

A Weekly E-newspaper Initiative of the HULAHUL FOUNDATION

# THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow



Ravi Singh & Srishti

## UNDER THE MOONLIGHT OF WISDOM: A SOULFUL TRIBUTE ON GURU PURNIMA

Once a year, on a full moon night drenched in silver light, time pauses. The noise quiets, the heart softens, and we turn inward to honor the ones who taught us how to truly see.

*Guru Purnima. Not just a date, but a feeling. A celebration. A soul-deep bow of gratitude.*

In the ancient language of Sanskrit, “Guru” means the one who dispels darkness. And truly, what could be more sacred than someone who walks into your life—not to give you answers, but to teach you how to ask the right questions?

From the moment we are born, life sends us teachers in many forms. Some hold chalk and blackboards. Others hold our hands. Some teach us equations, others teach us how to love, forgive, or simply breathe. A few enter quietly, changing our lives forever without ever asking for thanks.

Guru Purnima is a chance to pause, reflect, and whisper those long-overdue words: Thank you.

### The Story Behind the Celebration

The roots of Guru Purnima reach deep into Indian tradition. This day commemorates Sage Vyasa, the literary giant who compiled the Vedas and authored the Mahabharata. Because of him, rivers of wisdom still flow through our culture. That's why this day is also called Vyasa Purnima—in his honor.

In Buddhism, this day marks the moment when Lord Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath, setting the Wheel of Dharma in motion. In Jainism, too, it is a day to remember the first disciples of Lord Mahavira.

But Guru Purnima is not bound to one faith. It is a whisper across time, a thread that connects every seeker to their guide.

### Modern Gurus in an Ancient Light

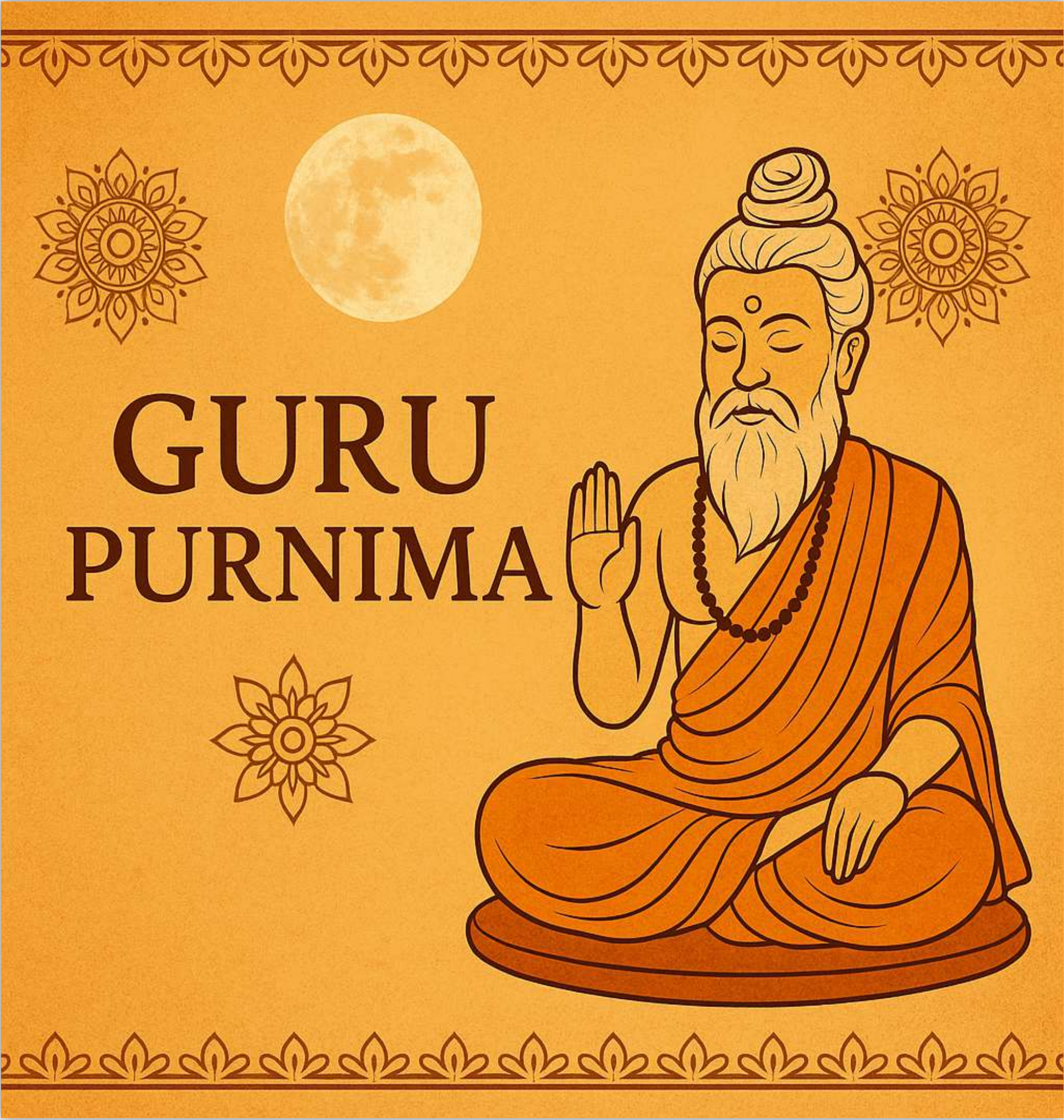
In today's fast-paced world, not everyone wears saffron robes or holds scriptures. Your Guru might be a teacher who believed in you when you didn't. A friend who stood beside you in silence. A book that cracked open your mind. A child who taught you patience. A stranger who reminded you of your own worth.

Guru Purnima asks us to recognize these luminous souls.

It also invites us to become torchbearers. To guide, to uplift, and to live with intention so that our lives become lessons for others.

### How Do We Celebrate?

There are no mandatory rituals just heartfelt ones. Some meditate, fast, or visit their spiritual mentors. Others write



letters of gratitude. Many simply sit beneath the stars and remember the hands that once helped them rise.

And above all, it's a day to return to your inner self your greatest teacher of all.

### The Light Never Fades

As the full moon rises this Guru Purnima, take a moment. Breathe. Reflect.

Think of the voices that echoed when you were lost. The

eyes that saw potential when you couldn't. The hearts that held space for your growth.

Because if the sun gives us light to see the world, it is the Guru who gives us eyes to see ourselves. And that, dear reader, is a miracle worth celebrating every full moon, and beyond.

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Durgesh K. Dubey

# Swami Sanand – The Scientist : Saint Who Offered His Life for Mother Ganga

When the July sun blazed over the little town of Kandhla in western Uttar Pradesh, a child named Guru Das Agrawal was born on 20 July 1932. Nobody guessed that this boy destined to earn a PhD in environmental engineering from the University of California, teach at IIT Kanpur, and head India's Central Pollution Control Board would one day renounce everything, don the saffron robes of Sant Swami Gyan Swaroop Sanand, and lay down his life to save the Ganga.

Threads of Science and Spirit: Growing up among fertile fields, young Guru Das learned early that a river is more than water; it is the pulse of a civilisation. His brilliance carried him from Banaras Hindu University to IIT Roorkee and onward to Berkeley. Back home, he became the first Member-Secretary of the Central Pollution Control Board, drafting India's earliest pollution norms. Students at IIT Kanpur still recall a professor who ended lectures with the same plea: “Use your science for the people, not just for profit.”

Yet, the more data he collected, the more he sensed a gap between charts in laboratories and tears on riverbanks. Science gave him facts; the Ganga gave him purpose. He began to say, half in jest, “I'm an engineer by degree and a pilgrim by destiny.”

The Awakening at Gangotri: In 2008, while surveying hydro-electric projects in the upper Himalaya, Agrawal watched heavy machines choke the Bhagirathi, Ganga's pristine source. Villagers whispered, “She can't breathe.” Something snapped. On 13 June 2008 he sat on the banks at Gangotri, sipped the icy water, and announced an indefinite fast until new dams were stopped.

Forty-eight days later the Union government caved. Three projects at Bhairon Ghati, Lohari Nagpala and Pala Maneri were scrapped, and the first steps toward ecological-flow norms were born. A journalist asked why he risked death. He replied, “A river that has carried our civilisation for millennia deserves at least one old professor's life.”

From Professor to Parivrajaka: Realising that policy papers alone could not stir a billion hearts, he embraced sannyasa in 2011 at Varanasi, becoming Swami Sanand. He shaved his head, wrapped himself in cotton ochre, and adopted the name Gyan Swaroop, “the form of knowledge.” The shift was not escapism but strategy: religion, he felt, could mobilise people faster than research abstracts. “When Mother Ganga cries, her children must hear her in their temples as well as their laboratories,” he said.

Fast, Faith and Fearless Logic: Between 2009 and 2013 Swami Sanand launched a series of fasts:

- 2009 & 2010 – halted the 600 MW Lohari Nagpala dam when construction was almost complete.
- 2012 – forced notification of 125 km of the Bhagirathi as an eco-sensitive zone.
- 2013 – jailed for 15 days during a protest fast demanding a legal framework for river protection.

Each time he began with scientific spreadsheets, ended with Vedic hymns, and used both to hammer home one idea: “Aviral



(un-broken) and Nirmal (un-polluted) flow is the river's birth-right.”

The Final Satyagraha: On 22 June 2018, aged 86, he commenced what he called his antim Tapasya his last penance at Matri Sadan, Haridwar. In letters to the Prime Minister he demanded:

1. An enforceable Ganga Protection & Management Act.
2. Cancellation of new hydropower projects on her Himalayan tributaries.
3. Immediate ban on sand-mining and deforestation along the river.
4. Creation of an independent Ganga Bhakta Parishad people's council of river guardians.

On day 112 he refused even water. On 11 October 2018 the frail saint-scientist breathed his last at AIIMS Rishikesh. Parliament was in recess; television studios moved on after a night. But in ashrams from Uttarkashi to Varanasi, conches blew in mourning, and young volunteers vowed to continue his fight.

Philosophy of Humanity and the River: Swami Sanand's ethics merged the rigor of engineering with the tenderness of bhakti:

- Inter-being: “The health of a river and the dignity of a village are the same equation written in different symbols.”
- Self-restraint: He owned two sets of robes, a notebook, and a stainless-steel kamandalu, saying, “You cannot ask society to sacrifice unless you first live lightly yourself.”
- Science as Seva: He argued that data devoid of empathy breeds indifference, while faith devoid of data breeds superstition; true service uses both.
- Ahimsa toward Earth: Echoing the Upanishads, he taught that harming ecology is a subtler violence against humanity's own future.

In classrooms he had urged students, “Do not seek jobs only seek solutions.” In saffron, he refined it: “Do not seek moksha only seek a world that no longer needs martyrs.”

Ripples After the Stone: Though the river still battles sewage and dams, Swami Sanand's penance left milestones:

- India's first recognition of minimum ecological flow for the Ganga.
- A generation of engineers turned eco-activists who call themselves “Sanand's Children.”
- Draft Ganga Act pending before Parliament, drawing directly from his notes.
- The moral equation that environmental justice is inseparable from cultural and spiritual health.

## Conclusion

The story of Sant Swami Sanand is not a tale of defeat but of luminous defiance. In an age that measures worth by profit and progress by concrete, an octogenarian scientist showed that shradha (faith) and shastra (science) can walk hand-in-hand, that the voice of conscience can still shake governments, and that a single life, freely offered, can widen the course of a mighty river toward justice. His fasting body became a bridge between laboratory graphs and sacred chants, reminding us that the first duty of humanity is to safeguard the living systems that sustain it. Like the Ganga he adored, his legacy flows on sometimes thwarted, never broken whispering to every student, engineer, policymaker and pilgrim: “Protect what is pristine, question what is convenient, and, when necessary, stand alone for the common good.”

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HARJEET SINGH: CHAMPION OF CLIMATE JUSTICE

Harjeet Singh stands as a towering figure in the global climate justice movement, a Delhi-based advocate whose work bridges grassroots activism, international policy, and systemic change. With a career spanning over two decades, Singh has dedicated his life to amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, holding powerful nations accountable, and advocating for equitable solutions to the climate crisis. His leadership, marked by resilience and moral clarity, has made him a pivotal force in shaping a sustainable and just future.

Roots in Resilience

Singh's journey into climate justice was shaped by his early experiences in India, a nation acutely vulnerable to climate impacts. Growing up in Delhi, he witnessed the disproportionate toll of environmental disasters on the poor floods, droughts, and heatwaves that devastated livelihoods. His career began at ActionAid, where he initially focused on community empowerment, disability rights, and livelihoods. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami marked a turning point. Deployed to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Singh led disaster response efforts for over two years, coordinating relief and rebuilding communities. This experience cemented his understanding of the deep link between environmental crises and social inequity, setting the stage for his lifelong mission.

His early work taught him that those least responsible for climate change small farmers, indigenous groups, and low-income communities suffer its worst consequences. This insight drives Singh's advocacy, which consistently centers the Global South in global climate discussions. His transition from local projects to global advocacy reflects his ability to connect individual stories to systemic issues, a skill that defines his impact.

A Global Voice for Justice

Singh's influence is most visible in his leadership roles within major climate organizations. As Global Engagement Director at the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, he pushes for a rapid, equitable transition away from fossil fuels. Previously, as Head of Global Political Strategy at Climate

Action Network (CAN) International, he coordinated a coalition of over 1,500 organizations across 130 countries, shaping climate policy and amplifying grassroots voices. His strategic presence at UN climate summits, including COP27 and COP28, has been transformative. At COP28 in Dubai, Singh was instrumental in advocating for the Loss and Damage Fund, a historic mechanism to support nations hit hardest by climate impacts. While he critiqued its limitations, he celebrated it as a hard-won step toward justice.



Singh's diplomacy is matched by his boldness. He has consistently called out wealthy nations for their hypocrisy professing climate leadership while expanding fossil fuel production. In a 2023 Axios interview, he highlighted that the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Norway are projected to drive 51% of global fossil fuel expansion by 2050, undermining their Paris Agreement commitments. “They talk green abroad but drill at home,” he remarked, exposing the gap between rhetoric and action. His ability to navigate high-stakes negotiations while maintaining a focus on equity has earned him a reputation as a bridge between policymakers and activists.

Demanding Fair Finance

Singh's advocacy extends to the financial

underpinnings of climate action. At COP29 in Baku, dubbed the “finance COP,” he criticized wealthy nations for failing to deliver adequate climate finance. He argues that loans, which dominate current funding models, deepen the debt crisis in developing countries, trapping them in a cycle of dependency. Instead, Singh demands grants to support adaptation, mitigation, and loss and damage. His lanyard at COP29, emblazoned with “Pay up \$5 trillion,” symbolized the scale of reparative finance he believes rich nations owe for their historical emissions. This bold stance underscores his

commitment to systemic change, challenging the economic structures that perpetuate climate injustice.

Grassroots to Global Solutions

Beyond policy, Singh is a practitioner of sustainable solutions. As co-founder of Satat Sampada, a social enterprise in India, he promotes regenerative agriculture and organic farming near Delhi. This initiative addresses food security and environmental health, demonstrating how local actions can align with global sustainability goals. Singh's work with Satat Sampada reflects his belief that climate justice requires empowering communities to build resilience from the ground up.

He also serves on the boards of CAN International and the Global Network of Civil

Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), and is part of the UN's Technical Expert Group on Comprehensive Risk Management. These roles allow him to influence global strategies while grounding them in the realities of vulnerable communities. His writings, featured in The India Forum and Dialogue Earth, advocate for participatory approaches that let communities assess their own climate losses, ensuring their voices shape policy.

Navigating Challenges

Singh's work is not without obstacles. The relentless pace of global climate summits tests his endurance Grist documented him at COP28, surviving on minimal sleep and quick meals while racing between meetings. He also faces a shrinking space for activism, with COP29 seeing protests stifled and activists resorting to symbolic gestures like taping their mouths. Yet, Singh remains undaunted, using platforms like Democracy Now! to amplify his message and rally global support.

His resilience is matched by his optimism. In a 2020 FairPlanet interview, he highlighted the growing power of collective action, from youth movements to indigenous advocacy. By uniting these forces, Singh has helped transform climate justice into a global movement, one that demands accountability and systemic change.

A Legacy of Impact

Harjeet Singh's contributions are a testament to the power of principled activism. By blending grassroots innovation with global advocacy, he has redefined climate leadership, making equity and justice central to the fight against climate change. His work challenges powerful nations, empowers vulnerable communities, and inspires a new generation of activists. As the climate crisis escalates, Singh's vision of a world where sustainability and human dignity are inseparable offers a roadmap for change. His legacy, still unfolding, is a beacon of hope in a warming world.

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GOLDEN GAIN  
FOR TURMERIC  
FARMERS



Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the headquarters of the National Turmeric Board (NTB) in Nizamabad, Telangana, on June 29, 2025. This is a big milestone for turmeric growers, especially in what's referred to as India's "turmeric capital." The setting up of the board was a long-pending demand and was promised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the time of the 2023 elections.

The NTB is slated to revolutionize turmeric farming by organizing the whole value chain, from production and processing to branding, marketing, and export. In contrast to the previous system of dealing with turmeric in the larger Spices Board, this specialized board will deal exclusively with the development and well-being of turmeric cultivators.

Today, farmers are getting ₹18,000–₹19,000 per quintal for turmeric. Amit Shah promised that with the help of the board, this rate would go up by ₹6,000–₹7,000 in the next three years. A research fund of ₹200 crore has also been set aside for crop development and training of farmers.

The government wants to increase turmeric exports to USD 1 billion by 2030. A focus will be put on organic and GI-tagged turmeric to ensure that the turmeric meets international quality standards and emphasizes its medicinal properties, such as anti-inflammatory and antiviral effects.

Moreover, assistance from projects such as the National Cooperative Exports Limited and National Cooperative Organics Limited will improve farmers' access to foreign markets. This move encourages farmers to believe that the export of turmeric is the major game changer for farmers in districts such as Nizamabad, Jagtial, Nirmal, and Kamareddy.

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INDIA'S COFFEE EXPORTS BREW RICH  
GAINS IN FY25

India's coffee exports had a remarkable surge in the first quarter of FY25, reaching a value of \$616 million, a 19% jump from the corresponding period this year. Surprisingly, this upsurge occurred even though shipment volume declined by 18%, with this showing an increasing worldwide demand for high-quality Indian coffee.



The growth mirrors a higher trend overall, with India's overall coffee export income surging to \$1.28 billion in FY24 from \$1.14 billion in FY23. India's coffee exports have increased by more than 125% over the last decade, with value addition being at the core of propelling the trend.

Europe remains the biggest market for India, with Italy, Germany, and Belgium at the top of the import list. The Middle East, North America, and certain regions of Asia, such as Japan and South Korea, are also experiencing an increase in demand.

Government assistance has played a vital role in this development. The Coffee Board of India has implemented

various export-support initiatives, including electronic documentation systems, freight support, and export-linked subsidies of ₹3/kg for value-added coffee and ₹2/kg for green beans. Coffee processing units are also availing up to 40% subsidy on investments in machinery.

Industry stakeholders bring to the fore how these policies are assisting in unlocking new markets and achieving international levels of quality and sustainability standards. With growing emphasis on high-value, specialty, and sustainable coffee, India is gradually becoming a quality-focused global coffee exporter.

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FARMING FORWARD: GVA SOARS 54%,  
RURAL INDIA RISES

In a big support to India's farm economy, the Gross Value Added (GVA) per farm worker increased by 54% during the period from FY2015-16 to FY2024-25, based on the Sustainable Development Goals, National Indicator Framework (SDG-NIF) Progress Report, 2025 issued by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. The GVA per agricultural worker grew from ₹61,247 in FY16 to ₹94,110 in FY25, which reflects enhanced productivity and increased income levels for farm workers. This significant increase coincides with an overall emphasis on rural upliftment and sustainable development.



such as PM-KISAN, pension schemes, and rural job schemes. Another achievement of significance has been in rural access to water. The proportion of the rural

population served by improved drinking water sources jumped to virtually 100% in FY25, from 94.57% in FY16, a sign that universal access to safe drinking water is becoming a reality.

Further, the proportion of renewable energy in the total installed capacity for electricity generation also increased considerably, from approximately 16% to more than 22% during the same timeframe, indicating India's intent towards sustainable growth and clean energy. Combing these together, the indicators show a promising trend in India's progress towards realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in rural productivity, well-being, and infrastructure.

The report further pointed towards the sharp increase in social protection coverage, with the percentage of the population covered under these programs increasing from 22% in 2016 to 64.3% in 2025. This indicates that the government has been trying to push inclusive welfare through programs

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KERALA'S LOW-CARBON CROP DRIVE

Towards major strides in sustainable agriculture, the Government of Kerala has entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) aimed at the development of climate-resilient and low-emission rice cultivation in the state. The initiative is part of the World Bank-financed Kerala Climate Resilient Agri-Value Chain Modernization Project (KERA).



Palakkad's canal-fed rice lands and the Kole wetlands in Thrissur, two of the state's highest methane-emitting areas.

IRRI will provide technical guidance and collaborate with institutions such as Kerala Agricultural University (KAU), Centre for Water Resources Development and Management (CWRDM), farmer groups, and water user associations.

The project is also inclusive in its approach by engaging women, youth, and smallholder farmers. It also seeks to find the prospects of carbon credit markets in enhancing farmers' income.

This collaboration not only aids climate adaptation but also makes Kerala a leader in low-carbon, sustainable rice cultivation in India.

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INDIA SAYS NO TO U.S. FARM PUSH IN  
TRADE TALKS

As trade talks between India and the United States are nearing a crucial deadline on July 9, India has strongly pushed back against U.S. pressure for opening up its agriculture and dairy markets more. The talks, initially slated for two days, have been prolonged as both countries try to iron out main differences and steer clear of a sharp 26% U.S. countervailing duty on Indian exports.



retains tariffs on staple farm items, many with tariffs over 60%, in order to protect its local agriculture industry.

The U.S. has said that unless there are significant concessions from India on agriculture, no interim trade pact can be concluded. India, in turn, is looking for tariff cuts on labor-intensive exports like textiles, leather, and gems, and demanding treatment on par in customs practices and trade norms.

Even with the standoff, both countries are working on a phased deal that could be inked prior to the July 9 deadline, with a full agreement eyed for later this year. India remains committed to its rural economy but maintains strategic ties with the U.S.

India has provided some concession, such as reducing the tariffs on higher-end U.S. imports such as almonds and pistachios. Nonetheless, it

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PUNJAB GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS DISPLAY ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT AT INNOVATION EXPO



Highlighting the growing impact of experiential learning—Government school students across Punjab presented their entrepreneurial ventures and creative solutions at an innovation expo organized under the state's education department.

Held in Mohali, the event featured over 100 student-led projects ranging from eco-friendly packaging to AI-driven agriculture tools. Punjab Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains, who inaugurated the event, praised the students' ability to apply classroom concepts to real-world challenges. “These innovations prove that our government schools are not lagging behind but leading in creativity and applied knowledge,” he stated.

The exhibition was a culmination of several months of incubation support,

wherein students from Classes 9 to 12 received mentorship in ideation, design thinking, and product development. Many of these projects were tied to the curriculum modules introduced under the new Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC), aimed at fostering critical thinking and self-reliance.

Officials confirmed that select projects would now be eligible for state-level seed funding and further mentoring under the 'School Startup Support' initiative. The top ten entries will also be showcased at national innovation platforms.

Teachers and school heads attending the expo highlighted the shift in classroom dynamics—from rote learning to project-based assessments—as a key reason for this emerging innovation culture.

The education minister concluded by stating that the state will expand innovation labs in all senior secondary schools to ensure that every student has the platform to explore, experiment, and excel.

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CABINET APPROVES NATIONAL SPORTS POLICY 2025 WITH FOCUS ON OLYMPICS 2036



In a landmark decision, the Union Cabinet has approved the National Sports Policy 2025, setting a transformative agenda to strengthen India's sporting ecosystem ahead of its bid to host the 2036 Olympics.

The policy integrates the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and aims to promote sporting excellence, community engagement, and infrastructure expansion across the country. Emphasizing “sports for all” and “excellence at the top,” it outlines a unified national framework to identify, train, and support athletes from the grassroots to the global stage.

A central highlight includes the establishment of Community Sports

Hubs in every district, offering early access to training and participation for school children and youth. These hubs will be linked to educational institutions to ensure sports is developed as a core part of school and college life.

The policy also mandates the creation of State Sports Academies, high-performance centres, and a National Athlete Database to track and manage talent scientifically. Coaches will undergo standardized certification under a newly developed National Coach Development Framework.

In addition, a four-tier India Sports League system will be developed in collaboration with private partners, offering competitive exposure and career pathways for athletes.

With dedicated funding and structured goals, the National Sports Policy 2025 is being viewed as a key stepping stone toward positioning India as both a global sporting host and a medal-winning nation in the years to come.

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CHHATTISGARH TO SET UP ₹100 CRORE EDUCATION HUB IN BILASPUR

Marking a pivotal step in expanding educational infrastructure—The Chhattisgarh government has announced the establishment of a ₹100 crore Education Hub in Bilaspur, with the aim of transforming the city into a regional academic and skill development centre.

The project is expected to house institutions offering a wide range of courses, including higher secondary, undergraduate, and vocational programmes. Designed as a multi-disciplinary campus, the hub will bring together students from surrounding districts, offering residential facilities, digital classrooms, and specialized labs.

According to officials, the blueprint includes provisions for institutes in science, commerce, humanities, technical training, and teacher education. The hub will also host career guidance centres, incubation labs for young entrepreneurs, and industry collaboration zones to link students directly with potential employers.

In an effort to boost equitable



access, 30% of the seats will be reserved for students from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Scholarship programmes and transport services will also be provided for students from remote and underserved regions.

The Education Hub aligns with the state's larger vision of making Chhattisgarh an emerging education and skill capital. Emphasis will also be placed on digital innovation, with all institutions under the hub following a common e-governance and learning management system.

Construction is set to begin by the end of 2025, with the first phase expected to be operational within 18 months. Once complete, the hub is expected to benefit over 20,000 students annually.

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MAHARASHTRA TO INTRODUCE DIRECT FEE WAIVER SCHEME FOR ORPHANED STUDENTS

In a step towards equitable access to higher education. The Maharashtra government is preparing to roll out a direct fee concession scheme to support orphaned students entering colleges and universities across the state.

Proposed by MLA Varsha Gaikwad, the initiative aims to eliminate financial hurdles faced by orphans during the college admission process. Under the scheme, eligible students will receive full tuition fee waivers directly credited to institutions, ensuring uninterrupted access to higher education.

The scheme comes in response to reports of orphaned youth being denied admission or facing dropouts due to their inability to produce guardian-related documentation or afford rising fees. Gaikwad stressed that the education system must accommodate the needs of vulnerable student groups without delay or discrimination.

Once approved, the scheme will be implemented across public universities and government-aided colleges. A

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STATES & UTS UNITE TO SHAPE HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY



Placing a renewed focus on academic excellence and employability—States and Union Territories convened for a high-level consultation on the role of higher education in powering India's transition into a knowledge-driven economy.

Held under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, the meeting brought together education secretaries and policy representatives to deliberate on key strategies to modernize curricula, foster industry-academia linkages, and elevate research capabilities in state universities.

Deliberations included aligning higher education goals with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasizing multidisciplinary learning, digital readiness, and outcomes-based education. Several states highlighted the need for increasing autonomy for institutions, promoting faculty training, and offering flexible degree pathways.

Discussions also included region-specific priorities. While some UTs emphasized expanding access in remote areas, others stressed global collaborations, skilling initiatives, and leveraging AI and data analytics in classrooms.

A common consensus emerged on the importance of innovation and inclusivity in higher education—ensuring that growth in the knowledge economy benefits students from all socio-economic backgrounds. Officials proposed capacity-building workshops for teachers, grant support for startups in academic settings, and developing state-level credit banks under the National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF).

The Ministry assured that a structured roadmap would soon be rolled out, focusing on strengthening the research ecosystem and global competitiveness of Indian universities.

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# ATLANTIC TRADE TENSIONS RISE AS US TARIFFS THREATEN EU RELATIONS AND GLOBAL PRICES

As transatlantic trade tensions heat up, the United States and the European Union find themselves at a critical crossroads in what is widely recognized as the world's most significant two-way commercial partnership. With U.S. President Donald Trump signaling the possibility of sharply increasing tariffs on European imports—potentially as high as 50% the ripple effects could alter global trade dynamics, squeeze corporate profit margins, and ultimately hit consumers' wallets on both sides of the Atlantic.

At the heart of this standoff lies Trump's push to correct what he describes as an “unfair trade imbalance.” In early April, the U.S. administration had already imposed a 20% tariff on EU-made goods, only to soften it temporarily to 10% to ease market jitters and allow space for negotiations. But the President has now threatened to escalate tariffs dramatically unless Brussels agrees to a deal that meets Washington's demands, particularly in agriculture and regulatory barriers.

Though the EU has expressed a willingness to negotiate, its leadership has made clear that it will retaliate if pushed too far. According to EU officials, hundreds of American products could be subject to counter-tariffs, ranging from agricultural goods and auto parts to high-value exports like aircraft and machinery.

Trade between the U.S. and the EU is not just large—it is colossal. The combined value of goods and services traded between the two blocs reached \$2 trillion in 2024, averaging around €4.6 billion daily, based on Eurostat data. American crude oil, pharmaceuticals, aircraft, and automobiles dominate exports to Europe, while the EU supplies the U.S.

with everything from cars and electronics to wine and medical equipment.

Despite these volumes, Trump has been sharply critical of the EU's \$233 billion trade surplus in goods. However, when services—where American companies excel—are factored in, the actual trade deficit shrinks considerably, accounting for less than 3% of the total exchange. Still, these nuances seem unlikely to shift the administration's confrontational tone.

Trump has also raised concerns over the EU's value-added taxes and its bans on certain American food products, including hormone-treated beef and chlorine-washed chicken. However, EU economists and officials argue that such policies are grounded in public health regulations and that VAT systems apply equally to both domestic and imported products.

The potential consequences of a trade war are wide-reaching. Analysts estimate that if the proposed tariffs of 10% to 25% are implemented, U.S. GDP could fall by 0.7%, while the EU's would drop by 0.3%, according to Brussels-based think tank Bruegel. Additionally, higher tariffs would inevitably raise the prices of imported goods in the U.S., from German cars and French cheese to Italian fashion and Spanish wine.

Companies have already begun preparing for the worst. Mercedes-Benz dealers in the U.S. have reportedly frozen 2025 prices for now but warned of future increases. French luxury conglomerate LVMH, which owns Tiffany, Dior, and Moët & Chandon, has suggested shifting production to the U.S. to bypass tariffs—an option echoed by other



multinationals.

Economists have emphasized that while Trump may frame any limited trade concession as a victory, the broader cost will be borne by consumers through inflated prices and fewer choices. A final agreement, if it arrives, may settle on a baseline 10% tariff while leaving auto, steel, and aluminum levies in place. Some predict narrowly targeted exemptions might help defuse tensions.

In summary, what started as an attempt to level the playing field risks spiraling into a disruptive trade battle. The coming days will determine whether economic pragmatism prevails—or if protectionist fervor sends shockwaves through the global economy.

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# MICROSOFT'S EXIT FROM PAKISTAN: A WAKE-UP CALL FOR THE NATION'S TECH AMBITIONS

In a move that has stirred both reflection and concern across Pakistan's technology sector, Microsoft has officially shut down its local office after 25 years of operation. The decision, announced as part of the tech giant's global restructuring efforts, has sent ripples through the industry, not for its immediate workforce impact just five employees were affected but for the broader message it conveys about Pakistan's investment climate.

While Microsoft has clarified that customer service and enterprise support in Pakistan will continue via regional hubs and authorized partners, the closure of its physical office is being viewed as a symbolic retreat. Analysts believe this decision underscores a lack of confidence in the country's ability to provide a stable, growth-oriented ecosystem for multinational technology firms.

According to industry sources, Microsoft's local office mainly handled enterprise sales for services such as Azure and Office 365. Unlike its Indian counterpart, Pakistan never developed a full-fledged development or engineering base for Microsoft, a gap that some believe reflects missed strategic opportunities over the years.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has attributed the exit to Microsoft's broader global downsizing strategy part of which included over 9,000 job cuts worldwide. However, former Microsoft Pakistan head Jawwad Rehman, who had established the office in 2000, viewed the move as more than a corporate decision. In a poignant message shared on LinkedIn, Rehman described the development as a "sobering signal" for the country, suggesting that the difficult operating environment

in Pakistan had made it increasingly unsustainable for even globally dominant firms to maintain a local presence.

Rehman emphasized that Pakistan's environment has grown challenging for long-term investments, citing the government's lack of consistent policy follow-through and the missed opportunities by successive teams. “We must not dismiss this as just another multinational shifting gears. It's a moment for deep introspection,” he noted.

Observers in the tech community see Microsoft's exit as a blow to the country's already struggling technology sector, which remains heavily reliant on freelance work, small-scale startups, and remittances from overseas. In stark contrast, India has managed to transform itself into a global IT powerhouse, offering infrastructure, policy support, and human capital that continues to attract global tech firms for both development and innovation.

Interestingly, while Microsoft has withdrawn, companies like Google are still exploring deeper engagements with Pakistan including initiatives in digital education and even potential local manufacturing. This contrast highlights that the global tech community hasn't given up on Pakistan but its patience may be wearing thin.

What this episode truly reveals is not just the loss of a multinational office but the fading of an opportunity. The closure is a reminder that without proactive policy support, consistent governance, and



infrastructure improvement, Pakistan risks being left behind in the global digital economy.

As Pakistan seeks to redefine its economic roadmap and attract foreign investment, especially in the tech space, Microsoft's quiet exit should serve as a pivotal moment less a closure and more a cautionary tale. It is a call to action for policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to prioritize the digital ecosystem as a key pillar of national growth and global integration.

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## EXPERT



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### Q. How to Show Empathy at Work?

**Ans.** Empathy is a powerful tool for fostering positive relationships in the workplace. It allows individuals to connect on a deeper level, understand each other's perspectives, and create an atmosphere of mutual respect. By showing empathy at work, leaders and employees alike can enhance collaboration, reduce stress, and improve overall morale. Below are practical ways to demonstrate empathy in your professional environment:

**1. Listen Actively and Without Judgment:** Empathy begins with listening. Active listening is more than just hearing words; it involves truly understanding the speaker's emotions, intentions, and perspective. When a colleague or team member is speaking, avoid interrupting or jumping to conclusions. Focus fully on their words and body language, and show that you're engaged through your reactions. Make eye contact, nod occasionally, and

refrain from making judgments while the other person is speaking. Wait for them to finish before responding thoughtfully. “श्रवणेन ज्ञानं प्रवर्तते न हि अन्यथा” (True understanding comes through listening, not through assumptions or quick judgments.) This ancient wisdom highlights the importance of active listening. It is only when we listen carefully that we can truly empathize with others.

**2. Be Present and Give Full Attention:** Empathy requires us to be fully present. In today's digital age, distractions are rampant, but showing empathy means putting these distractions aside when someone is speaking to you. Being present signals to the person that their concerns or thoughts are important to you. Close your laptop, turn off your phone, and avoid looking at your screen when someone is talking to you. Give them your undivided attention. “यत्र ध्यानं तत्र सामर्थ्यं”. (Where your focus goes, your strength flows). The act of being present is a powerful form of empathy. By giving someone your full attention, you demonstrate respect and understanding.

**3. Validate Their Emotions:** When a colleague is upset, frustrated, or stressed, validating their feelings shows that you understand and accept their emotions, even if you don't agree with the situation. Use phrases such as, “I can see that you're feeling frustrated,” or “That must be difficult for you.” Acknowledging their feelings helps them feel supported. “प्रत्येकस्य अनुभवं स्वकीयमुक्तं विद्धि” (Understand that every person's experience is unique to them). Validating someone's emotions creates a safe space for them to express themselves, which helps build trust.

**4. Offer Help and Support:** Empathy isn't just about understanding; it's also about offering support when needed. Ask, “How can I help?” or “Is there anything I can do to support you?” This simple gesture goes a long way in building a culture of empathy in the workplace. “सम्भ्रमं हृदयं पश्यतां परितापं समाचरन्” (The most effective way to ease others' distress is through compassionate action). Offering help not only demonstrates empathy but also shows that you care about the well-being of your colleagues.

**5. Be Non-Judgmental:** People may have different views, emotions, or behaviors based on their own unique experiences. Empathetic individuals avoid making snap judgments or assumptions about others' situations. Refrain from criticizing or jumping to conclusions when someone opens up to you. Let them express their feelings or thoughts fully before offering any feedback or solutions. “न हि धर्मेण कार्येण सदा धर्मेण प्रतिष्ठितं” (One's righteousness is shown through thoughtfulness, not hasty judgments). Empathy requires a deep understanding that each person has their own journey, and judgment often prevents true connection.

**6. Offer Constructive Feedback with Sensitivity:** Giving feedback with empathy is vital to both the personal and professional growth of your colleagues. Constructive feedback is essential, but it should be delivered with sensitivity. Start with positive feedback, followed by areas for improvement, and conclude with encouragement. For example, “You did a great job with the report, but next time, we could improve by focusing more on the key metrics.” शान्तं कर्म प्रियं शृणु” (Listen to actions that promote peace and progress). Feedback offered with a calm and empathetic demeanor fosters growth and helps individuals feel encouraged rather than criticized.

**7. Encourage Open Communication:** A culture of open communication fosters empathy by allowing people to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of being reprimanded. An empathetic leader or colleague ensures that all team members feel comfortable sharing their concerns and ideas. Regularly invite team members to share their thoughts, ideas, or concerns. Let them know that their input is valued, and that they can come to you with anything, whether it's work-related or personal. “धर्मेण प्रतिष्ठितं यः सः शान्तिं प्राप्नुयात्” (A

person grounded in righteousness and openness will find peace and success). Empathy thrives in environments where open communication is encouraged, and individuals feel heard and understood.

**8. Be Compassionate in Tough Situations:** Empathy is especially important in difficult or stressful situations. Whether your colleague is going through a personal crisis or facing a challenging project, offering compassion during tough times shows that you are not just concerned with the task but also with the person. Instead of jumping straight into solving the problem, first acknowledge the stress or difficulty your colleague is facing, and offer a sympathetic ear or practical help where possible. धैर्येण विजयं प्राप्तं सदा सुखं मनीषिता” (Patience and empathy bring victory and peace to any situation). In difficult times, showing compassion can provide much-needed relief, allowing individuals to feel supported and valued.

**9. Recognize Efforts and Celebrate Success:** Empathy involves recognizing and celebrating the successes. Acknowledging the hard work and achievements of others makes them feel valued and appreciated. Publicly acknowledge the efforts of your colleagues during meetings or send a personalized note of thanks for their hard work. “वेदस्य पाठं समर्पयेत् कर्म सिद्धिं प्राप्नोति” (Those who acknowledge the efforts of others attain success and fulfillment). Recognizing contributions boosts morale and fosters a sense of belonging and accomplishment.

**10. Be Patient and Understanding:** Sometimes, people just need time and space to work through their challenges. Whether it's a delay in a project or a personal issue, giving someone the time, they need can make a world of difference. If a colleague is struggling, show patience and understanding. Allow them to take the time they need, and be ready to lend a helping hand when they are ready. “तृष्णा हृदयं पश्यतां परितापं समाचरन्” (By being patient and compassionate with others, we ease their distress and encourage healing). Empathy requires patience. By offering this, you help people feel understood and valued in a deeper way.

Empathy at work is more than just a soft skill; it is the foundation for building strong, trusting relationships. By actively listening, validating emotions, offering support, and being non-judgmental, you can create a more harmonious and productive environment. Sanskrit wisdom encourages us to approach others with patience, understanding, and a willingness to listen. These values are timeless, and by practicing them, you can foster a workplace where empathy thrives, leading to improved collaboration, greater job satisfaction, and a more positive organizational culture. Share the bliss of Empathy, Stay blessed!

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# ONE HOUR, ONE HABIT, BIG CHANGES: THE POWER OF DAILY WALKING

Let's be honest when we think about getting fit or finding mental clarity, walking isn't the first thing that comes to mind. It's slow, it's basic, and it lacks the adrenaline and structure of a spin class or a HIIT session. There's no curated playlist, no performance tracker, and none of that sweaty, post-workout high we often associate with real exercise.

But what if that simplicity is exactly what we need?

A few months ago, I decided to commit to something radical in its simplicity: walking for one hour every single day for 30 days. No fitness apps, no step goals, no social sharing just a quiet promise to myself. What followed was far from ordinary. This small act, repeated daily, didn't just change my body. It shifted the way I think, feel, and move through life.



sneakers, stepped outside, and walked no agenda, no earbuds. Most days, I chose the quiet of early mornings. But by Day 2, something strange started happening. My mind craved distraction. I kept reaching for my phone. I felt uncomfortable without multitasking. That's when I realized: walking wasn't just about moving my body it was about stilling my mind. By midweek, the restlessness began to fade. That one hour became a pause button in my day. No scrolling, no rushing, no pressure. Just movement, breath, and the rhythm of my footsteps. In a world built for speed, slowing down felt unfamiliar but also, deeply healing.

## Week 2: Mental Clarity Starts to Shine Through

By the second week, something shifted. My thoughts became clearer. Decisions I had been overthinking suddenly felt obvious. Creative ideas flowed more freely like they used to during long showers or journaling sessions.

### Patterns began to emerge:

- My mood noticeably improved, especially when I walked near greenery or under open skies.

- I became less reactive to daily stressors.
  - I started sleeping better and waking up feeling more refreshed.
- It felt like I had discovered a kind of moving meditation—therapy without the price tag.

## Week 3: Subtle but Real Physical Changes

Honestly, I didn't expect any major physical transformation from walking. It seemed too gentle for that. But I was wrong.

### By the third week, I noticed:

- Improved posture—I was standing taller, naturally.
- Less pain—the nagging lower back ache from long hours of sitting had disappeared.
- Greater stamina—I could walk faster and longer, without even realizing it.

Even more surprising was the shift in my appetite. I stopped snacking out of boredom. My body felt more balanced, more intuitive. I was finally listening to it.

## Week 4: Walking Becomes My Anchor

In the final stretch, walking was no longer a task it became a lifeline. A habit I genuinely looked forward to each day, no matter the weather or the chaos on my calendar. I started wandering off my usual paths. I discovered hidden corners of my neighborhood. I

noticed blooming flowers, barking dogs, and friendly nods from strangers. I started waving back. It was small, but grounding. For the first time in a while, I felt present. No digital noise. No internal chaos. Just me and the world around me moment by moment.

## Will I Keep Going? Absolutely

I'm not claiming walking will fix your life. But it can be a powerful entry point to feeling better mentally, physically, emotionally. It reminded me that movement doesn't have to be intense to be impactful. That clarity isn't always found in the hustle it can also come from stillness and slow steps. So if you're feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or simply out of sync, I'd recommend this: Put on your shoes. Step outside. Walk for an hour. Repeat. You might be surprised by what starts to shift inside and out.

## Why Simplicity Wins

No, walking didn't change me overnight. But over 30 days, it gave me space to breathe, to think, and to reconnect with myself and my environment. Sometimes, the most powerful habits are the quietest ones. And in a world that glorifies the extreme, choosing something gentle might just be the boldest act of all.

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# RETHINKING OUR PLATE: HOW FOOD HABITS SHAPE OUR HEALTH AND FUTURE

In a world that's moving faster than ever, our food habits have quietly become both a reflection of our lifestyles and a major influence on our health. Whether it's grabbing a quick bite on the way to work or meticulously preparing a balanced meal, the way we eat tells a story about who we are and where we're headed.

## More Than Just a Meal

Food has always been central to culture, tradition, and community. But modern food habits are changing, and not always for the better. With the rise of fast food, ultra-processed snacks, and on-the-go eating, many people are drifting away from mindful eating and home-cooked meals. "We're seeing more convenience foods than ever before," says Dr. Maya Roy, a nutritionist based in Mumbai. "They're quick, tasty, and cheap, but the long-term health consequences are real."

## A Growing Awareness

At the same time, there's a growing awareness of the importance of healthy eating. From plant-based diets to farm-to-table movements, people are slowly reclaiming control over their plates. Social media and documentaries have brought food issues to the forefront. Sustainability, ethical eating, and the impact of diet on mental health are now hot topics. Apps track calories and nutrients, while influencers share recipes for quinoa salads and smoothie bowls. "People are

realizing that food isn't just fuel it's medicine, culture, and identity," says food writer Anjali Mehta.

## Habits That Stick

Changing food habits doesn't have to be drastic. Simple steps can make a big difference:

- **Cook more at home:** Not only is it healthier, but it also builds a stronger connection to what you're eating.
- **Eat mindfully:** Avoid screens while eating. Focus on the taste, texture, and aroma of your food.
- **Plan meals:** Weekly planning can help reduce waste, save money, and promote variety.
- **Stay hydrated:** Sometimes what feels like hunger is actually thirst.
- **Don't demonize food:** All foods can fit into a balanced diet. Moderation is key.

## Looking Forward

As we navigate busy schedules and new technologies, our relationship with food will continue to evolve. The challenge is finding a balance between convenience and nourishment between indulgence and intention. Good food habits aren't about strict diets or short-term fixes. They're about creating a lifestyle where food supports well-being, brings joy, and reflects respect for our bodies, our communities, and the planet.

# FOOD HABITS IN A FAST-PACED WORLD

Understanding how modern eating patterns affect our health



Because in the end, we are not only what we eat but how, when, and why we eat as well

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Afreen Mazgaonkar, Srivarthini Subramanian & Kiranpreet Kaur

BTS RETURN WITH ALBUM AND WORLD TOUR PLANS  
AFTER MILITARY HIATUS



In their first livestream since completing compulsory service in South Korea, the seven-member band from BTS indicated they would be returning to the studio in the US to prepare new music, indicating an album will be released in Spring 2026. “Hey guys, we are back,” Jimin said as the group explained they were coming together for an album—their first full length album since 2020—and a full-world tour, their first since the Permission to Dance on Stage tour in 2022. All members now have completed their military service with Suga completing the final term in June. The group staggered their enlistments so the group's overall absence was shorter. For example, J-Hope completed his solo tour after army service and is slated to headline the Lollapalooza Berlin festival, this July. In terms of the expected album, BTS maintained it would show each member's artistic voice, saying, “We are thinking of the album and working with the same frame of mind we did when we started.”BTS has evolved from their debut back in 2013 to being the biggest boy band in the world, numerous chart-toppers solidifying their status. A reunion is an anticipated cultural moment for ARMY and for the global music world.

DIGITAL STRESS AND LIFESTYLE SHIFTS FUEL RISING PCOS  
IN INDIAN TEEN GIRLS

There is a silent epidemic that is occurring in India among teenage girls: the rise of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS). Once considered a condition only found in adults, PCOS is now being diagnosed in girls from 13 to 19 years of age at alarming rates. Doctors point to the digital stressors of excess smartphone usage, poor sleep, sudden eating habits and decreases in activity levels combined with consumed digital content as the main contributors. Stress hormones hit the roof with the invasion of smartphones with message, social media, and online classes being a major part of the lives of our youngsters. It is especially harmful to developing bodies because of the variations it can create in their hormonal principally, to cause irregular periods, acne, excessive hair, and unwanted increases in weight—classic signs of PCOS. What is more concerning is that many teens as well as parents have, will or are not aware that their girl has PCOS until they experience debilitating symptoms. Failure to identify this condition and seek treatment has long term consequences that can include infertility, type-2 diabetes and heart disease in later adulthood. Experts agree that it is essential for parents to set lifestyle interventions early: encouraging exercise, keeping a digital detox schedule, adhering to nutrition moderation and screening with a family physician for other medical conditions (obese, hypertension, sleep apnea to name a few), as well as making mental health counseling an essential service, to assist with any anxiety or body image issues, as these too can be an associated condition in PCOS.



ENGINEERS FROM IISC CREATE NEW STAGE SENSOR FOR  
EARLY DETECTION OF LIVER  
CANCER

In a remarkable finding scientists out of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Binagalu have developed a fluorescent nanosensor that can detect liver cancer in an early stage. The sensor glows when the enzyme associated with liver cancer development is sensed, allowing for a non-invasive real-time diagnosis. Lying at the center of this technology is a protein known as Fibrinogen, which has been engineered to react to gamma-glutamyl transpeptidase (GGT)—a biomarker that appears in increased levels in patients with liver cancer. Through their reaction with the sensor, the GGT activates a fluorescent process, essentially "illuminating" the cancerous activity. This device is likely to markedly enhance the rate of early detection, particularly in areas with limited diagnostic facilities. Existing practices tend to identify liver cancer at a very late stage when it is hard to treat. This sensor provides a quicker and easier avenue for screening, which could even be utilized in point-of-care environments, though. The researchers will soon transition to clinical trials after it is successfully tested in the lab. This breakthrough by IISc highlights India's increasing role in global biomedical innovation. Through the integration of biochemistry with nanotechnology, the researchers have shed light on a promising avenue for early and affordable cancer diagnosis.

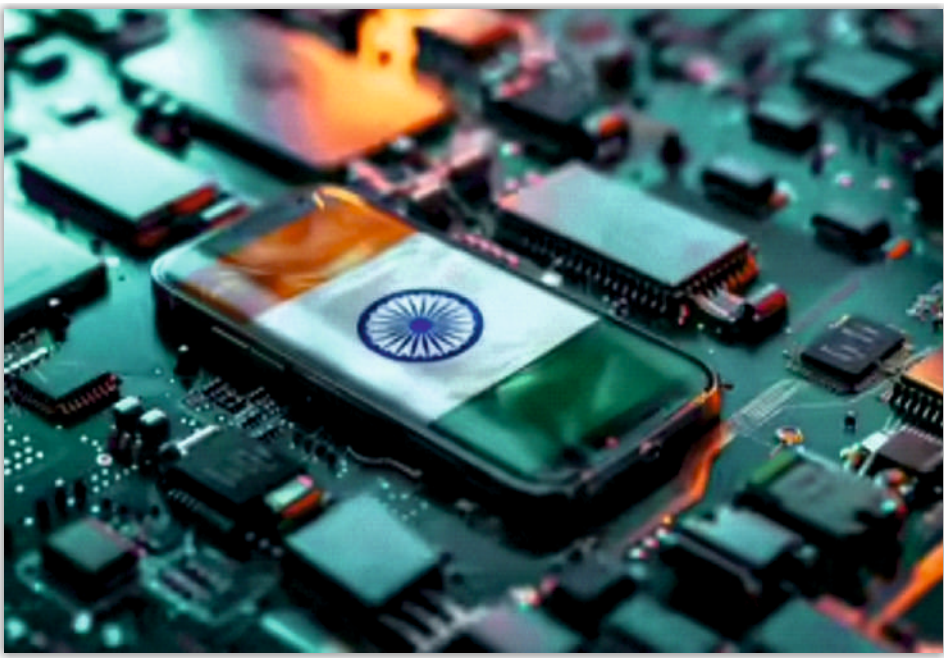


INDIA ADDS HUNDREDS OF NEW SPECIES TO ITS WILDLIFE  
RECORDS IN 2024

India's amazing biodiversity showed up again in 2024 — the country added 683 new animal species and 433 new plant taxa to its national records. Out of the animals, 459 were brand new to science, while 224 were seen in India for the first time, even though they were known elsewhere. These included reptiles, frogs, fish, spiders, insects, and even a few mammals. One snake was so special, it was named after Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio. On the plant side, researchers added hundreds of flowering plants, fungi, mosses, and even tiny algae to India's records. Some of these were found in forests, while others came from wetlands and mountain areas. Most of the new species were discovered in India's biodiversity-rich regions — like the Western Ghats, the North-East, and parts of Kerala, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. All of this was made possible by hard work from the Zoological Survey of India and the Botanical Survey of India. It's a reminder that there's still so much we don't know about the natural world around us. Finding these species is exciting — but now comes the hard part: protecting them.



INDIA BECOMES THE NEW HOME FOR SMARTPHONE  
MAKING



Something big is happening in India's tech world. Chinese phone companies — like Xiaomi, Vivo, Oppo, and OnePlus — are now building more and more phones here in India, not just selling them. They've started assembling phones in Indian factories. Some are even exporting them to other countries. Why the sudden shift? A lot of it is because of India's “Make in India” push. The government wants global brands to make things locally, so it's giving tax breaks and support. Also, India has a huge number of phone users. It makes sense to build where the demand is. And after COVID and all the supply problems, many companies want to depend less on China. This also means jobs for Indians from factory workers to engineers. States like Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh are seeing this change up close. At the same time, Indian brands like Lava and Micromax are still in the game, trying to catch up. There are challenges — transport, logistics, and quality control still need work. But the direction is clear: India is slowly becoming a phone-making hub. Not just for India. For the world. And that's something to be proud of.

INDIA BLOCKS LAND ROUTE FOR BANGLADESHI  
JUTE—BANGLADESH INDUSTRIES TAKE A HIT

India has shut its land borders to jute, woven fabrics, and yarns coming in from Bangladesh. Now, these items can only be imported through the Nhava Sheva seaport in Maharashtra, as per a June 27 order from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). This isn't a small tweak—it's a serious blow to Bangladesh's jute industry. Over the years, jute and related products flowed quickly into India via land crossings. That's no longer possible. Traders say this will raise their costs and slow down deliveries. And with sea routes taking longer and costing more, small factories might struggle. India's move comes amid growing concerns of “dumped and subsidised” Bangladeshi jute hurting its own farmers and factories. Officials say this step ensures tighter quality checks and cuts out unfair trade. This builds on past actions: India earlier this year revoked special land transit facilities to Bangladesh, which had been used for the movement of goods en route to third countries. Now, the two sectors of Bangladesh ready-made-garment and jute yarn are worried. Their exports are delayed and costlier. Industry bodies in Dhaka are saying that the unfairness will affect the small stakeholders the most. Unlike the other in above instances, at a bigger level, this marks an increasingly tense trade relation between India and Bangladesh, as both countries navigate changing rules of the game and the regional politics.





Afreen Mazgaonkar, Srivarthini Subramanian & Kiranpreet Kaur

WIMBLEDON 2025: BALAJI SHINES AS BOPANNA FACES  
EARLY EXIT



The verdant lawns of Wimbledon 2025 came up with acutting results for Indian doubles stars. While N. Sriram Balaji made stable and subtle work for the round one victory, veteran Rohan Bopanna unceremoniously bowed out earlier in this game.Balaji, partnered with Mexico's Miguel Reyes-Varela, found the muse and chemistry to conquer American duo of Aleksandar Kovacevic and Learner Tien in straight sets. The duo appeared relaxed under pressure and earned India a solid start in the men's doubles draw.Meanwhile, Rohan Bopanna partnered with Belguim's Sander Gillé fell in the first round at the hands of Germany's experienced third seed Kevin Krawietz and Tim Pütz, losing in a rather disappointing showing 6-3, 6-4. This was a disappointing start for the 44-year-old who had high hopes going into Wimbledon. Also, Yuki Bhambri and Rithvik Bollipalli have also continued India's positive run. Bhambri

and his partner Robert Galloway took care of business convincingly. Despite being down four match points, Bollipalli found an epic comeback to turn a match lost against Colombia's Nicolas Barrientos.While Bopanna falling early hurts, India's young doubles players have kept the tricolour flying high. Balaji is leading the charge with his early round victory so we will now see in the next round how the Indian challenge will develop stronger and sharper!

DIVYANSHI CREATES HISTORY IN ASIAN YOUTH TABLE  
TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP

In a monumental occasion for Indian table tennis, Divyanshi Chouhan won the Asian U-15 Women's Singles gold, after a nearly 36-year-long wait for the nation. At the 2025 Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships in Chongqing, China, Divyanshi was nothing short of stellar as she beat China's Tan Zhi Rui in a gripping final (11-8, 7-11, 11-9, 11-8); clearly, this involved a great measure of resolve against home pressure and elite rivals.The previous time that India captured a gold at this event was in 1989, so it is an absolutely historic moment. Her stunning journey throughout the tournament included a solid defeat of top-ranked paddlers from Japan and Korea during earlier rounds too. By taking the gold, she has become another promising face in Indian table tennis, while signifying that the youth circuit is on an upward trend with the resulting list of many more through it.The event Is being praised as a turning point in India's youth table tennis circuit; the national federation is identifying her as an inspiration for a generation. At only 14 years old, Divyanshi's technical skills, mentation, and strokes are seen as characteristics of a future star. After so long, the anticipated return of an India into international table tennis has now come, and it has a new name behind it.



INDIA WIN 2-1 OVER THAILAND TO QUALIFY FOR AFC  
WOMEN'S ASIAN CUP 2026

India's women's team pulled off a historic 2-1 win over Thailand at Chiang Mai on July 5 and punched their ticket to the AFC Women's Asian Cup next year in Australia. It was a thriller. Sangita Basfore opened the scoring with a beauty curling it in from outside the box in the 29th minute. Thailand struck back early in the second half through Chatchawan Rodthong, making it 1-1. But Sangita wasn't done, she nodded in the late winner in the 74th minute, and India held on under intense pressure. This was a huge moment: it's India's first-ever win over Thailand in women's football. It also completes a perfect qualifier run: 13-0 over Mongolia, 4-0 against Timor-Leste, 5-0 vs Iraq, and then this must-win game. Coach Crispin Chhetri had warned it would feel like a knockout and he was right . The players responded, earning their spot in the final tournament through qualifiers for the first time since 2003. This win is more than a result. It's a statement: India's women are ready to rise on bigger stages. With the Asian Cup ahead and a path to the FIFA Women's World Cup on the line, the Blue Tigresses are dreaming bigger than ever.



GUKESH BEATS CARLSEN AGAIN, STUNS  
THE CHESS WORLD

India's teenage chess star D Gukesh is on fire. In the Grand Chess Tour in Croatia, he once again defeated world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen — and this time, it was big. With this win, Gukesh now leads the tournament all by himself. Their match was intense. Carlsen looked solid at first, but one wrong move — 23.b4 — gave Gukesh an opening. He didn't panic. He stayed calm, thought deep, and turned the game around completely. In just 49 moves, the game was over. Gukesh had beaten one of the greatest players again. This is Gukesh's fifth straight win in the tournament. After 6 rounds, he's sitting at the top with 10 points, two ahead of his closest rival. The best part? He's doing it with quiet confidence and smart play. Carlsen admitted he made a mistake. He even said the game wasn't fun anymore when he couldn't play freely. But Gukesh didn't let anything shake him. He said after the match, “I was in a bad position, but I didn't give up.” That says everything. There are still a few rounds to go, but one thing is clear: Gukesh is not just here to play — he's here to win.



INDIA'S BADMINTON STARS MAKE WAVES ABROAD



Indian shuttlers have been on fire in recent weeks, putting up impressive performances across top-level tournaments. At the Canada Open Super 300, experience met talent. Kidambi Srikanth, once world No. 1, came back strong. He fought his way into the quarters with a gutsy straight-game win, then stunned top seed Chou Tien-Chen 21-18, 21-9 to claim a spot in the semis. Alongside him, young guns Sankar Subramanian and Shriyanshi Valishetty also reached the quarterfinals with confident wins, showing India's depth in both men's and women's singles. Meanwhile at the US Open Super 300 in Iowa, two rising stars captured hearts. Tanvi Sharma, just 16 and unseeded, surprised many by storming into the women's

final. She narrowly lost the title but became the youngest Indian to reach a Super 300 final . On the men's side, 20-year-old Ayush Shetty ended India's dry spell on the tour by beating Canada's Brian Yang 21-18, 21-13 for his first-ever BWF World Tour title. These performances send a message: India's badminton future is shining. Veterans like Srikanth remind us of past glory, while young players like Sankar, Shriyanshi, Tanvi, and Ayush bring fresh energy—and they're just getting started. On the court, it's clear: India is not just competing—it's hungry, fighting, and ready to win.

NEERAJ CHOPRA WINS INAUGURAL NC CLASSIC WITH  
86.18M THROW

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra topped the podium at the first Neeraj Chopra Classic at Bengaluru's Sree Kanteerava Stadium with a throw of 86.18 metres. The javelin event, which was labelled gold, was organized by Chopra and JSW Sports and the Athletics Federation of India, and was India's first foray into hosting elite-level international athletics. After fouling his first attempt, Chopra bounced back with a series of 82.99m, 86.18m, 84.07m and 82.22m. Despite the wind concerns the electric 14,500 crowd got to witness his third throw sealing the victory. Kenya's Julius Yego (84.51m) and Rumesh Pathirage from Sri Lanka (84.34m) came second and third respectively. While there was competition happening, the meet encapsulated the vision of Chopra to develop athletics in India by bringing world-class platforms to India. Chopra hopes to bring Diamond League events to the country so that youth athletes in the country can recognize their potential through exposure to world-class athletics. After today's win, and victories earlier this season in the Paris Diamond League and Ostrava Golden Spike, Chopra is having a strong 2025 season. The NC Classic represents not just a meet, but a movement — which is a step towards India's ascendance in world athletics, led by one of the brightest beacons of hope.





Dr. Smita Kuntay

EXIM BANK RECRUITMENT  
2025 FOR OFFICER – DIGITAL  
TECHNOLOGY



Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank), a premier financial institution under the Government of India, invites applications from qualified and experienced professionals for the post of Officer on Contract – Digital Technology (Finacle Core). This is a golden opportunity for tech professionals to contribute to India's international trade sector while advancing in a high-impact banking IT role.

Apply Online From: 16th June 2025 to 16th July 2025 through the official portal: [www.applyonlineeximb.com](http://www.applyonlineeximb.com).

Vacancy Details

- **Post Name:** Officer – Digital Technology (Finacle Core)
- **Total Vacancies:** 06 (GEN: 5, OBC-NCL: 1)
- **Job Location:** Mumbai
- **Age Limit:** Max 35 Years (as on 31.05.2025)

Salary & Perks

- Minimum CTC: ₹14.68 lakh per annum - Includes 80% fixed + 20% variable pay based on performance.

Eligibility Criteria

- **Educational Qualification:** B.Sc./B.E./B.Tech in CS/IT/ECE with 60% marks, OR MCA/M.Tech in CS/IT with 50% marks (From Govt./AICTE/UGC-approved institute)
- **Experience:** Min. 2 years post-qualification in IT/Fintech roles in Scheduled Banks, Financial Institutions, or BFSI tech service providers.
- **Skills:** Strong communication and Finacle Core platform expertise preferred.

Selection Process

1. Shortlisting (1:10 ratio based on qualification marks)
2. Personal Interview (at Mumbai/New Delhi office)

Application Fee

- General/OBC: ₹600/-
- Female Candidates: ₹100/- (Online payment only; non-refundable)

How to Apply

- Visit [www.applyonlineeximb.com](http://www.applyonlineeximb.com) → Fill form → Upload documents → Pay fee → Submit & print copy.
- Interview (Tentative): August 2025
- Deadline: 16th July 2025

For more details, candidates can refer to the official notification.

IBPS SO RECRUITMENT 2025–26 (CRP SPL-XV)

The Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) invites online applications for the Common Recruitment Process (CRP SPL-XV) to fill 1007+ Specialist Officer (SO) positions in Scale-I cadre across 11 Public Sector Banks for the financial year 2026–27.

Apply online through [www.ibps.in](http://www.ibps.in) from 1st July to 21st August 2025.

Post-wise Vacancy Details: Marketing Officer 350, Agricultural Field Officer 310, IT Officer 203, Rajbhasha Adhikari 78, Law Officer 56, HR/Personnel Officer 10

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Age Limit:** 20–30 years as on 01.07.2025 (Relaxations as per rules)
- **Educational Qualification:** Varies by post – Graduation/PG in relevant fields such as IT, Law, Agriculture, HR, Hindi, or Marketing. (See detailed notice)

Pay Scale:

Scale-I: ₹48,480 – 85,920 + allowances (CTC Approx. ₹12–14 LPA)

Selection Process:

1. Preliminary Exam (Objective – English, Reasoning, Quant/GA)
2. Main Exam (Professional Knowledge)
3. Common Interview by Participating Banks
4. Provisional Allotment based on merit and preference

Application Fee:

- UR/OBC/EWS: ₹850/-
- SC/ST/PwBD: ₹175/- (Pay online through Cards/UPI/Net Banking)

How to Apply:

Apply online at [www.ibps.in](http://www.ibps.in) from 1st July to 21st August 2025. Upload required documents, pay the fee, and download your application confirmation.

## IBPS SO XV Vacancy 2025

Institute of Banking Personnel Selection



Last Date- **21.07.2025**

Total Post- **1007**

**Apply Online**

Prelims Exam: August 2025 | Mains: October 2025 | Interview: Dec 2025/Jan 2026

For more details, candidates can refer to the official notification.

IBPS PO/MT RECRUITMENT 2025 (CRP PO/MT-XV) 5208+ VACANCIES  
IN PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS

The Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) invites online applications for the Common Recruitment Process (CRP-PO/MT-XV) for selection of Probationary Officers/Management Trainees (PO/MT) in 11 prestigious Public Sector Banks for the 2026–27 financial year.

Vacancy Highlights:

- **Total Vacancies:** 5208+
- **Participating Banks Include:** Bank of Baroda (1000), Canara Bank (1000), Bank of Maharashtra (1000), Bank of India (700), Central Bank of India (500), Indian Overseas Bank (450), Punjab & Sind Bank (358), PNB (200) and others.

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Age Limit:** 20–30 years as on 01.07.2025 (Relaxations applicable for SC / ST / OBC / PwBD / ExSM)
- **Qualification:** Bachelor's Degree in any discipline from a recognized university.

Pay Scale (Basic):

- ₹ 48,480 – 85,920 + DA, HRA, CCA, and other perks. (CTC approx. ₹12–14 LPA)

Selection Process:

1. Preliminary Online Exam
2. Main Online Exam
3. Personality Test
4. Common Interview & Provisional Allotment



## IBPS PO / MT 2025

Application Fee:

- UR/OBC/EWS: ₹850
- SC/ST/PwBD: ₹175 (Online payment only)

How to Apply:

- Apply online via [www.ibps.in](http://www.ibps.in) from 1st July to 21st July 2025. Upload required documents: Photo, Signature, Thumb Impression, Handwritten Declaration, and Caste/PwBD certificates.

Key Dates:

- Last Date to Apply: 21st July 2025
- Prelims Exam: August 2025
- Mains Exam: October 2025
- Interview: December 2025 / January 2026
- Final Allotment: February 2026

For more details, candidates can refer to the official notification.





1. China's 'Made in China 2025' policy targets what?

2. What is EU's 2040 greenhouse gas reduction target?

3. Delhi's fuel ban targets which 10-year-old vehicles?

4. Which countries signed agreements with India in Port of Spain (July 2025)?

5. Who launched the 'C-FLOOD' system?


6. First woman fighter pilot trainee in Indian Navy?

7. Which Indian city launched a QR-based address system?

8. NTPC is building waste-to-charcoal plants in which state?

9. Which state offers free higher education for EWS/SEBC/OBC girls?

10. First UAE bank to open in GIFT City?



1. I ride on a train's rooftop, my beat makes you sway. Shah Rukh Khan danced on me, come what may. My rhythm is infectious, brightening your day. What song am I?

2. We celebrate on a ship, as family stories unfold. There's dancing and laughter, worth more than gold. From a Zoya Akhtar film, a vibrant tale told. What song am I?

3. I speak of spring's celebration, in royal Mughal halls grand. A love story blooms, across time and land. Hrithik and Aishwarya grace my every command. What song am I?

4. My melody is melancholic, of a love not perceived. My hero's heart broken, his feelings deceived. She remains unaware, though his soul is grieved. What song am I?

ANSWERS

1. Chaiyya Chaiyya

2. Gallan Goodiyaan

3. Jashn-E-Baharaa

4. Tu Jaane Na

10. Mashreq

9. Maharashtra

8. Haryana

7. Indore

6. Poonja

5. Patil

4. India


3. Diesel

2. 90%

1. Innovation

10. RIDDLES

11. QUIZ TIME



# ALU VADI ELEGANCE

This Week, We're Rolling Alu Vadi Elegance – Maharashtra's Leafy Layers of Spice and Heritage

Alu Vadi Elegance, the much-loved Maharashtrian Patra, is a delicately rolled, steamed, and pan-fried snack made from colocasia leaves and a sweet-spicy gram flour paste. Earthy, tangy, and satisfyingly crisp, every bite brings the aroma of home kitchens and festive warmth from the Western Ghats to your plate.

**Ingredients:**

For the Gram Flour Spread: Besan (1 cup), Tamarind pulp (2 tbsp), Jaggery (2 tbsp, grated), Red chilli powder (1 tsp), Turmeric (¼ tsp), Coriander powder (1 tsp), Cumin powder (½ tsp), Hing (a pinch), Salt (to taste), Water (as needed for thick paste)


Other: Colocasia (Alu/Arbi) leaves (5–6, large and fresh, cleaned), Oil (for shallow frying)

Tempering & Garnish (optional but traditional): Mustard seeds (½ tsp), Sesame seeds (1 tsp), Curry leaves (a sprig), Grated coconut (1 tbsp), Chopped coriander (1 tbsp)

**Steps:**

1. Prep the Leaves: Wash colocasia leaves well. Gently trim the thick center vein without tearing the leaf. Pat dry.
2. Make the Paste: Mix besan, tamarind, jaggery, red chilli, turmeric, cumin, coriander powder, hing, and salt. Add water to form a thick, smooth, spreadable paste.
3. Layer & Roll: Place a leaf shiny side down. Spread the besan paste evenly. Layer another leaf on top, alternating direction. Repeat for 3–4 leaves. Roll tightly like a Swiss roll. Make 2–3 such rolls.
4. Steam: Steam rolls in a cooker or steamer for 15–20 mins. Let cool completely. Slice into ½-inch thick round vadis.
5. Pan-Fry: Heat a little oil and shallow-fry the slices until golden and crisp on both sides.
6. Temper & Garnish: Heat oil, crackle mustard and sesame seeds. Add curry leaves. Pour over the fried vadis. Garnish with fresh coconut and coriander.

This iconic snack brings together sweet, sour, and spicy in every beautifully crisp bite. Best enjoyed with hot chai or green chutney, Alu Vadi is tradition rolled into taste.



Introducing Our New Column

## ARTWORK OF THE WEEK

We invite all young artists to showcase their talent in our weekly e-newspaper, The HULAHUL Times. Submit your hand-drawn artwork to be featured!

**CRITERIA**

- Age Limit: Up to 24 years
- Artwork Size: A4
- Format: Hand-drawn only

**SUBMISSION DETAILS**

- Email your artwork to: thehulahultimes@gmail.com
- Subject Line: ARTWORK
- Include: Your Name, Age, School/College Name, and Phone Number

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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