**American investors trigger record IPL surge with two-billion-dollar franchise deals**

**A**merican investors have made a major push into Indian cricket, sealing two separate billion-dollar acquisitions of Indian Premier League franchises on the same day, highlighting the sport's rising global commercial appeal. The first deal saw a consortium backed by United States businessmen Kal Somani and Rob Walton agree to acquire Rajasthan Royals in a transaction valued at about 1.63 billion dollars, according to Indian media reports. Hours later, a new record was set when Royal Challengers Bengaluru were acquired for approximately 1.78 billion dollars by a consortium including David Blitzer's Bolt Ventures and asset manager Blackstone.

The rapid escalation in valuations underscores how the Indian Premier League has become one of the most attractive sports properties worldwide. Cricket legend Sourav Ganguly called the figures "mind-boggling"

but said they reflect strong growth and compared the league's scale to the National Basketball Association.

The franchise values dwarf their original 2008 purchases, when Bengaluru was bought for about 111.6 million dollars and Rajasthan for 67 million dollars. Analysts say global private equity interest in sports is accelerating, with leagues increasingly seen as high-growth entertainment assets.

The Indian Premier League's broadcast rights deal for the 2023 to 2027 cycle was valued at 6.4 billion dollars, reinforcing its commercial strength. Expansion in 2021 added two new teams, further boosting valuations. Experts say continued international investment, including links to American sports leagues and media platforms, signals significant room for future growth in cricket's most lucrative competition.



**Iran bans sports teams from traveling to countries it labels hostile**

**I**ran has banned its sports teams from traveling to countries it considers hostile, state media reported this week, ahead of a scheduled Asian Champions League Elite playoff involving Tractor FC in Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Sports in Tehran announced the restriction but did not mention the upcoming World Cup in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

The decision specifically referenced Tractor FC's playoff against Shabab Al Ahli, set to be played in Saudi Arabia after scheduling changes by the Asian Football Confederation. It said national and club teams are barred from visiting countries deemed unable to ensure athlete safety until further notice.



The move comes amid heightened regional tensions linked to ongoing conflict in the Middle East, which has disrupted several sporting events. Iranian authorities said clubs and the football federation must notify the Asian Football Confederation to relocate fixtures when required.

**From classroom choice to national gold, Anjali Munda's rise defines tribal games breakthrough**



**A**njali Munda, a 15 year old swimmer from Odisha, won gold in the 200 meter freestyle at the Khelo India Tribal Games in Raipur on Wednesday, becoming the first female champion of the event. She clocked 2 minutes 39.02 seconds to secure the title. Raised in a modest family and trained at the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, Anjali began swimming without formal coaching. Her breakthrough came with silver medals at local and national competitions, including the ASMITA League. Despite her achievement, she said she was not fully satisfied and aims to improve her personal best in upcoming backstroke and medley events.

**Rybakina fights back to reach Miami semifinal and renew rivalry with Sabalenka**



**E**lena Rybakina staged a strong comeback to defeat Jessica Pegula 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 and reach the Miami Open semifinals on Thursday. After a slow start, the world number two regained control with aggressive baseline play and composure in key moments. The win marks her second semifinal appearance of the season following her Australian Open title earlier this year. Rybakina has an unbeaten record in Miami semifinals, having reached this stage in both 2023 and 2024, though she fell short in the finals on each occasion. She will now face Aryna Sabalenka, setting up another chapter in their closely contested rivalry on the WTA Tour.



**Zverev powers past Cerundolo to set up Sinner clash in Miami semi-finals**

Alexander Zverev produced a dominant 6-1, 6-2 win over Francisco Cerundolo on Thursday at the Miami Open to reach the semi-finals and set up a meeting with Jannik Sinner. The German reached the last four in Indian Wells and Miami in the same season for the first time in his career. Cerundolo, who had previously reached the Miami semi-finals in 2022, could not match Zverev's level. Zverev now leads their head-to-head 4-3 and will face Sinner, who has beaten him in their last six meetings.



### Nagelsmann shifts focus to team spirit over star power ahead of 2026 World Cup



Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann has emphasized team unity over individual talent in the lead up to the 2026 World Cup, a shift reinforced by captain Joshua Kimmich on Tuesday. Speaking ahead of friendlies against Switzerland and Ghana, Kimmich said success will depend on collective effort rather than assembling the most high profile squad. The change comes after Germany's disappointing early exits at the World Cup on Sunday in 2018 and again on a Sunday in 2022, which exposed internal divisions. Nagelsmann has selected players based on cohesion and adaptability, highlighting figures such as Pascal Gross for their influence on team dynamics. He believes strong mentality and shared purpose can compensate for any gaps in individual quality.

### Delhi High Court backs Gautam Gambhir in fight against deepfake misuse of identity



The Delhi High Court on Wednesday granted interim relief to Gautam Gambhir, directing major technology platforms to remove unauthorized content using his name and likeness for commercial gain. The court said it would order companies such as Meta, Google, and Amazon to take down offending material and provide details of those responsible. Gambhir argued that his identity had been misused through artificial intelligence tools, including deepfake videos and voice cloning, causing reputational harm in his role as India's head coach. The plea also cited the sale of unauthorized merchandise and misleading online promotions. The case reflects a growing trend of public figures seeking legal protection against digital impersonation.

### Ukrainian skeleton racer Vladyslav Heraskevych defends Olympic ban at United Nations forum

Ukrainian skeleton athlete Vladyslav Heraskevych, who was barred from competing at the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics over his plan to wear a helmet honoring Ukrainians killed in the war, spoke at the United Nations on Thursday, saying he still stands by his decision. Heraskevych said he was invited to a student-led "Change the World Model United Nations" event in New York, where he discussed the role of sport beyond medals and competition.

The International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation ruled that his tribute helmet violated Olympic expression guidelines, preventing him from racing. The International Olympic Committee had suggested alternatives such as a black armband or post-race display, but he declined to alter his tribute.



At the forum, Heraskevych joined former Iranian soccer player Shiva Amini, who now lives in exile. He said sport should reflect values and awareness, not only performance. Heraskevych added he remains committed to competing in future World Cup events and aims to participate in the 2030 Winter Olympics, while continuing his advocacy work for Ukraine.

### Coney and Tiffen join New Zealand Hall of Fame, honoring legacy of leadership and excellence



New Zealand Cricket inducted former captain Jeremy Coney and women's great Haidee Tiffen into its Hall of Fame on Tuesday, marking the first additions since the inaugural group was honored last summer. Coney led New Zealand through a historic period in the 1980s, including landmark Test series wins over Australia and England on a Thursday across 1985 and 1986. He scored 2,668 runs in 52 Tests and was known for his leadership under pressure. Tiffen, a standout all rounder, made 128 international appearances after debuting in 1999 and played a key role in New Zealand's World Cup victory in 2000. She later captained the team to the 2009 final, cementing her legacy.

### Kohli's star power and teenage sensation Sooryavanshi drive narrative into new IPL season

The Indian Premier League season begins on Saturday in Bengaluru, combining established stars with emerging talent. Royal Challengers Bengaluru open their title defense against Sunrisers Hyderabad, with Virat Kohli remaining a central figure at 37 despite no longer leading the side. The season will feature ten homegrown captains, marking a notable shift toward domestic leadership. Teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who impressed with a rapid century last year, is expected to attract attention again. Several international players will miss early matches due to fitness concerns. Batting friendly conditions and the



impact player rule are likely to produce high scoring games throughout the tournament.

### India reshapes Border Gavaskar Trophy schedule, sidelines traditional Test venues

India has named Nagpur, Chennai, Guwahati, Ranchi, and Ahmedabad as hosts for the five match Border Gavaskar Trophy against Australia starting on a Wednesday next year. The schedule, announced on Thursday, excludes traditional venues such as Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bengaluru despite their history of hosting major Tests. Guwahati will stage only its second Test match, having made its debut on a Saturday in November 2025. Ahmedabad continues to be a preferred venue for marquee fixtures. Australia currently holds the trophy after winning the previous series at home. India's season will begin earlier with limited overs matches against West Indies and Sri Lanka.



### Novak Djokovic withdraws from Monte Carlo Masters due to shoulder injury



Novak Djokovic withdrew from the Monte Carlo Masters on Friday due to a right shoulder injury, tournament organizers said. The 38-year-old had already pulled out of the ongoing Miami Open with the same issue.

Djokovic last played earlier in March at Indian Wells, where he lost in the round of 16 to Jack Draper. A two-time champion in Monte Carlo, he won the title in 2013 and 2015.

American player Taylor Fritz also withdrew on Thursday due to injury. The tournament is scheduled to begin on Sunday, with Carlos Alcaraz set to defend his title.

### Bolivia move closer to world cup return with late playoff win over Suriname

Bolivia edged Suriname 2-1 on Thursday in their inter-confederation playoff semi-final, moving within one win of a first World Cup appearance in 32 years. Liam van Gelderen put Suriname ahead early in the second half before Moises Paniagua equalized in the 72nd minute. Miguel Terceros scored the winner from the penalty spot seven minutes later. Bolivia will face Iraq in the final playoff on Tuesday, with a place at the World Cup in the United States, Mexico, and Canada at stake.



### World Skate outlines qualification pathway for Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games

World Skate on Thursday announced the qualification system for skateboarding at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games in park and street disciplines. The pathway includes two phases, starting with the World Skateboarding Tour from June 2026 to March 2028, followed by a final qualifying series in 2028 featuring the top 44 athletes per discipline and gender. Nations can enter up to three athletes per event, with additional ranking-based entries and continental representation ensured. A universality quota will also allow spots for underrepresented countries.

**John Boyega hints at return to 'Star Wars' franchise**



**J**ohn Boyega has suggested he may return to the 'Star Wars' universe after confirming he has held discussions with Lucasfilm about reprising his role as Finn. Speaking at MegaCon Orlando on Sunday, the actor responded to fan questions by acknowledging that conversations with franchise leadership have already taken place. Boyega starred in the sequel trilogy films 'The Force Awakens', 'The Last Jedi', and 'The Rise of Skywalker'. His comments come as the franchise prepares future projects, including 'The Mandalorian and Grogu', scheduled for release in 2026. He has previously said he would have approached the sequel storyline differently, particularly in how legacy characters were handled and the overall direction of the trilogy.

**Paul McCartney announces reflective new album 'The Boys of Dungeon Lane'**



**P**aul McCartney has announced a new album titled 'The Boys of Dungeon Lane', set for release on May 29, with the lead single 'Days We Left Behind' already out. The former Beatles member said the album is deeply inspired by his childhood memories in Liverpool and early life experiences before global fame. In comments shared on Sunday, McCartney described the project as a mix of nostalgia and new love songs. The album reflects on family life, childhood streets, and early friendships that shaped him. Recording began several years ago with producer Andrew Watt, with sessions completed around touring schedules in Los Angeles and Sussex. McCartney also performs multiple

**Vivek Agnihotri, Bhushan Kumar team up for 'Operation Sindoor' inspired by Lt General K. J. S. Dhillon's book**

**F**ilmmaker Vivek Agnihotri on Thursday announced his next project, Operation Sindoor, a feature film developed in collaboration with producer Bhushan Kumar of T Series. The film is based on former Indian Army officer Lt General K. J. S. Dhillon's book 'Operation Sindoor: The Untold Story of India's Deep Strikes Inside Pakistan' and will explore India's covert military operations across the border.

Agnihotri said the story is rooted in real events and shaped by extensive research and inputs from multiple wings of the Indian armed forces. He added that the film is set in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack and will depict strategic military responses and their wider security implications in the region.

According to the director, the project aims to present a fact-driven narrative rather than dramatization, focusing on clarity and authenticity. Kumar said the film is a responsibility-driven project meant to document significant national events with honesty.

The announcement also references the 2025 India-Pakistan military escalation



following missile strikes under the codename Operation Sindoor, launched after the April Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians, with further strikes targeting militant infrastructure in May.

**BTS marks historic comeback in Seoul after military hiatus, launches new global era**

**B**T S made a landmark return on Saturday with their first full-group performance in nearly four years at Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul after completing mandatory military service. The seven-member group—Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V, and Jung Kook—reunited on stage to launch what they described as a new era, ahead of an 80-plus-date global tour across the United States, Europe, and Asia.

The show was held at a historically significant site near Gyeongbokgung Palace, with special government permission, and incorporated traditional Korean cultural elements, including hanbok-inspired styling and staging designed to highlight the landmark.

Their set list included new material from their album "Arirang," released on Friday, along with global hits such as "Dynamite"



and "Butter." Fans from around the world attended or watched via livestream, marking a major moment in K-pop history and Korean cultural visibility.

**Hogwarts returns in nostalgic teaser for new 'Harry Potter' series**

**T**he trailer for the upcoming 'Harry Potter' television series has triggered a wave of nostalgia as it revisits Hogwarts, magical spells, and Harry's early life. HBO has indicated that the first season is expected to premiere during Christmas 2026. The teaser shows Harry living under the stairs with the Dursleys, meeting Hagrid, and discovering the wizarding world before boarding the Hogwarts Express. It also briefly features Ron, Hermione, and characters such as Dumbledore, Snape, and Draco Malfoy. Dominic McLaughlin plays Harry, with Alastair Stout as Ron and Arabella Stanton as Hermione. The series is planned as a faithful adaptation of J. K. Rowling's books, with each season covering one novel from the original saga.



**Zendaya reflects on friendship and love ahead of 'The Drama' release**



**Z**endaya has shared her thoughts on relationships, saying she believes strong marriages are built on friendship rather than perfection. In an interview published on Sunday, she said couples who genuinely enjoy each other's company and function as best friends set a strong foundation for love. Her comments come amid ongoing speculation about her relationship with Tom Holland, fueled by public appearances and online discussion. The pair have previously described each other as close friends in past interviews before confirming their relationship years later. Recent rumors about engagement have circulated, though neither has directly addressed them. Zendaya's upcoming film 'The Drama' is scheduled for theatrical release in 2026.

**Nandamuri Balakrishna receives lifetime honor at 'International Film Festival of Delhi'**

**V**eteran actor Nandamuri Balakrishna was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 'International Film Festival of Delhi 2026' for his contribution to Indian cinema over five decades. The ceremony took place on Sunday at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. The recognition highlighted his long career and influence in Telugu cinema. His film 'Bhagavanth Kesari' was also screened at the event following its earlier national recognition. During his speech, Balakrishna thanked his family and credited his parents for shaping his journey. He also spoke about his father's legacy in social reform and women's empowerment, calling the award a proud moment in his career spanning 50 years.

**Ram Gopal Varma says 'Syndicate' marks creative reinvention**



**F**ilmmaker Ram Gopal Varma reflected on his changing inspirations, saying his creative influences have evolved from childhood books to global cinema. In a post shared on Sunday, he discussed early ambitions and how exposure to different art forms shaped his filmmaking style. He cited classics such as 'The Godfather' as major influences. Varma also announced his upcoming project 'Syndicate', describing it as a thriller about a sudden collapse of law and order within a single day and the rise of a powerful organization. He said the film represents a shift in his creative approach as he rethinks his storytelling style and explores a new phase in his career.

### Rajkummar Rao and Sanya Malhotra film 'Toaster' set for Netflix release



The dark comedy 'Toaster', starring Rajkummar Rao and Sanya Malhotra, will premiere on Netflix on April 15. The film features an ensemble cast including Abhishek Banerjee and Archana Puran Singh, and marks the debut production of Rajkummar Rao and Patralekhaa's banner Kampa Film. The story follows a miserly man who becomes obsessed with a toaster he gifts to a newlywed couple, leading to a chaotic chain of criminal mishaps. Producers described the film as a blend of dark humor and unpredictable storytelling. Netflix highlighted it as part of its focus on fresh voices and unconventional narratives in upcoming releases.

### Bill Maher set to receive Mark Twain humor prize after White House denial



Comedian Bill Maher will receive the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for American Humor, the institution confirmed on Thursday, following earlier confusion after a White House denial of his selection. The announcement came less than a week after reports first surfaced and were publicly rejected by White House officials, who called them false. A Kennedy Center spokesperson said Maher has influenced American discourse for decades through his politically charged comedy. Maher responded with humor, joking that the award is like an Emmy, except he wins it. The honor, presented since 1998, recognizes major contributions to American comedy, with past recipients including Conan O'Brien, Dave Chappelle, and Tina Fey. The award ceremony is scheduled for June 28. The decision arrives amid ongoing political tension surrounding the Kennedy Center's leadership and governance changes in Washington.

### Savannah Guthrie to return to 'Today' on April 6 after mother's disappearance in emotional family ordeal

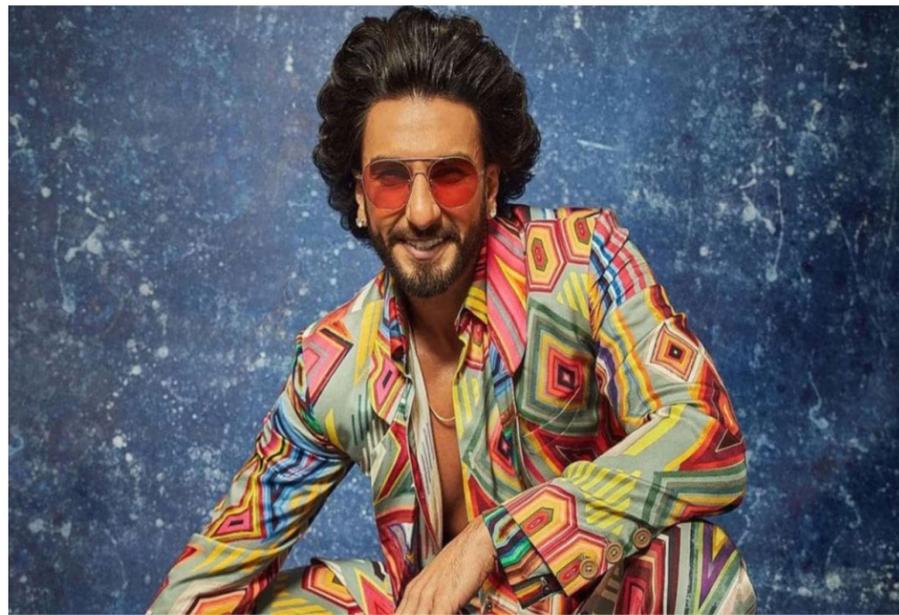
Savannah Guthrie will return to 'Today' show on April 6 after a two-month absence following the disappearance of her 84-year-old mother, Nancy Guthrie, who was reported missing from her Arizona home on a Saturday in early February in what authorities believe was an abduction. Investigators have said surveillance footage showed a masked man outside the residence on the night she vanished, and the family has offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to her recovery. In an emotional interview aired on Friday, Guthrie said returning to the "Today" show will be difficult but necessary, describing it as part of her purpose during an ongoing crisis. She said she hopes to bring genuine joy back on air while acknowledging the uncertainty and emotional toll of her mother's disappearance, which continues to deeply affect her family.



### Court suggests apology in Ranveer Singh 'Kantara: Chapter 1' mimicry case

The Karnataka High Court reviewed a petition filed by Ranveer Singh seeking to quash a complaint and police case over alleged remarks linked to a divine character from 'Kantara: Chapter 1'. On Wednesday, the court questioned procedural delays and observed that the comments were inappropriate, highlighting responsibility for public figures. The bench suggested

that if an apology is required, Singh should personally appear at Chamundi Hill with his counsel. The matter has been adjourned to April 10 for further hearing. The controversy stems from a viral video where Singh mimicked a scene from the film, sparking backlash online. He later issued a public apology stating he intended only to praise Rishab Shetty's performance.



### Christian Bale draws punk inspiration for role in 'The Bride'

Christian Bale has revealed that punk icons Sid Vicious and Richey Edwards influenced his performance in the upcoming film 'The Bride', a reimagining of the Frankenstein story. In an interview with United Kingdom media, Bale said director Maggie Gyllenhaal encouraged cast members to use music as part of their creative process during filming. He explained that music helped shape emotional tone and character development throughout production. Bale also reflected on how live performances and personal musical experiences inform his acting choices. Jessie Buckley stars opposite him as the Bride in the film, which explores themes of identity, isolation, and transformation through



a modern interpretation of the classic Frankenstein narrative.

### Stephen Colbert teams up with son for 'Lord of the Rings' film



Late night host Stephen Colbert will co-write a new 'Lord of the Rings' film titled 'The Lord of the Rings: Shadow of the Past' alongside his son Peter McGee and franchise writer Philippa Boyens. The announcement was revealed on Wednesday through Warner Bros. and supported by producer Peter Jackson in a social media introduction. Colbert, a longtime fan of J. R. R. Tolkien's world, said he first discussed ideas for the project years ago and developed a framing concept involving characters from the original story in a new adventure set years after Frodo's journey. The film is expected to follow Andy Serkis' 'The Hunt for Gollum', which is scheduled for release next year. The project also comes as Colbert's late night show prepares to conclude its run in May after its cancellation was previously announced.

### Hansal Mehta returns to food storytelling with AI series 'Khana Dil Se'



Filmmaker Hansal Mehta is returning to culinary storytelling with the upcoming AI-driven series 'Khana Dil Se', an exploration of India's kitchens and food heritage. The project is developed by True Story Films in collaboration with Collective Studios and Collective Artists Network. It marks Mehta's creative return to food-based content decades after his early television show 'Khana Khazana', which helped popularize cookery programming in India. The new series blends artificial intelligence with human storytelling to trace migration, memory, and cultural identity through traditional recipes. Mehta said food serves as a record of human history passed across generations. Producer Sahil Saigal added that AI will enhance, not replace, storytelling by helping uncover undocumented culinary traditions. The series aims to present India's food culture as a living archive, combining technology and heritage in a first-of-its-kind format.

# Celebrating Durga Ashtami

## Reverence, rituals and the triumph of Shakti



**O**n the auspicious occasion of Durga Ashtami, observed during Chaitra Navratri, Hindus across the world come together to honor the divine feminine power, Maa Durga. This day is widely regarded as one of the most significant within the nine-day Navratri festival and is marked by devotion, rituals and the celebration of strength, courage and righteousness.

### Significance of Durga Ashtami

Durga Ashtami, also known as Mahashstami, falls on the eighth day of Navratri. It is dedicated to Maa Durga in her most powerful form, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil. Devotees believe that worship on this day removes negative energies, purifies the mind and soul, and blesses families with prosperity, health and spiritual strength. A key tradition is the Kanya Poojan or Kanjak ritual, rooted in ancient Vedic practice. In this ritual, nine young girls representing the nine forms of Goddess Durga are worshipped, honored and offered meals, gifts and new clothes. It is believed that serving the Kanya is equivalent to serving the Goddess herself, fostering humility, compassion and gratitude.

### Chaitra Navratri: Renewal and devotion

Chaitra Navratri, observed in the spring season, marks the beginning of the Hindu New Year in several regions of India. It is a time of fasting, prayer and spiritual reflection, encouraging devotees to begin the year with renewed energy and auspicious intent.

Durga Ashtami during this period is considered especially powerful for chanting mantras, performing pujas and observing fasts. Temples across India and Hindu communities worldwide organize special rituals,

cultural programs and collective prayers, creating a shared atmosphere of devotion.

### Kanya Poojan: Ritual and reverence

The Kanya Poojan remains central to Durga Ashtami observances. Devotees typically:

- ▶ Cleanse homes and puja spaces as a symbol of purity
- ▶ Invite nine young girls representing the Navadurga forms
- ▶ Wash their feet, offer flowers and serve special meals
- ▶ Present gifts or clothes as a gesture of devotion

The ritual underscores respect for the divine feminine while also strengthening community bonds, as families and neighborhoods come together in celebration.

### Global celebration and cultural importance

Durga Ashtami is observed by Hindu communities across India and around the world, including in the United States, Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia. Temples host bhajans, recitations of the Durga Saptashati and community feasts. Many families also observe the day at home through fasting, prayer and traditional rituals, preserving the spirit of devotion across generations and geographies. Durga Ashtami is a reminder of strength, courage and righteousness, inviting devotees to reflect on the divine feminine energy within and around them. Through prayer, ritual and devotion, it becomes a moment of spiritual renewal and collective harmony.

May Maa Durga bless all with health, prosperity, courage and peace, and may Chaitra Navratri bring joy, devotion and balance into every home.

*Happy Durga Ashtami.*



# Ram Navami

**Devotion, dharma and the timeless recitation of the Ramayana**



**O**n the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami, observed during Chaitra Navratri, Hindus worldwide celebrate the birth of Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu, revered for embodying virtue, righteousness and unwavering devotion. The sacred day is marked by prayer, fasting, temple rituals and recitations that form a cornerstone of Hindu spiritual and cultural life.

**Significance of Ram Navami**

Ram Navami falls on the ninth day of Chaitra Navratri and marks the birth of Lord Rama in Ayodhya. The day symbolizes the victory of dharma over adharma, reinforcing the eternal triumph of righteousness over evil.

**Devotees believe worshipping** Lord Rama on this day brings peace, prosperity, spiritual strength and guidance toward a virtuous life. Homes and temples are decorated, while idols and images of Lord Rama are adorned with flowers, silk garments and ornaments in celebration.

**Holy Ramayana recitals: 24 hours, 48 hours and week-long paths**

A central tradition of Ram Navami is the Ramayana Path, the continuous recitation of the epic Ramayana. Depending on community practice, these recitations may last 24 hours, 48 hours or even an entire week.

These readings are often accompanied by bhajans, kirtans and devotional singing, creating a deeply immersive spiritual atmosphere. Families, communities and temples participate together, strengthening unity and shared devotion.

The recitals are considered highly auspicious, believed to purify the mind,

remove obstacles and bring blessings to devotees and their families.

**Chaitra Navratri: A time for spiritual renewal**

Ram Navami is observed during Chaitra Navratri, a period dedicated to spiritual reflection, fasting and devotion. The festival begins with worship of Goddess Durga and culminates in the celebration of Lord Rama's birth.

This sacred period highlights the balance between divine feminine energy

and the moral strength of Lord Rama, encouraging discipline, self-reflection and righteous living.

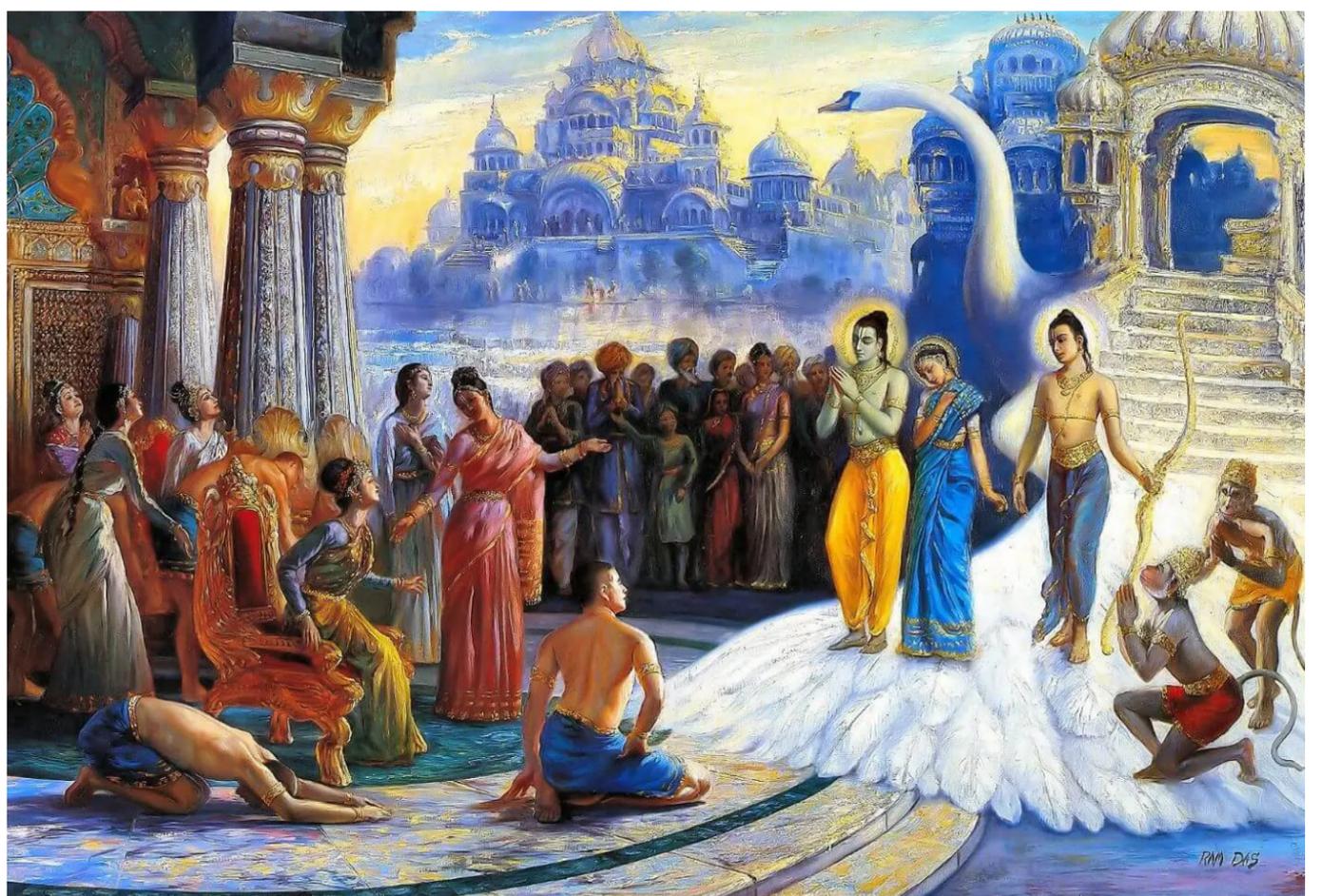
**Global celebration and community devotion**

Across India and worldwide, including in the United States, Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia, Ram Navami is celebrated with temple rituals, Ramayana recitations and community feasts. Many devotees also observe the festival at home through fasting and prayer, preserving its spiritual essence across generations.

Ram Navami is a reminder of dharma, courage and devotion, inspiring devotees to embody the virtues of Lord Rama in daily life.

Through prayer, fasting and sacred recitations, the festival reinforces the timeless values of truth, righteousness and compassion. May Lord Rama bless all with wisdom, peace and prosperity, and may Chaitra Navratri fill every home with harmony and devotion.

*Happy Ram Navami.*





# Daniel Biss engages with Indian community leaders to strengthen campaign ties

By: Dr. Avi Verma

**D**aniel Biss, Democratic nominee for Illinois' ninth Congressional District, recently met with Hindu community leaders, Indian business owners, and civic representatives along Chicago's Devon Avenue at Uru-Swati. The meeting focused on strengthening relationships with the Hindu community while emphasizing continued engagement beyond the election cycle.

During the interaction, community leaders shared key priorities, including support for small businesses, community safety, cultural understanding, and increased civic participation within the Hindu community. Biss listened attentively, encouraging open dialogue and demonstrating a commitment to understanding the concerns and



contributions of the community. The discussion reflected a shared goal of building a relationship rooted in trust, respect, and consistent engagement.

Following the meeting, Biss toured Devon Avenue, engaging directly with Indian business owners and witnessing the vibrant economic and cultural life of the area.

These interactions highlighted the vital

role Hindu and Indian-owned businesses play in the local economy. During conversations with Dr. Avi Verma of the IndoUS Tribune and other leaders in attendance, Biss acknowledged the community's concerns and reaffirmed his commitment to pursuing meaningful, practical solutions.

The discussion also included broader cultural and global perspectives, including the role of the Hindu community within

the Indian diaspora and the importance of strengthening ties between India and the United States. Leaders emphasized the need for greater representation, cross-community collaboration, and mutual respect among diverse communities.

Overall, the meeting reflected a continued effort to build stronger connections with the Hindu community, recognizing its significant cultural, economic, and civic contributions to the region



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**Mata Bhagat: Avi Verma**



# State Bank of India Chicago highlights zero balance accounts and attractive remittance rates at community seminar



By: Jayanti Oza

**T**he State Bank of India (SBI Chicago) hosted a successful “Customer Connect” seminar at the National India Hub in Schaumburg, spotlighting its zero balance checking and savings accounts along with competitive remittance rates for the Indian American community.

Led by SBI Chicago Chief Executive Officer R. K. Jain and his team, the session offered detailed insights into a broad range of banking solutions tailored to the financial needs of non resident Indians and the wider diaspora. A key focus of the event was the bank’s zero balance account offerings, which attracted strong interest from attendees seeking flexible and convenient banking options.

The seminar also featured SBI’s remittance services, highlighting fast, secure, and cost effective money transfers between the United States and India, a vital



service for families and businesses managing cross border financial commitments.

In addition, the team presented information on non resident external accounts, non resident ordinary accounts, and investment options including fixed deposits and certificates of deposit. Among these, SBI’s certificate of deposit offerings were noted for their competitiveness in the current market environment.

The interactive session allowed participants to engage directly with banking professionals, ask questions, and receive personalized financial guidance. Many attendees also took immediate steps to open new accounts during the seminar, reflecting strong community interest and confidence in SBI’s services.

The event underscored SBI Chicago’s continued commitment to delivering reliable, customer focused banking solutions while deepening its engagement with the Indian American community.



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by **Legendary Lakhbir Singh Lakha**

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## BAPS scholar Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami conferred Sahitya Akademi Award for Sanskrit literature

By: Vandana Jhingan

**M**ahamahopadhyaya Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami of the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha has been awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 by the Government of India for his Sanskrit work 'Prasthanachatushtaye Brahmaghosha', marking a significant recognition of contemporary Sanskrit scholarship and Hindu philosophy.



The work has been selected as the finest Sanskrit literary contribution of the year for its comprehensive exposition of the Brahma principle based on the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Brahma Sutras and the Vachanamrut of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. Written in a sutra-based poetic form, the text is regarded by scholars as philosophical poetry combining literary refinement with

deep metaphysical insight.

Composed under the guidance of His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, the work was published in 2018 and reflects the Akshar-Purushottam Darshan tradition. The Sahitya Akademi selection committee praised its originality, philosophical depth and literary excellence.

Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami, who heads the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, is an internationally renowned Sanskrit scholar with multiple academic distinctions including M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., and an honorary D.Sc. from the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur. He is also the author of 'Swaminarayana Siddhanta Sudha' and the five-volume 'Swaminarayan Bhashyam' on the Prasthanatrayi.

Over the years, he has received several honors including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, the Mahamahopadhyaya title from Kavikulguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, and recognition from institutions in India and abroad.

Expressing gratitude, Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami dedicated the award to Bhagwan Swaminarayan and his gurus, Pramukh Swami Maharaj and Mahant Swami Maharaj, stating that the recognition highlights the enduring relevance of Sanskrit and India's philosophical heritage.

The Sahitya Akademi Award is one of India's highest literary honors, presented annually to outstanding literary works across 24 languages.

## Chicago Kali Bari celebrates vibrant Holi festival in Glen Ellyn

By: Jayanti Oza

**T**he Chicago Kali Bari Temple hosted its annual Holi Color Festival on March 8, 2026, in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, drawing more than 400 devotees and visitors who gathered from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to celebrate the festival of colors with music, dance and traditional rituals.

Families, children and elders took part in the symbolic throwing of colors, representing unity, love and the triumph of good over evil. The temple grounds turned into a vibrant celebration space as participants enjoyed a shared atmosphere of joy and togetherness.

Chicago-based DJ Bharat Oza kept

the energy high with Bollywood and Holi-themed music, encouraging continuous dancing and celebration across generations.

Chicago Kali Bari Founder and President Dr. Ram Chakraborty attended the event and actively participated in the festivities, highlighting the temple's commitment to preserving cultural traditions and strengthening community bonds.

The event was supported by a large team of volunteers, including youth volunteers Aarav Thakore, Advika Jain, Anvika Jain, Arjun Thakore, Krish Suman, Vardaan Tiwari, Vihaan Murlidhar and Yash Mohanty, along with adult volunteers Amit Jain, Anand Tiwari,



As colors filled the air and laughter echoed across the temple grounds.



Dr. Ram Chakraborty, Founder and President of Chicago Kali Bari and Anand Tiwari playing Holi with Devotees.

Eva, Hridesh Bansal, Indu Tiwari, Jayant Thakore, Lina Chakraborty, Mahak Jain, Nag Bhushan Pandit ji, Surendra Sabaliya and Surendra Suman.

Attendees also enjoyed food generously provided by sponsors Shimla Peppers

and an anonymous devotee, adding a culinary highlight to the celebration. The event once again underscored Holi as a unifying festival, bringing the Chicago community together in a vibrant expression of culture, tradition and joy.

## Indian-origin healthcare venture in United States faces setback after Chicago hospital closures

By: Dr. Avi Verma

A major healthcare shake-up is unfolding in the Chicago area, as safety-net hospitals under Indian-origin ownership face mounting operational and financial pressures. West Suburban Medical Center in Oak Park is now under intense scrutiny following the earlier closure of its sister institution, Weiss Memorial Hospital in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, which ceased operations in late 2025 after a series of regulatory and infrastructure failures.

Both hospitals are part of Resilience Healthcare, a United States-based hospital system led by Indian-origin physician-entrepreneur Dr. Manoj Prasad, who acquired the facilities in 2022 with the stated goal of revitalizing struggling community hospitals.

According to emerging reports, hospital leadership has attributed some of the financial distress to failures in the electronic medical record system, which allegedly impacted billing and revenue collection. While such systems are critical for hospital reimbursement cycles, independent verification of this claim remains limited, and industry experts



Dr. Manoj Prasad, CEO of Resilience Healthcare, speaks to the media at West Suburban Medical Center following the closure of Weiss Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

note that operational, compliance, and funding issues typically play a larger role in hospital closures.

In the case of Weiss Memorial, investigations found serious compliance

deficiencies, including infrastructure breakdowns such as a prolonged air-conditioning failure. These issues ultimately led federal regulators to revoke Medicare funding, an essential revenue stream, forcing the hospital to shut down services.

The closure has raised broader concerns about the viability of privately run safety-net hospitals serving low-income and Medicare-dependent populations. Financial strain, aging infrastructure and regulatory compliance challenges continue to affect such institutions nationwide.

For the Indian American business and medical community, the developments highlight the growing but complex role of diaspora-led healthcare investments in the United States. While such acquisitions are often positioned as turnaround opportunities, experts caution that reviving distressed hospitals requires sustained capital, strong governance and regulatory alignment, not just operational restructuring.

With Weiss now shuttered, attention is turning to West Suburban Medical Center, where stakeholders fear a similar trajectory unless immediate corrective measures are taken.

## Rajasthan Association of Chicago celebrates Gangaur with cultural fervour in Naperville

By: Dr. Avi Verma

The Rajasthan Association of Chicago brought the colors and traditions of Rajasthan to life as it celebrated the festival of Gangaur on Saturday at a clubhouse in Naperville. The event saw enthusiastic participation from more than 50 women, along with their spouses and children, creating a warm and festive community gathering.

Gangaur, one of Rajasthan's most cherished festivals, is dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. It symbolizes marital bliss, the arrival of spring and prosperity. Traditionally, women observe fasts, perform rituals, sing folk songs and take

part in colorful processions, praying for the well-being and longevity of their husbands or for a loving life partner.

The Naperville celebration reflected these traditions through themed decorations that showcased Rajasthan's cultural heritage. The event was organized by Neha Patodia, whose attention to detail helped create an authentic and immersive experience for attendees.

Guests enjoyed traditional Rajasthani cuisine, with the highlight being Ghevar, a seasonal dessert closely associated with the festival. The atmosphere came alive with Gangaur folk songs and cultural performances, as participants dressed in vibrant ethnic attire celebrated together.



The event strengthened cultural roots and community bonds among members of the Indian diaspora in the Chicago area. The

association also announced its next major gathering, the annual picnic scheduled for August 1, 2026.

# Artificial womb technology: A new frontier in saving extremely premature infants

By: Dr. Avi Verma

**A**dvances in neonatal medicine are steadily pushing the boundaries of what is possible in saving extremely premature infants. Among the most promising and debated innovations is the development of artificial womb-like systems designed to support babies born at the very edge of viability.

## Understanding the challenge of extreme prematurity

Infants born between 22 and 24 weeks of gestation, often referred to as micro-preemies, face immense survival challenges. At this early stage:

- ▶ The lungs are too underdeveloped to breathe air effectively
- ▶ Mechanical ventilation, while lifesaving, can damage fragile lung tissue
- ▶ The risks of brain injury, infection, and long-term disability are significantly elevated

Despite major advancements in neonatal intensive care units, survival rates remain limited and complications are common.

## The science behind artificial womb technology

Researchers in Europe and the United States are exploring systems that aim to replicate the natural conditions of the womb. These experimental technologies, sometimes referred to as perinatal life support systems, work by:

- ▶ Placing the infant in a sterile, fluid-filled environment similar to amniotic fluid



- ▶ Maintaining circulation through the umbilical cord
- ▶ Using an external device that functions like a placenta, supplying oxygen and nutrients

Animal studies, particularly in fetal lambs, have demonstrated that such systems can support continued development outside the mother's body for extended periods. These findings have generated optimism about future applications in human neonatal care.

## Where does the technology stand today?

While the concept is groundbreaking, it is important to note that:

- ▶ Artificial womb systems are not yet approved for clinical use in humans
- ▶ Most research remains in the preclinical or early experimental stage
- ▶ Regulatory bodies, including the United States Food and Drug Administration, will require extensive safety and efficacy data before permitting human trials

In short, while progress is real, routine clinical use is still years away.

## Potential impact on neonatal care

If proven safe and effective, this technology could transform outcomes for the most vulnerable patients by:

- ▶ Increasing survival rates for extremely premature infants
- ▶ Reducing dependence on invasive ventilation
- ▶ Lowering the incidence of chronic lung disease and neurological complications
- ▶ Potentially redefining the threshold of viability in modern medicine

## Ethical and social considerations

With innovation comes responsibility. Artificial womb technology raises complex ethical questions:

- ▶ How early can life be sustained outside the human body?
- ▶ What are the implications for parental choice and medical decision-making?
- ▶ Will access to such advanced care be

equitable or limited to specialized centers?

These questions will require thoughtful dialogue among physicians, ethicists, policymakers and families.

## Looking ahead

Artificial womb research represents one of the most exciting frontiers in modern medicine. While still in development, it holds the promise of bridging a critical gap in neonatal care, offering hope to families facing the uncertainty of extreme prematurity.

As science advances, the focus must remain not only on saving lives, but also on ensuring quality of life, ethical integrity and equitable access.

## Disclaimer

*This article is for informational and educational purposes only and should not be considered medical advice. Readers are encouraged to consult qualified healthcare professionals for personalized medical guidance.*



# Personal finance insights: News & Features

● Dr. K C Gupta, YBB Personal Finance

**CONTRARIAN INDICATORS**

AAll Bull-Bear Spread -21.6% (very low)  
 CNN Fear & Greed Index 14 (extreme fear)  
 NYSE %Above 50-dMA 21.65% (oversold)  
 SP500 %Above 50-dMA 21.20% (oversold)

ICI Fund Allocations (Cumulative), 1/31/26  
 OEFs & ETFs: Stocks 61.83%, Hybrids 4.01%, Bonds 17.25%, M-Mkt 16.92%

**INTEREST RATES**

CME FedWatch  
 Cycle peak 5.25-5.50%  
 Current 3.50-3.75%  
 FOMC 4/29/26+ hold  
 FOMC 6/17/26+ hold

Treasury  
 T-Bills 3-mo yield 3.74%, 1-yr 3.80%;  
 T-Notes 2-yr 3.88%, 5-yr 4.01%, 10-yr 4.39%;  
 T-Bonds 30-yr 4.96%;  
 TIPS/Real yields 5-yr 1.38%, 10-yr 2.01%, 30-yr 2.72%  
 FRNs Index 3.643%

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 TIAA Traditional Annuity (Accumulation) Rates  
 Restricted RC 5.00%, RA 4.75%  
 Flexible RCP 4.25%, SRA 4.00%, IRA-101110+ 3.30%  
 TSP G Fund 4.00% (previous 4.250%)

India Fear & Greed MMI 25.99 (extreme fear)  
 Weekly ETFs: INDA -3.06%, INDY -2.78%, EPI -3.35%, INDH -1.52%, SPY -1.80%



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

**ECONOMY**

A new Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF) at \$6.2 billion will provide some protection from external economic shocks. Indian economy depends on various imports/exports. In addition, special rules may apply for trade financing & duties/fees during crises. Rules for handling returning-exports due to disruptions have already been changed - previously, those were treated as imports.

**CHINA**

India-China business relations continue to thaw. Chinese companies can acquire up to 10% of Indian companies without approval & higher minority stakes may get quicker approvals. The new rules are officially for land-border-countries

(LBCs; China, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh & Myanmar) in areas of manufacturing of electronic components, capital goods & solar cells, but they are really targeted for China; Pakistan is included as LBC but there is hardly any business or trade relationship with it. India has huge trade deficit with China despite border tensions - exports only \$15.9 billion, imports \$108.2 billion.

Chinese Hisense (consumer electronics & home appliances) & EPACK Durable have inaugurated a joint-venture (JV) to manufacture room air-conditioners in Sri City, Andhra Pradesh (AP), the cooling capital of India. Carrier-India is expanding its air-conditioning operations on Sri City.

Almost 40% on India's air-conditioners are manufactured in Sri City, a Southeastern coastal special economic zone (SEZ; also, DTZ, FTWZ) founded in 2008. Due to its industrial nature, population density is low, especially compared to big cities.

**PHARMA**

Why 47% of US GENERICS in US that come from India are affected by the Strait of Hormuz closure? Lot of pharma APIs from China are consolidated by traders in Middle East & then shipped to India (some come directly from China to India). India imports 40% of its crude oil from Middle East that's used for energy as well as several pharma ingredients & other petrochemicals (acetaminophen, amoxicillin, glycerin, metformin, metoprolol, statins, etc). Medical supplies are affected too.

Pharma supply-chains still operate with just-in-time-inventories (JITs) because of expiry dates or the requirements cold or cryogenic storages - shipments that are delayed too much may have to be discarded. If many containers are stuck in transit, that may also create container shortages. The global pharma industry

has had some prior experiences from the pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war, etc.

**INDIA GPS NavIC**

Several GEO/GSO-GPS NavIC satellites had Swiss atomic clocks (3 per satellite) that failed prematurely or completed 10-yr lives. This problem was first noted in 2017 but wasn't addressed aggressively. Moreover, the mandatory use of NavIC GPS in India was pushed. Newer NavIC satellites had indigenous atomic clocks that are also failing prematurely. So, only 3 of 11 NavIC satellites remain functional for GPS after 03/2026 (remaining satellites may still be used for other purposes, but not for GPS). A functioning GPS system requires at least 4 satellites for accurate determinations of latitude, longitude, altitude & clock time.

A 2025 NavIC satellite launch was a failure because it didn't achieve a geosynchronous orbit. Subsequent launches were delayed due to some PSLV rocket issues (2 failures in other launch applications). There are global/ regional GPS systems (GEO/GSO - BeiDou/ China, QZSS/ Japan, NavIC/ India; MEO - US-GPS, Galileo/EU, SES, GLONASS/ Russia; LEO - Starlink/ SpaceX, OneWeb/ Eutelsat) that India can tap, but the domestic NavIC GPS system was developed after US denied access to its US-GPS during 1999 India-Pakistan Kargil War.

NavIC = Navigation with Indian Constellation, PSLV = Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle

GEO/GSO = Geostationary/ Geosynchronous (high orbit) earth orbit, MEO = medium earth orbit, LEO = low earth orbit

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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.

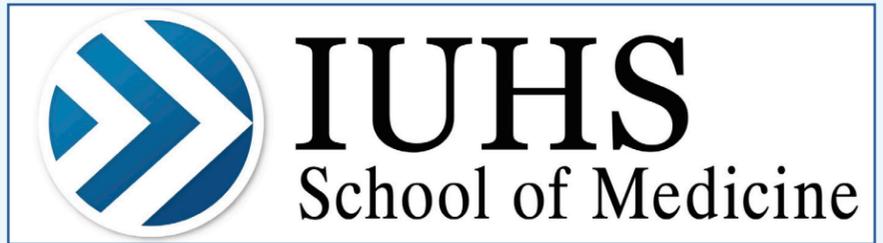
- ▶ Lecturio self-assessments which are mandatory but not graded.

**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. Lecturio:** 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.

Lecturio 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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# Inside Spring 2026's biggest designer debuts redefining luxury fashion

Spring 2026 has arrived as a defining moment for luxury fashion, driven less by seasonal trends and more by a sweeping transformation at the top of the industry. A wave of high-profile creative director changes has reshaped iconic houses, turning this season into a global debut stage where heritage codes are being rewritten in real time and instantly translated into must-have pieces.

At Christian Dior, Jonathan Anderson's full-house vision introduces a playful yet precise reinterpretation of femininity, with sculptural tailoring, cinched silhouettes, and standout accessories like bold-buckle belts and refined ballet flats setting the tone. Over at Chanel, Matthieu Blazy's debut has already triggered a surge in demand, led by the reimagined two-tone pumps and the viral Chanel 25 bag, which has quickly become one of the season's most coveted accessories.

Loewe enters a new chapter under Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez, who bring a sharper, structured sensibility rooted in ease and modern American sportswear. Sculptural leather jackets and the versatile Amazona tote define their direction. At Gucci, Demna balances restraint with disruption, reworking



Elsewhere, Simone Bellotti injects bold color blocking into Jil Sander, while Louise Trotter elevates Bottega Veneta with fluid tailoring, archival



heritage signatures like the Jackie 1961 bag and horsebit detailing through a contemporary lens.

references, and sculptural accessories that feel both modern and timeless. Pierpaolo Piccioli's Balenciaga focuses on clarity and emotion, delivering pared-back pieces that emphasize wearability and form.

Glenn Martens brings a wearable edge to Maison Margiela through reconstructed denim, deconstructed tailoring, and directional footwear, while Nicholas Aburn's Area leans into

nightlife glamour with crystal embellishments and statement minis designed for day-to-night dressing. Dario Vitale's final Versace collection channels youthful energy through sporty separates and bold accessories.

Together, these debuts signal a recalibration of luxury itself, where storytelling, immediacy, and desirability converge. Spring 2026 is not just a season of fashion changes, but a reset of what modern luxury looks like, and more importantly, how it is worn, shared, and consumed.



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