

A Weekly E-newspaper Initiative of the HULAHUL FOUNDATION

# THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow



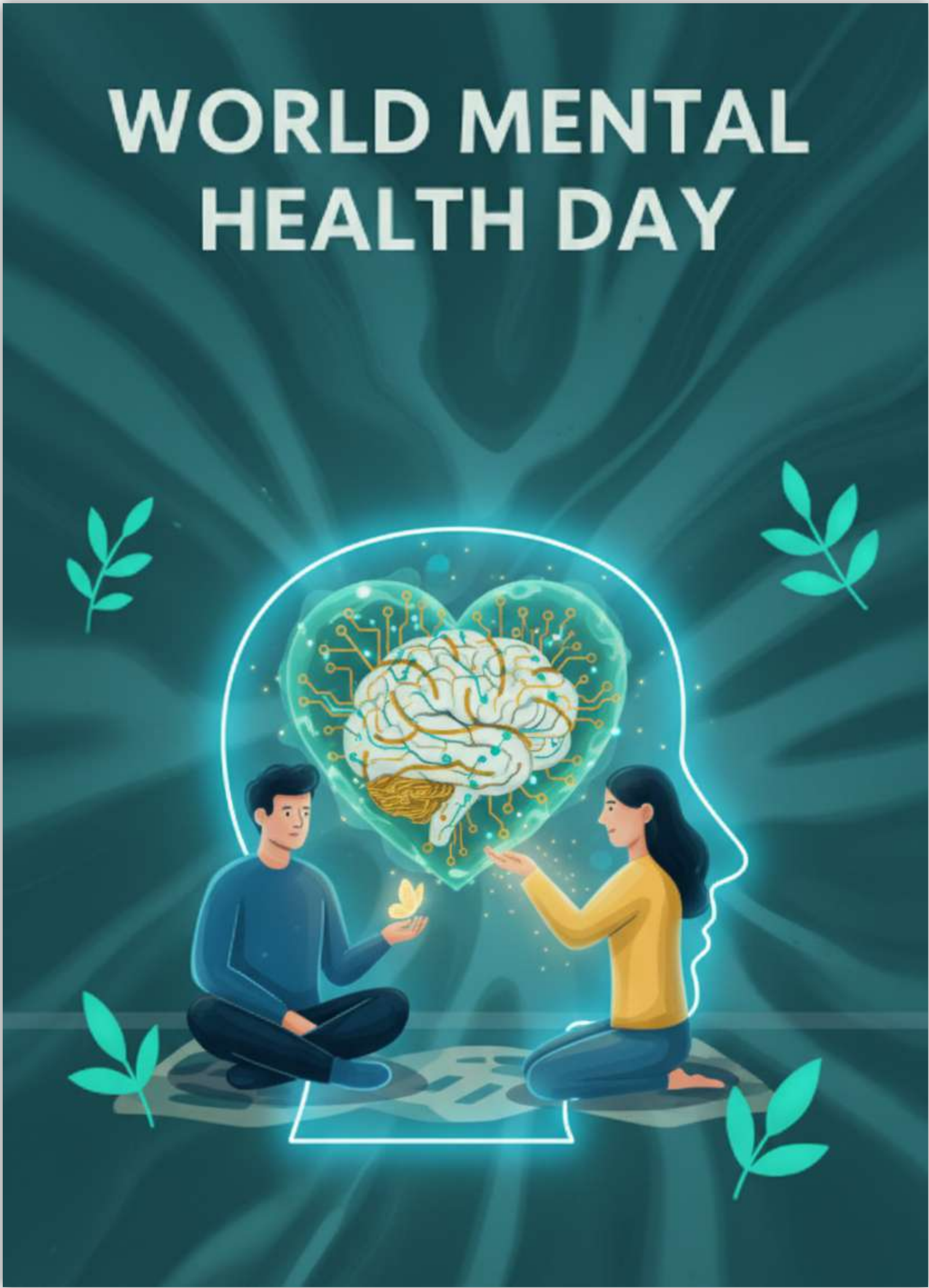
## WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY: BUILDING RESILIENCE WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

Every year, on October 10, the world observes World Mental Health Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about mental health issues and advocating for better mental health support globally. In 2025, the theme is "Access to Services: Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies", highlighting the urgent need for mental health support during crises such as natural disasters, conflicts, and public health emergencies.

Mental health is an integral part of overall well-being. However, during emergencies, the mental health of affected individuals often takes a backseat. Crises can cause significant emotional distress, and without proper support, these issues can escalate, leading to long-term psychological challenges. The 2025 theme emphasizes the importance of providing timely and effective mental health services during such times.

During emergencies, individuals may experience a range of emotions, including fear, anxiety, and grief. Without adequate mental health support, these feelings can lead to conditions like depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance abuse. Providing accessible mental health services during crises helps individuals cope better, recover faster, and rebuild their lives with resilience.

Organizations worldwide are taking steps to address mental health needs during emergencies. For instance, the World Health Organization (WHO) collaborates with governments and NGOs to integrate mental health services into emergency response plans. These initiatives aim to ensure that mental health care is available alongside physical health services during crises.



In India, mental health awareness is gaining momentum. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), launched a Virtual Mental Health Series from October 4 to 10, 2025. This initiative targets key stakeholders in CBSE-affiliated schools, including principals, teachers, counsellors, parents, and students, aiming to raise awareness and provide support around mental health issues in the school ecosystem. The program includes virtual sessions addressing various aspects of mental well-being, emphasizing prevention, support mechanisms, and resilience-building techniques.

Despite progress, challenges remain. In many parts of the world, mental health services are limited, especially during emergencies. There is a shortage of trained mental health professionals, lack of infrastructure, and insufficient awareness about the importance of mental health care. Stigma and misunderstanding about mental illness further discourage people from seeking help. These challenges are magnified during crises when the demand for services grows but resources become even more strained.

World Mental Health Day serves as a reminder that mental health is just as important as physical health. By prioritizing mental health services during emergencies, we can help individuals navigate through crises with strength and resilience. Let us come together to ensure that mental health support is accessible to all, especially in times of need.

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# RANI NAGNIKA SATAKARNI: THE QUEEN WHO CARVED HER NAME IN STONE

In the ancient land of the Deccan, when dynasties rose and fell like waves of the sea, there lived a queen whose courage, wisdom, and devotion to dharma shone like a beacon in Indian history. She was **Rani Nagnika (Nayanika) Satakarni**, the formidable queen of the Satavahana Empire. Her story is not just about palaces and power but about the strength of a woman who balanced duty, love, and leadership with grace.

## The Satavahana Empire and the Queen

The Satavahana dynasty flourished between the 1st century BCE and 2nd century CE, ruling large parts of central and southern India. It was a time of bustling trade, rich culture, and frequent battles for supremacy. King Satakarni I, one of the most powerful Satavahana rulers, expanded the empire's boundaries, but his true partner in governance and vision was his queen, **Rani Nagnika**.

Unlike most royal consorts of her time, Nagnika was not confined to the inner palace. She was deeply involved in administration, religious patronage, and diplomacy. Inscriptions discovered at Nanaghat bear her name, proving that she left an indelible mark on history, carved not by others, but by her own will.

## The Nanaghat Inscriptions: A Voice Across Ages

High in the passes of the Western Ghats, where traders and travelers once walked, stand inscriptions that tell us about Rani Nagnika. These inscriptions are unique, for they were commissioned by the queen herself.

They describe the great sacrifices she organized, the donations she gave, and her role as the wife of Satakarni and mother of princes. More importantly, they highlight her agency in decision-making. At a time when women were rarely remembered in stone, Nagnika ensured that her deeds and vision would echo across millennia.

Her inscriptions remind us that women have always been central to Indian history—not merely as supporters, but as leaders. A Queen's Sacrifice and Strength

Rani Nagnika's greatness lay in her ability to combine compassion with courage. She actively patronized Vedic rituals and Buddhist causes alike, showing her inclusivity. Her generosity to priests, scholars, and common people reflected her belief that true power lies in uplifting others.

But she was also a woman of steel. When enemies threatened the stability of the Satavahana realm, she stood beside her king in strategy and counsel. Folk tales suggest that when Satakarni marched to distant wars, Nagnika often oversaw administration, ensuring justice and stability at home.



Her strength was not loud but steady, rooted in the conviction that the dharma of a ruler is service.

## A Mother to the Empire

As a mother, Nagnika ensured that her sons were raised not in comfort alone but in discipline, knowledge, and a sense of duty. She knew that kingdoms can crumble if heirs are not grounded in values. The Nanaghat inscriptions describe her proudly as the “mother of princes,” which was not just a title but a testament to her role in shaping the future of the empire.

Her vision was clear: an empire may stand tall with armies, but it flourishes only when guided by ethics, wisdom, and compassion.

## Philosophy of Rani Nagnika

The life of Rani Nagnika reflected a philosophy that still holds meaning for us today. She used to believe that power must be used for service, not for domination. She supported diverse faiths and communities, teaching that harmony is strength. By commissioning inscriptions in her own name, she showed that women must be recognized as decision-makers in history. For her, duty to family, kingdom, and people was sacred above all else.

## The Moral of the Story

Rani Nagnika Satakarni's life is a reminder that history is not only written by kings and warriors, but also by queens who led with courage and compassion. She teaches us that power is not defined by gender but by responsibility. She also reminds us that our legacy is not in what we take, but in what we give—whether through justice, generosity, or service.

For today's youth, her story inspires us to use our voices fearlessly, to balance strength with kindness, and to remember that leadership means standing up for what is right, even if history forgets to record it.

## Conclusion

The story of Rani Nagnika Satakarni is not merely a tale from the distant Satavahana era; it is a timeless lesson in ethics, leadership, and empowerment. She stood by her king as an equal, carved her name in stone when women were often silenced, and ruled with a vision that united people across faiths and classes.

Her inscriptions at Nanaghat still whisper across the mountains: “*Greatness is not in conquest, but in compassion. Power is not in titles, but in service.*”

Rani Nagnika's life reminds us that even in times when women were rarely acknowledged, she rose above barriers and declared through her deeds that a queen's strength can guide a kingdom, and her wisdom can inspire generations.

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Ravi Singh & Tanishka Verma

# SHABNAM HASHMI: A VOICE OF COURAGE AND COMPASSION

In a quiet lane of Delhi's Nizamuddin area, a young woman began teaching girls in the early 1980s. She had no big organisation, no funding, just a belief that education could change lives. That woman was Shabnam Hashmi, who would go on to become one of India's most recognised social activists. Over four decades, she has fought for communal harmony, women's rights, and the dignity of the marginalized.

Born in 1957, Shabnam grew up in a family that valued books, art and political discussion. Her father, who had refused to migrate to Pakistan during Partition, passed on a strong belief in secularism. Her brother, Safdar Hashmi, was a street theatre activist whose murder in 1989 by political goons left a lasting wound on the family.

For Shabnam, this loss was not just personal. It convinced her that silence in the face of injustice was never an option. She once recalled that her childhood home was full of poetry and debate, but also of responsibility, to fight for a society where every voice mattered.

Her first brush with activism came in 1981, when she set up a small learning centre for girls in Nizamuddin. Many of these children had never entered a classroom before. Through teaching, Shabnam realised that education was deeply tied to larger issues of poverty, gender, and communal prejudice.

This early experience laid the foundation for her later work. By the 1990s, she was no longer just a teacher. She had become a campaigner, speaking out against religious hatred, discrimination, and fundamentalism.

The communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 marked a major turning point in her life. Seeing the large-scale violence, Shabnam knew that individual efforts were not enough and organised, collective resistance was needed.

In 2003, along with historian K.N. Panikkar and activist Harsh Mander, she co-founded

ANHAD (Act Now for Harmony and Democracy). The organisation worked to defend constitutional values, challenge hate politics, and create spaces for dialogue.

ANHAD's campaigns were often creative. One, titled "Mere Ghar Aake To Dekho" (Come

support and personal sacrifice.

Shabnam Hashmi also understood that social change required more than campaigns. It needed legal victories too. She was part of a legal battle that secured the right of Muslims

In 2024, she flagged misuse of power in Gujarat elections before the Election Commission. She also launched the "I too am Rani Chennamma" campaign, invoking the memory of the warrior queen of Karnataka to inspire women to resist authoritarianism.

After leading ANHAD for 22 years, Shabnam announced in 2025 that she was stepping down. The decision, she said, was necessary to allow younger leadership to take charge. It was not retirement but a transition. "Movements must renew themselves," she reminded her colleagues.

Her departure marked the end of an era for ANHAD, but not for her activism. She continues to speak out independently, supporting voices of resistance in art, culture, and politics.

Shabnam has never had it easy. Her critics brand her "anti-national" for opposing communal politics. She has faced state hostility, financial hurdles, and personal attacks. Yet she remains unshaken. To her, defending pluralism and dissent is the highest form of patriotism.

She has also spoken about the need for reform within minority communities, especially around women's rights. In doing so, she has shown that her activism is not about taking sides, but about standing consistently for justice

What makes Shabnam Hashmi stand out is her blend of compassion and firmness. She believes activism should not just resist hate but also build bridges of trust. Whether it was teaching girls in a small Delhi classroom, campaigning in riot-affected Gujarat, or challenging laws in the Supreme Court, her work has always been about dignity and equality.

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and Christians to adopt children under the Juvenile Justice Act. The Supreme Court's 2014 judgment, which affirmed this right, was a milestone for secular citizenship in India.

Her activism has often taken symbolic forms. In 2017, she returned the National Minority Rights Award she had received in 2008, as a protest against the rise in mob lynchings. It was her way of telling the state that awards mean nothing if lives are not protected.

Even in recent years, she has stayed active.



Home and See), encouraged people to visit homes across religious and caste lines, breaking stereotypes in the most personal way possible over food and conversation. In villages and towns, ANHAD held cultural events, training sessions, and people's tribunals that gave victims of violence a platform to be heard.

But standing up to powerful forces came with costs. In 2016, ANHAD's foreign funding license was cancelled. The organisation often struggled for resources, but Shabnam and her colleagues kept going, relying on community



Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay

EDITOR



Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay

PhD (Business Administration) M.Phil, M.Com, B.Ed.  
Assistant Professor, (Department of Commerce) &  
Professor in-charge of Department of Accounting and  
Finance (BAF) and Foreign Trade Sydenham College.  
Member, Board of Studies in Accounting,  
Dr. Homi Bhabha State University, Mumbai  
Gazette Class One officer of Government  
of Maharashtra.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Commerce Connect is a student-friendly column that turns money, markets, and management into everyday lessons. From canteen economics to digital wallets, it bridges classroom theory with real-world trends—making commerce not just a subject, but a life skill.

Your phone buzzes “Get 60% OFF on your first three orders!” Suddenly, that ₹500 pizza feels lighter on your pocket. Or you scroll through “Flat 70% OFF on furniture” during a festive sale. Jackpot? Not really. Behind every glittering “mega discount” lies a carefully calculated business strategy. Brands aren't losing money out of generosity they're investing in you.

Understanding this playbook isn't just about saving a few rupees; it's about recognizing real-world lessons in marketing, consumer psychology, and the economics of everyday life.

The Masked Hero: Why Businesses Offer Discounts

Discounts look like superheroes, flashy, tempting, impossible to ignore. But every hero wears a mask.

**Customer Acquisition:** Companies lose money today to profit tomorrow. A ₹200 discount may secure loyalty for years.

Example: Swiggy may take a hit on your

OFFERS OR ILLUSIONS? THE SMART COMMERCE BEHIND DISCOUNTS

first pizza but recovers through delivery charges and repeat orders. Similarly, Jio's free internet in 2016 built a massive subscriber base that still pays today.

**Data Goldmine:** Every click, search, and order becomes a data point. Businesses study these to decode your habits. Example: Zomato knows your midnight cravings; Amazon tracks festive shopping to nudge you toward “similar items.”

**Cross-Brand Partnerships:** “Extra 10% OFF with XYZ Bank card” isn't kindness it's collaboration.

Example: Flipkart's Big Billion Days with HDFC Bank or Apple's EMI tie-ups with ICICI Bank.

**The FOMO (fear of missing out) Trick:** “Offer ends at midnight!” isn't coincidence it's designed urgency to push impulse buying.

Behind the Curtain: The Commerce Playbook

Discounts are not random they're proven strategies disguised as generosity.

- Penetration Pricing:** Launch with steep discounts to grab quick market share (Ola, Uber).
- Loss Leaders:** Sell one product at a loss to pull customers in, then profit elsewhere (supermarkets with staples).
- Inventory Clearance:** “End of season” sales are simply warehouses being emptied.
- Psychological Pricing:** ₹499 feels lighter than ₹500.

Example: Myntra's End of Season Sale isn't charity it's smart inventory clearance dressed in glamour.

The Villains: Consumer Traps

Every superhero story has villains. In the discount game, traps often wear friendly masks.

- Overbuying:** “50% OFF” lures you into buying what you never needed.
- Hidden Charges:** Discounts shrink once delivery or convenience fees are added.
- Pay-Later Pitfalls:** “Buy now, pay later” feels smooth until the credit bill arrives with interest.

Example: A young professional buys a phone “20% OFF on EMI.” Add fees, and the

- Use credit only when repayment is certain.
- Treat discounts as live case studies in pricing psychology.

Real-Life Scenes

- Swiggy Coupons:** ₹100 off today creates a lifelong ordering habit.
- Flipkart Big Billion Days 2023:** ₹11,000 crore sales in a week—consumers thought they saved, Flipkart gained massively.
- Amazon Prime Day:** Discounts sell gadgets, while subscriptions secure steady revenue.
- Zomato + Banks:** You save ₹50, but Zomato earns commissions and banks gain loyal customers.

The Real Superpower: Awareness

Discounts may look like rescues, but the real hero is you if you pause and think. Businesses aren't charities; they thrive on capturing your wallet, loyalty, and data.

The goal isn't to avoid discounts, but to use them wisely without falling into traps. Next time you see “Flat 70% OFF,” ask yourself:

- Do I really need this?
- What's the final cost after hidden charges?
- Can this discount works for me, not just for them?

Final Takeaway

Discounts aren't freebies they are strategies. But if you shop with clarity, compare smartly, and focus on needs over wants, you don't just save money, you gain a crash course in commerce.

So, when the next “Limited Time Offer” flashes on your screen, don't rush. Think, smile, and decide like a pro. Because in the economy of discounts, the real winner isn't the brand it's the aware consumer who knows the game.

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final price is higher than the MRP.

The Smart Shopper's Guide

You don't need superpowers, just clarity.

- Check the final price sometimes no-offer rates are cheaper.
- Buy needs, not wants.
- Track spending via apps like Google Pay, CRED, or Walnut.
- Stack coupons and bank offers smartly.



EDITOR



**Prof. Dr. Savita Kishan Pawar**  
Professor and Head, Dept. of English,  
Sydenham College.  
Chairperson, Board of Studies in English,  
Dr. Homi Bhabha State University, Mumbai.  
Gazette Class One officer Government of  
Maharashtra.  
MPSC Batch 2005.

EDITORIAL NOTE

*The study of language and literature is not just an academic pursuit, but a journey into the world of imagination, critical thinking, and cultural exchange. This page celebrates creativity, knowledge, and expression by bridging the classics with contemporary voices.*

MEDITATION AND MUSIC: A  
HARMONY FOR MIND AND SOUL

Meditation and music, though seemingly different, share a deep connection in nurturing mental peace and emotional balance. Music has the power to calm the restless mind, while meditation helps us focus inward and listen more deeply. Together, they create a unique pathway to relaxation, creativity, and self-discovery.

From ancient times, Indian traditions have emphasized the role of sound (nada yoga) in spiritual practice. The chanting of mantras, the rhythm of tabla, or the serene notes of a flute can elevate meditation to a profound experience. Western traditions too recognize the healing power of music, classical symphonies, Gregorian chants, and even modern ambient music have been used to support mindfulness.

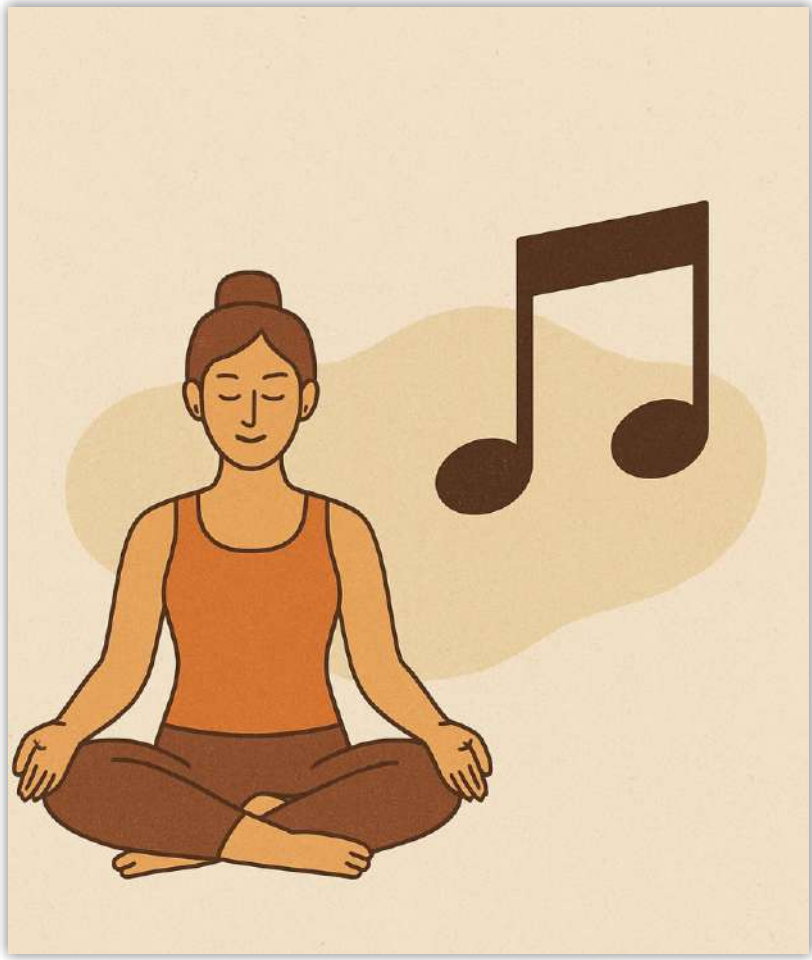
Scientific studies reveal that meditation lowers stress hormones and improves concentration, while music activates pleasure centers in the brain, releasing dopamine. When combined, they harmonize the nervous system, enhance memory, and even reduce anxiety and depression.



In today's fast-paced world, many people practice guided meditation with background music. Soft instrumental sounds or natural melodies like rainfall and birdsong are often used to deepen focus. Artists across cultures have composed music specifically for meditation, creating spaces where silence and sound meet.

Meditation with music is not just a practice—it is an art. It teaches us to breathe with rhythm, to listen without judgment, and to find harmony in chaos. As William Congreve once wrote, “Music has charms to soothe the savage breast.” With meditation, it also awakens the soul.

- Dr. Savita Pawar



GRAMMAR TIP

Its vs. It's

Its shows possession.  
Example: The tree shed *its* leaves in autumn.

It's is a contraction for it is or it has.  
Example: *It's* going to rain today.

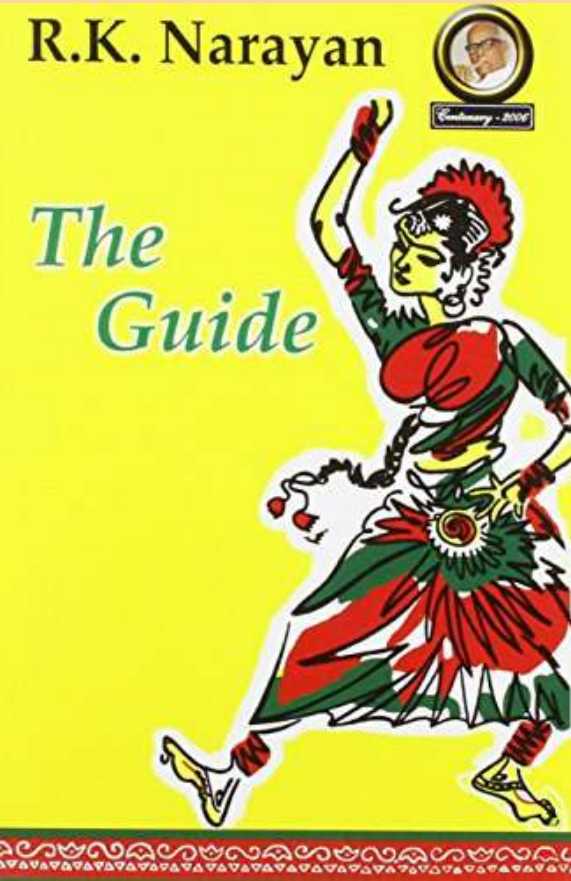
WRITER OF THE WEEK

Anita Desai (b. 1937)

Anita Desai is an eminent Indian-English novelist, short-story writer, and academic. Known for her psychological realism, she explores themes of identity, displacement, and family dynamics. Her celebrated works include Clear Light of Day, In Custody, and Fasting, Feasting. She has been shortlisted three times for the Booker Prize and continues to inspire generations of readers with her delicate yet powerful narratives.

BOOK REVIEW

The Guide by R. K. Narayan



R. K. Narayan's The Guide (1958) is a timeless novel that beautifully captures the complexities of human relationships, morality, and transformation. Set in the fictional town of Malgudi, the story follows Raju, a tourist guide who rises from humble beginnings to fame and fortune, only to face downfall and unexpected redemption. Through his relationship with Rosie, a dancer seeking freedom, Narayan explores themes of love, ambition, and cultural conflict. The novel's brilliance lies in its simplicity of language and depth of insight into human nature. It leaves readers questioning whether Raju is a fraud, a victim of circumstance, or a reluctant saint, making The Guide one of the most thought-provoking works in Indian English literature.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Happiness depends upon ourselves.”

— Aristotle

CREATIVE WRITING

DAFFODILS

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed and gazed but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

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Poetry By

- William Wordsworth

WORD OF THE WEEK

**Quintessential (adjective)** — representing the most perfect or typical example of a quality or class.

**Example:** R. K. Narayan is often seen as the quintessential Indian storyteller.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

**Break the ice:** To do or say something to relieve tension or get a conversation going in an awkward or uncomfortable situation.

**Example:** At the start of the meeting, the manager told a funny story to break the ice and make everyone feel more comfortable.



SILENT INVADERS: PAU ISSUES RED ALERT ON BROWN LOCUST THREAT IN PUNJAB'S PADDY FIELDS

Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, has sounded an urgent alert for farmers after detecting brown locust infestations in several paddy-growing regions of the state. The pest, in both adult and juvenile stages, feeds on plant sap, causing a gradual yellowing of leaves from the tip downward until the plant eventually withers and dries. Adding to the challenge, the presence of black owl insects has been reported in some fields, compounding crop losses.



Experts warn that once a plant dries out, the locusts swiftly migrate to nearby healthy crops, creating a fast-spreading infestation. To curb this, farmers have been advised to closely monitor their fields. A simple check involves twisting two to three plants at the base and observing—if five or more locusts float on water per plant, pesticide application becomes essential.

metre radius of healthy plants. Additionally, as locusts are attracted to light, using lamps at night can help identify their presence.

PAU has emphasized timely intervention to minimize damage and safeguard Punjab's paddy harvest this season.

The advisory recommends spraying targeted pesticides at the root zone, where locusts usually gather, instead of blanket spraying the entire field. In localized infestations, farmers should treat only the surrounding 3–4

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EXCESS RAINS DEVASTATE 9.6 LAKH HECTARES OF CROPS IN NORTH KARNATAKA

Excess rainfall and flooding in North Karnataka have damaged crops on more than 9.6 lakh hectares. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, after an aerial survey of Kalaburgi and Yadgiri districts, said standing crops were affected on 8.9 lakh hectares and horticulture crops on over 71,000 hectares. Farmers growing pulses, soybean, and cotton have suffered major losses, with nearly 90% of crops destroyed.



As per the relief package, dryland farmers will receive ₹17,000 per hectare (₹8,500 from NDRF and ₹8,500 from the State). Irrigated land farmers will get ₹25,500 per hectare, while those with perennial crops will receive ₹22,500 plus an additional ₹8,500 from the State.

districts received far higher excess—up to 79% in Vijayapura, 60% in Bagalkote, and 55% in Bidar. This heavy rain and floods have caused widespread crop failure, leaving farmers with nothing to harvest. Farmers fear that delayed monsoon withdrawal could further damage remaining crops. They are demanding compensation of ₹25,000 per acre to recover from their losses.

The South-West monsoon recorded 8% surplus rainfall nationwide, but North Karnataka

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TEXTILES MINISTRY LAUNCHES 550 CENTRES AND KAPAS-KISAAN APP FOR COTTON MSP PROCUREMENT

The Ministry of Textiles has launched 550 cotton procurement centres and is promoting the 'Kapas-Kisaan' app to make farmer registration and payment tracking simple. Farmers must register on the app by 31st October to benefit from MSP.



To prepare for the Kharif Cotton Season 2025–26, Textile Secretary Neelam Shami Rao held a review meeting with state officials, CCI, and the Ministry. The aim is smooth procurement, timely payments, and full digital integration.

Procurement will begin in the Northern Zone (Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan) from 1st October, the Central Zone (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha) from 15th October, and the Southern Zone (Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu) from 21st October.

The Kapas-Kisaan app helps farmers self-register, book slots, and track payments. Payments will go directly to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts via NACH, with SMS updates

at every stage. Local monitoring committees and CCI WhatsApp helplines will address farmer issues, while states are sharing land records for smoother registration.

The Ministry emphasized its commitment to a modern, transparent, and farmer-friendly procurement system that ensures fair prices and timely support for cotton growers.

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SEEDS OF SELF-RELIANCE: INDIA'S MISSION FOR PULSE INDEPENDENCE



The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has cleared the Mission for Aatma-nirbharta in Pulses, a six-year initiative designed to make India self-reliant in pulse production. With an investment of ₹11,440 crore, the programe will run from 2025-26 to 2030-31, marking a transformative step for food security and farmer prosperity.

will be on developing climate-resilient, pest-resistant seeds. Under ICAR's guidance, breeder seeds will be produced and monitored via the SATHI digital portal for traceability. By 2030-31, 126 lakh quintals of certified seeds will cover 370 lakh hectares, bringing an additional 35 lakh hectares into pulse cultivation.

To diversify crops, 88 lakh seed kits will be provided free of cost, while farmers will receive training in soil health, mechanisation, and balanced nutrient use. Post-harvest, the scheme envisions 1,000 processing and packaging units with subsidies of up to ₹25 lakh each. Crucially, assured procurement of Tur, Urad, and Masoor through PM-AASHA will safeguard farmer incomes.

Although India is the world's largest producer and consumer of pulses, the country imports nearly 15–20% of its needs. The mission aims to eliminate this gap by boosting yields, expanding cultivation, and ensuring robust market systems. A major thrust

By 2030-31, India targets 350 lakh tonnes of pulses, reduced imports, higher rural employment, and strengthened climate-smart agriculture.

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GOVERNMENT PUSH FOR SUSTAINABLE SUGARCANE FARMING WITH NEW ICAR INITIATIVE



Union Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that a dedicated team will soon be created under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to focus on sugarcane research. The team will work on tackling crop diseases, water challenges, and farmer concerns. Speaking at a national seminar on the sugarcane economy, Chouhan highlighted that while sugarcane variety 238 has high sugar content, it has now become highly vulnerable to red rot disease. He warned against over-reliance on a single crop variety, stressing the importance of diversification and sustainable farming.

Chouhan pointed out that monocropping has reduced soil nutrients and nitrogen fixation. He suggested intercropping, wider use of drip irrigation, and cost reduction measures, though he acknowledged that micro-irrigation can add financial pressure on farmers. He also called for value addition in sugarcane beyond ethanol and molasses, promotion of natural farming to cut fertilizer use, and greater mechanisation to deal with labour shortages.

ICAR Director General Dr. M.L. Jat identified four key goals—research, development, industry solutions, and policy support. Officials also stressed crop diversification, efficient fertilizer use, and micro-irrigation systems. The seminar concluded with ICAR reaffirming its commitment to farmer-focused research for a stronger sugarcane sector.

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WORLD MENTAL HEALTH WEEK: CBSE, AIIMS TO HOST VIRTUAL SERIES FROM OCTOBER 4



The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), will present a week-long Virtual Mental Health Series from October 4 to 10, 2025, in observance of World Mental Health Week.

The programme targets principals, teachers, counselors, parents and students in CBSE-affiliated schools, with sessions intended to foster mental well-being, reduce stigma, and provide actionable strategies for resilience. Each day from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. IST, experts from AIIMS' Department of Psychiatry and Counselling Services

will lead a one-hour session on a specific facet of mental health in school settings.

The series begins on October 4 with a talk by Prof. Dr. M. Srinivas on Health, Nutrition and Emotional Health, followed by sessions on managing stress, nurturing positive mental health, the gut-brain connection, adolescent risk behaviours, and a concluding session on “Between Screens and Selves: Resilience in the Digital Age” on October 10, World Mental Health Day. Participation is open to 1,000 attendees per session on a first-come, first-served basis through the Webex platform.

By integrating expert guidance into school systems, this initiative aims to normalize conversations about emotional health and empower school communities to support their students' psychological well-being.

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GOA LAUNCHES NEW STARTUP POLICY TO CREATE 1,000 VENTURES, GENERATE 10,000 JOBS

The Goa government has introduced its new Startup Policy 2025 with an ambitious goal to establish 1,000 startups and create 10,000 employment opportunities for Goans while encouraging women entrepreneurs. The policy aims to transform Goa into India's “creative capital” by creating a strong ecosystem that connects entrepreneurs with investors, incubators, industries, and educational institutions. Currently, Goa has 696 startups recognized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), reflecting a growing culture of innovation in the state.



women entrepreneurs, including mentorship support, financial aid, and monthly allowances for innovation-driven businesses.

To strengthen the startup ecosystem, the policy also proposes setting up IT labs, maker labs, centres of excellence, and innovation hubs in collaboration with educational institutions and private partners. Through these efforts, the government hopes to build a vibrant environment that empowers local talent, drives innovation, and positions Goa as a leading hub for creativity and entrepreneurship.

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CENTRE APPROVES 57 NEW KENDRIYA VIDYALAYAS ACROSS 17 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

In a major push to expand quality education nationwide, the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of 57 new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) across 17 states and Union Territories. The project, costing ₹5,862.55 crore over nine years, will cover both capital and operational expenses.

Of these, 20 schools will come up in districts that currently lack a KV, 14 in aspirational districts, four in Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected areas, and five in Northeast and hilly regions—ensuring balanced educational development across India.

The move aims to meet the growing educational needs of Central government employees' children while extending opportunities to underserved regions. Each new KV will include 'Balvatikas', or pre-primary sections, emphasizing foundational learning. With an estimated 1,520 students per school, the new network is expected to benefit over 86,000 students.

This expansion will take the total



number of Kendriya Vidyalayas to 1,345, reaffirming the government's commitment to accessible, uniform, and high-quality education. KVs, run by the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) under the Ministry of Education, follow a CBSE curriculum based on NCERT textbooks.

While recent data showed a dip in new admissions in 2024–25, the Centre hopes this expansion will rejuvenate enrolment and ensure that every child of a Central employee—and beyond—has access to nationwide educational excellence under the KV banner.

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PM MODI TO LAUNCH MONTHLY ALLOWANCE, LOANS FOR BIHAR YOUTH AS PART OF RS 62,000 CRORE SKILL, EDUCATION PUSH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to unveil an ambitious package of youth-oriented schemes worth over ₹62,000 crore on October 4, with a sharp focus on empowering Bihar's young people.

One of the key Bihar-specific measures is the restructured Mukhyamantri Nishchay Svyam Sahayata Bhatta Yojana, under which nearly 5 lakh graduates will receive a monthly stipend of ₹1,000 for two years, along with free skill training. Also being revamped is the Bihar Student Credit Card Scheme, now offering interest-free education loans of up to ₹4 lakh, aimed at easing financial constraints on students.

Beyond Bihar, the Prime Minister will launch PM-SETU (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs) with an outlay of ₹60,000 crore, upgrading 1,000 government ITIs nationwide on a hub-and-spoke model. He will also inaugurate 1,200 vocational skill labs across Navodaya Vidyalayas and Eklavya Model

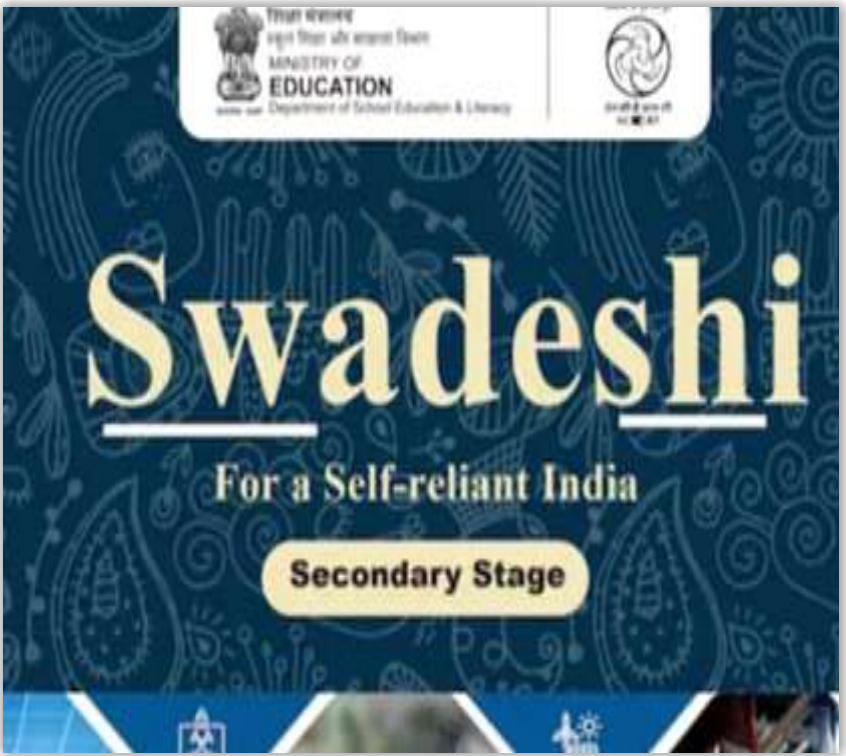
Residential Schools, and lay the foundation for modern academic and research facilities under the PM-USHA scheme in four Bihar universities.

Other initiatives include the establishment of the Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Skill University, formation of Bihar Yuva Ayog (for 18-to-45-year-olds), dedication of the new NIT Patna Bihta campus, and issuance of over 4,000 government job appointment letters along with ₹450 crore in scholarships to around 25 lakh class 9 and 10 students.

With these measures, the government aims to link education, skill development, infrastructure, and financial support into a comprehensive youth empowerment strategy — especially targeting Bihar as a hub of future human capital.

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NCERT INTRODUCES NEW 'SWADESHI' MODULE TO PROMOTE SELF-RELIANCE AMONG STUDENTS



The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has rolled out a new educational module on 'Swadeshi', aiming to reignite the spirit of self-reliance among students. Rooted in the idea of Atmanirbhar Bharat, the initiative reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to strengthen India through indigenous innovation, capability, and confidence.

The module goes beyond the idea of simply buying Indian-made products. It emphasizes that Swadeshi is about building India's capability—from science and technology to healthcare and defence. Quoting the Prime Minister, it reminds learners that “when self-reliance diminishes, capability declines.” The focus is on nurturing a generation that not only consumes responsibly but also creates, innovates, and contributes to the nation's growth.

Encouraging young minds to explore fields like research, patents, and innovation, the module draws connections to the government's BioE3 policy—an initiative fostering biotechnology, environment, and energy-driven entrepreneurship.

Historically, the concept is traced to the 1905 Swadeshi Movement, born during Bengal's partition, when Indians boycotted British goods and built indigenous enterprises like Bengal Chemicals (1901) and Tata Iron and Steel (1907). These milestones demonstrated India's power to compete globally through homegrown talent and industry.

By revisiting this legacy in a modern context, NCERT's Swadeshi module seeks to turn classrooms into incubators of self-belief, innovation, and national pride—preparing students to shape a truly Atmanirbhar Bharat.

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Durgesh K. Dubey & Anshika Pandey

# ZOMATO, HDFC PENSION LAUNCH NPS MODEL FOR DELIVERY PARTNERS TO SECURE RETIREMENT

In a landmark step toward ensuring social security for gig workers, food delivery platform Zomato has partnered with HDFC Pension Management Company to introduce a customized National Pension System (NPS) model for its delivery partners. The initiative marks one of the first large-scale collaborations in India aimed at integrating gig economy workers into formal retirement savings schemes.

The move is being hailed as a major milestone in strengthening financial security for delivery executives, who often work without the safety net of traditional employment benefits such as provident fund or pension contributions.

**Gig Workforce and Social Security Gap:** India's gig economy, which employs nearly 8 million workers according to NITI Aayog estimates, has expanded rapidly in recent years. While platforms like Zomato, Swiggy, and Blinkit have created significant employment opportunities, concerns over the absence of retirement savings, insurance, and long-term financial planning for delivery staff have persisted.

By tying up with HDFC Pension, Zomato aims to bridge this gap by offering its partners a voluntary yet structured way to save for the future. Delivery partners will now have the option to enroll in the NPS, a government-backed retirement savings scheme regulated by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

**How the Scheme Works:** Under the collaboration, HDFC Pension will provide seamless onboarding of delivery partners through digital

KYC and simplified processes. Zomato will facilitate awareness campaigns and technical integration on its platform to ensure partners can easily opt in.

Once enrolled, delivery executives can contribute a portion of their income to their NPS accounts. These contributions will be invested in a mix of equity, corporate bonds, and government securities, with returns linked to market performance. Upon reaching retirement age, the subscriber can withdraw part of the accumulated corpus as a lump sum, while the remaining amount will provide a monthly pension.

According to officials, flexible contribution amounts and tax benefits under the Income Tax Act will make the scheme attractive for gig workers, many of whom lack exposure to formal savings options.

**Statements from Stakeholders:** Speaking on the launch, a Zomato spokesperson said, “Our delivery partners are at the core of our ecosystem. This partnership with HDFC Pension is an effort to provide them with a dignified and financially secure future. We want to ensure that the gig workforce also has access to structured retirement benefits.”

Supratim Bandyopadhyay, Chairman of PFRDA, lauded the initiative, noting that it represents a significant step toward financial inclusion. “NPS is designed to provide long-term retirement security, and extending it to gig workers will help millions prepare for the future. Zomato's move could set an example for other companies in the sector,” he said.

**Implications for the Industry:** Analysts believe the initiative could transform the landscape of India's gig economy. With more companies expected to follow suit, the introduction of NPS for delivery partners may pave the way for comprehensive welfare policies, including insurance and health benefits.

Experts also see this as aligning with the government's long-term vision of extending social security coverage to informal workers under the Code on Social Security, 2020.

**Looking Ahead:** If successful, the model could inspire partnerships across the gig economy, bringing millions of workers under the safety net of retirement savings. For Zomato, the initiative not only enhances goodwill but also positions it as a pioneer in gig worker welfare.

With HDFC Pension providing the expertise and infrastructure, the NPS model for delivery partners represents a concrete step toward building a more inclusive and secure financial future for India's growing gig workforce.

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# RECORD-BREAKING NAVRATRI SALES THIS YEAR: GST CUT FUELS DECADE-HIGH FESTIVE DEMAND

This Navratri season has turned into a landmark occasion for retailers across India, with sales soaring to the highest levels in more than a decade. Market analysts and trade associations attribute this surge primarily to the government's recent decision to slash Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates on key consumer items, making big-ticket purchases more affordable for the middle class.

According to preliminary estimates from the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), overall festive sales during Navratri touched nearly ₹1.8 lakh crore, marking a growth of over 25 percent compared to last year. This figure is the highest recorded in the last ten years, reflecting not only the resilience of consumer sentiment but also the strong impact of favorable tax reforms on market dynamics.

**GST Cut as the Key Driver:** The government's announcement earlier this year to reduce GST rates on automobiles, two-wheelers, and certain consumer durables played a central role in the record-breaking numbers. The tax cut brought down prices across several categories, encouraging families to invest in new vehicles, electronics, and home appliances during the auspicious festive period.

Retailers have reported that two-wheelers and entry-level cars saw the most significant spike in demand. “The reduction in GST has lowered on-road prices, and customers are more confident about making purchases. We witnessed footfalls similar to pre-pandemic times but with much higher conversion rates,” said a Delhi-based automobile dealer.

Electronics and smartphone sales also saw a remarkable jump, with

companies launching new models during Navratri to capitalize on the festive buzz. Retail chains reported robust demand for smart TVs, refrigerators, and washing machines, items traditionally bought by families during the festive season.

**Wider Consumer Participation:** What made this Navratri season stand out was the participation of not just metro buyers but also Tier-II and Tier-III city consumers. Trade bodies noted that affordable financing schemes, attractive discounts, and reduced GST rates have helped expand the reach of festive shopping. Online platforms too registered record orders, with e-commerce giants reporting double-digit growth compared to last year.

A Jaipur-based textile trader noted, “This Navratri was special because people were shopping without hesitation. The GST cut gave customers extra savings, which they spent on clothes, jewelry, and décor. It revived the festive atmosphere that we had not seen in many years.”

**Boost for Economy and Employment:** The bumper sales season has had a ripple effect on the wider economy. Manufacturing units, logistics firms, and supply chains experienced heightened demand, translating into temporary job creation across several industries. Economists believe this surge in festive spending could provide momentum to India's GDP growth in the coming quarters.

“Festive demand is a critical barometer for the Indian economy. The GST cut acted as a stimulus at the right time, boosting consumption and lifting business sentiment. It has set the tone for a strong recovery heading into the wedding season,” remarked an economic analyst from Mumbai.



**Looking Ahead:** With Diwali around the corner, traders and businesses remain optimistic about sustaining the momentum. The record-breaking Navratri sales have created confidence that India's retail sector is entering a new growth cycle, supported by policy reforms and robust consumer appetite.

For now, this festive season will be remembered as the one that set a new benchmark for sales in the past decade, fueled by a rare blend of tax relief, pent-up demand, and the timeless cultural spirit of celebration.

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EXPERT



Dr. (Mrs) Chandra Hariharan Iyer

Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Coordinator - Center for IKS, B.K.Birla College (Autonomous), Kalyan.

PhD(Management-Finance), M.Phil(Management), MBA(Finance), M.com, M.Sc.(Psychology), M.A. (Philosophy and Religion) DBM, PGDBM, PGDFM, PG Diploma in Guidance & Counselling

FAQs ON  
Learning and Development through  
Ancient Indian Wisdom

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Q. What is the relevance of  
Abundance in our life?

**Ans.** In the vast ocean of human aspirations, abundance has always been a central pursuit. Abundance is not merely the accumulation of wealth or resources; in the Indian tradition, it extends to knowledge, compassion, health, relationships, and spiritual progress. Ancient Indian wisdom teaches that abundance is a holistic state where material prosperity and inner well-being coexist harmoniously. Unlike modern interpretations that limit abundance to financial growth, Indian philosophy views it as 'Purnatva'—the fullness of life itself. The Indian scriptures, Subhashitham, and epics emphasize that abundance must flow both outward and inward. A person who only gathers without giving is likened to a stagnant pond, whereas one who shares is like a flowing river nourishing many lives. Through this lens, we can explore how abundance shapes human existence, supported by timeless Sanskrit wisdom.

- 1) Abundance as Fulfillment (Purnatva)** A famous invocation from the **Isavasya Upanishad** says: ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते॥ “That is whole, this is whole; from the whole, the whole arises. Even when the whole is taken from the whole, the whole remains.” This verse explains that true abundance comes from recognizing the completeness of existence itself. Life, when seen through the lens of fullness, allows one to live without craving or deficiency. Abundance here is not about multiplying possessions but realizing the wholeness of being. When we accept life as already complete, our attitude changes from scarcity to gratitude. Instead of running endlessly for “more,” we start cherishing what we have, thereby experiencing abundance at every moment.
- 2) Abundance through Generosity:** दानं भोगो नाशस्तिस्रो गतयो भवन्ति वित्तस्य। यो न ददाति न भुङ्क्ते तस्य तृतीया गतिः भवति॥ “Wealth has three paths: charity, enjoyment, or destruction. One who neither shares nor enjoys faces only destruction.” This Subhashitham highlights that abundance multiplies when shared. Hoarding wealth creates fear and eventual loss, but giving ensures both material circulation and spiritual merit. In ancient India, kings were praised for dana (charity), for it maintained social harmony and uplifted the needy. In today's context, generosity may be financial, but it can also mean sharing time, knowledge, or kindness. Every act of giving strengthens the cycle of abundance because it flows back manifold, like a river returning as rain.
- 3) Abundance of Knowledge:** विद्या नाम नरस्य रूपमधिकं प्रच्छन्नगुप्तं धनम्। विद्या भोगकरी यशः सुखकरी विद्या गुरुणां गुरुः॥ “Knowledge is the true beauty of a person, the hidden treasure. It grants joy, fame, and guidance—it is the teacher of teachers.” Indian thought regards vidya (knowledge) as the highest wealth. Unlike material possessions, knowledge cannot be stolen, diminished, or destroyed. A person rich in wisdom carries abundance that benefits not only themselves but society at large. The ancient gurukula system was based on this idea—where knowledge was freely given, creating an abundance of enlightened minds. In modern life, cultivating lifelong learning ensures abundance beyond money. Sharing knowledge—mentoring, teaching, guiding—keeps this flame alive and makes one truly prosperous.
- 4) Abundance in Relationships:** सॄखं च यस्य प्रियसंगमेऽस्ति तस्य दुःखं प्रियवियोगजं भवति। तस्मात् स्नेहं विवेकपूर्वकं कुर्यात्॥ “He who finds joy in companionship will also feel pain in separation; therefore, nurture relationships with wisdom.” Relationships, when nurtured with care and wisdom, are the greatest source of abundance. Ancient Indian epics like the Mahabharata teach that even kings who owned vast riches were incomplete without loyal friends, family, and well-wishers. Abundance in relationships is not about numbers but about depth, trust, and mutual respect. In today's fast-paced life, investing in genuine connections creates emotional wealth. Listening, caring, and supporting others are currencies of abundance in relationships.
- 5) Abundance through Contentment (Santosha):** संतोषः परमो लाभः सत्संगः परमा गतिः। विचारः परमं ज्ञानं शमः शान्तिः परं सुखम्॥ “Contentment is the highest gain, good company the highest path, reflection the greatest knowledge, and peace the supreme happiness.” This Subhashitham reminds us that abundance is meaningless without contentment. Desires, if unchecked, create an endless void, whereas contentment fills life with peace. The Indian sages often equated contentment with true wealth because a contented person sleeps peacefully while a greedy one remains restless. Practicing gratitude journals, mindful living, and appreciating small joys help nurture inner abundance. Contentment transforms scarcity into fullness.
- 6) Abundance in Time and Patience:** कालः सर्वभूतानां भवत्ययनि कारणम्। सर्वस्यानुग्रहार्थाय कालः परमकारणम्॥ “Time is the cause of creation and dissolution; time is the supreme force that brings grace to all.” Abundance in life is not just about material or emotional gains but also about how one values time. Ancient Indian wisdom revered time (kala) as sacred. A patient farmer, a disciplined student,

- or a dedicated seeker all trust time as the ultimate nurturer of abundance. Using time wisely—balancing work, rest, and reflection—creates a rhythm of abundance. Patience, aligned with time, ensures that even delayed rewards feel abundant when they arrive.
- 7) Abundance through Inner Virtues:** विद्या ददाति विनयं विनयाद्याति पात्रताम् पात्रत्वात् धनमाप्नोति धनात् धर्मं ततः सुखम्॥ “Knowledge gives humility, from humility arises worthiness, from worthiness comes wealth, from wealth comes righteousness, and from righteousness—happiness.” Here, abundance is shown as a chain reaction beginning with inner virtues like humility. A person rich in virtues naturally attracts opportunities, prosperity, and respect. Without virtues, material abundance becomes hollow and fleeting. Cultivating humility, compassion, and integrity ensures sustainable abundance. Inner wealth safeguards outer success from collapsing.
- 8) Abundance in Spiritual Growth:** न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते। तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति॥ (भगवद्गीता 4.38) “Nothing is as purifying as knowledge. In due course, the perfected yogi discovers this within the self.” Ultimately, the highest abundance is spiritual realization. Material gains are transient, but self-knowledge brings eternal abundance. Indian seers emphasized meditation, yoga, and self-inquiry as means to tap into this inexhaustible reservoir. Integrating spiritual practices like meditation, chanting, or mindful silence creates a steady inner abundance. Even in challenges, such a person remains anchored in peace.
- 9) Abundance as Flow, Not Possession:** यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता। योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः॥ (गीता 6.19) “Just as a steady lamp does not flicker in a windless place, so is the yogi whose mind is absorbed in self-mastery.” Abundance is not static possession but a flowing balance of giving, receiving, and aligning with life's rhythms. The yogi experiences this balance as steady joy, unshaken by external gains or losses. Abundance thus becomes freedom, not bondage. We must see abundance as a flow of resources, energy, and blessings. The more freely we let it circulate—without clinging—the richer life becomes.
- Abundance in life, as per ancient Indian wisdom, is not confined to wealth but extends to generosity, knowledge, relationships, virtues, time, and spiritual realization. The Subhashithams remind us that abundance flows naturally when life is lived in alignment with values like dana (charity), santosha (contentment), vidya (knowledge), and dharma (righteousness). A person who embodies these principles experiences Purnatva—the fullness of life—irrespective of circumstances. True abundance lies not in chasing more but in realizing wholeness, nurturing gratitude, and sharing freely. As rivers flow without holding back, so too should abundance in our lives—bringing prosperity, peace, and fulfillment to all. Stay blessed!

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# BOOKS, BUDDIES & PRESSURE: THE REAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE

Peer pressure is everywhere, at home, at school, in family gatherings, and among friends. We can't ignore it, but we can definitely let go and overcome peer pressure when we face it.

Peer pressure has a more negative impact than a positive one. Because it has been seen that people get into bad habits just because they were pressured to fit in a group of people.

Teenagers nowadays get into smoking, vaping, and substance abuse just to look cool and under the influence of their friend circle.

When it comes to peer pressure among friends and education, both negative and positive impacts have been witnessed.

Sometimes it gets difficult to balance between peer pressure and education, because it leads to anxiety and depression, and may worsen the condition if the influence is more negative. People have been seen getting indulged in substance abuse to get over the pressurized situation.

Let us see some of the ways we can balance studies and peer pressure, which will be helpful in a long run.

**Prioritize Studies** - A lot of students ignore the studying schedule and waste time hanging out with friends; they don't prioritize their studies, but rather are conscious about their image in front of their friends.

**Break the People-Pleasing Cycle** - The main reason for being affected by peer pressure is people pleasing.

When we don't understand the difference between doing what we love

and doing what others love just to please them and be in their good books. This has been the main reason for people getting into bad habits and getting away from studies and their normal life routine.

**Set Clear Boundaries** - When it comes to studies, you should clearly set boundaries with your friends. If you have set a time for studying and your friends call you to play, hang out, or party, you should let go of the latter and stick to the schedule that you have planned.

**Communicate with an Understanding Adult**- It gets more difficult when we do not find anyone to help us in peer pressure situations. When you feel you are stuck and there is no way out, find someone reliable to talk to, who won't judge but lend a supporting hand.

Many people have overcome peer pressure when they have shared with either their parents or an elder who understands them. Having someone who guides us in times when we don't see any way out are our real well-wishers.

Peer pressure has made students get involved in ragging, the most common thing that many of the senior students get into. Ragging sometimes has gone to such an extent that students have even ended their lives because of the trauma and the peer pressure that the seniors pose on them.

Ragging is banned in colleges, but still there are a lot of students who get involved in it and cause trouble for others. This not only impacts their education but also their image in front of all the students. They even force their friends who are totally not interested in such activities to join them, and under pressure, they also fall prey to such things, and in turn damage their academic growth.



If you compromise with your studies, your friends who have peer-pressured you won't come to rescue you when you fail. It will be only you who will have to struggle again to clear out your backlogs.

So, it is essential to let go of peer pressure and prioritize studies, because once you lose time, it will never come back. It is better to set boundaries and prioritize what is important now than to regret later.

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# MIND OVER MUSCLE: HOW SPORTS BUILD MENTAL STRENGTH



When it comes to sports, the only thing that comes to our minds is physical fitness and flexibility. But, many of us overlook the mental benefits that sports entails.

Sports build confidence, focus, and resilience,

the levels of stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol in the body.

Winning and losing in sports teach us a lot of things. It teaches us patience and working hard in times of failure and reclaiming happiness in times of success.

which in turn enhances mental well being.

Whenever we are involved in any physical activity like exercise, jogging, horse riding, swimming, kabaddi, archery, and even walking, our brain releases endorphins. These chemicals that are released are responsible for lifting up our mood, and hence they are called “Mood lifters” or “Happy hormones”. These endorphins have the ability to change our mood. We feel happy, enthusiastic, and energetic, and in turn have a healthy mind free of depression and anxiety.

Higher levels of happy hormones in the body, in turn, are associated with lowering

This is not just limited to sports, but also in life. It teaches us how to stand up and run again in the race of life. It also helps in keeping a positive mindset when facing losses, which further helps in bouncing back to the winning streak. Having a positive mindset means a mind free of anxiety and negative thoughts, that ensures a good and strong mental strength even when it is easier to get carried away by the situation.

Sports need concentration to outperform others, when the concentration power of the brain increases, mental strength also enhances, leading to sharp presence of mind and better decision making.

When we make our mental strength stronger, no hurdle can stop us from winning. I have seen many of the players, who continue to play even after getting injured. This shows that nothing is more important to them than the sport they are recognized from. This is deep down fitted into their minds, making them mentally strong.

When sports become a part of our daily routine, long-term mental well-being is easily achievable. Many of the people are not involved in any physical activity and hence they are ones who are prone to mental health and physical health problems.

Some of the sports like kabaddi, chess, golf, and archery increase the concentration power of the player.

Even under stressful conditions, when we engage ourselves in any physical activity like sports, it helps calm our mind in that immediate situation.

Apart from helping people in being mentally and physically fit, sports also help in enhancing one's soft skills like leadership, gratitude, team management, and empathy.

When we isolate ourselves, we tend to attract more negative thoughts than when we are in a group. So, playing a team sport helps in replacing such negative energy into positive energy and helps in coping with stress.

Sports is not just about the physical and the mental well-being, but also about having discipline and a routine.

Every aspect of mental strength and well-being can be achieved and learned through sports. Sports are not just a way to stay physically fit, but also an opportunity to enhance our mental strength.

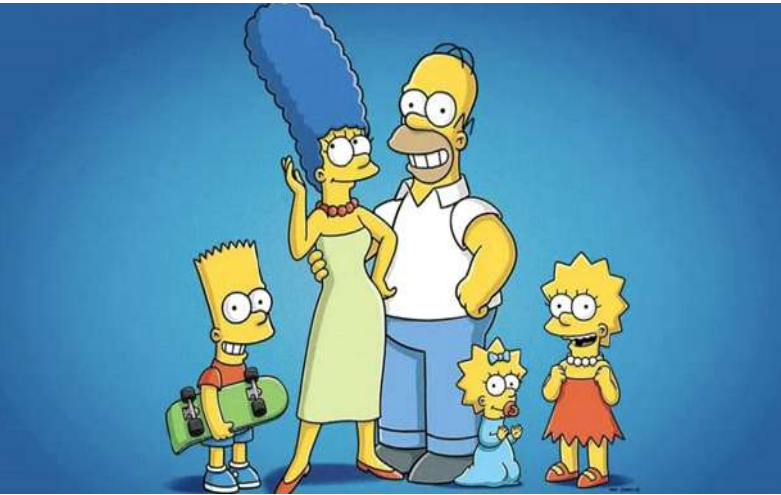
So, next time whenever you are overwhelmed by negative thoughts and anxiety, play something, it will definitely refresh and relax your mind. It will also help in waving off the feeling of anxiety. The benefits are wide-ranging, we just have to explore and see for ourselves.

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Afreen Mazgaonkar & Roshni Kumari

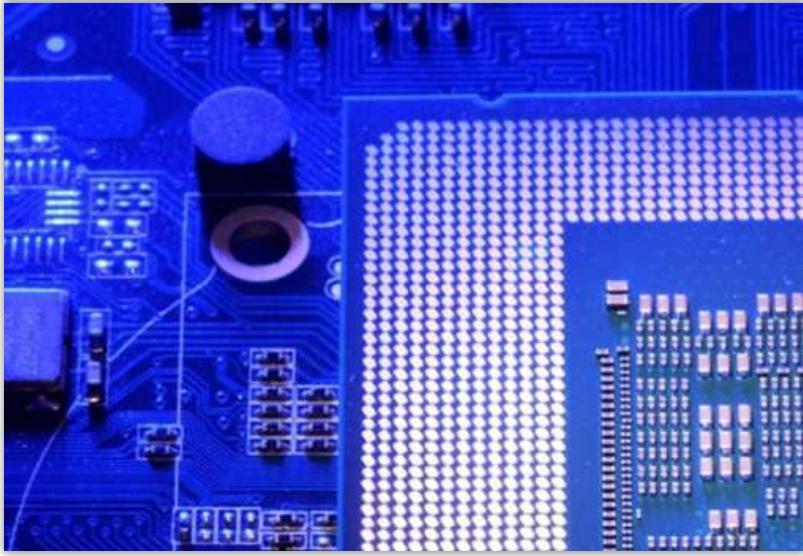
THE SIMPSONS SET TO RETURN ON BIG SCREEN AFTER 20 YEARS



Underscoring remarkable performance for animation fans around the globe, in the iconic television family, The Simpsons, is creating a grand return to cinemas after two decades. Produced by legendary cartoonist Matt Growing, the Simpsons first presented as animated shorts in 1987 before becoming a cultural phenomenon with their long running TV series. The new film pledges to get the beloved characters – Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Maggie back to this life on the big screen once again. Followers can expect the show's signature humor, satire, and heartwarming family moments, now in a cinematic form. This comeback was hailed as a wide event for both past fans who love watching and the new generation audience. Over the years, The Simpsons has become a symbol of animated story telling, influencing pop culture, television, and unique animation setup have gained a loyal global following, and this movie is targeting to honor that legacy while introducing fresh stories. With growing buzz surrounding the movie launch, cinemas are arranging for fans eager to see Springfield come alive once again. The Simpsons comeback marks 20 years since their last movie and also celebrates a timeless series that continues to entertain and inspire audiences across all new generations.

INDIA READY TO BOOST CHIPMAKING INDUSTRY

India is making themselves ready to build a strong push in the International Semiconductor and Chipmaking sector, an area which has become famous for technology and economic growth. Although India is a late entrant in this race, the government has planned to build a strong presence and low down dependence on imports. Prime minister Narendra Modi has expressed confidence that India can become a hub for semiconductors innovation very soon. Leaders of the industry like Vellayan Subbiah are playing a key role in providing guidance for the vision, focusing on creating advanced chip manufacturing and research facilities within the Nation. The international demand for semiconductors has been increasing rapidly, mostly in the rise of smartphones, electronic vehicles, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy systems. By investing in this field, India aims to secure its own supply and also position itself as a reliable partner in global supply chains. The step which took place will also generate new jobs , skills, development opportunities and attract foreign investments . India can transform its late entry into a golden opportunity with the help of right policies, infrastructure, and innovation. Through this innovation India is ready to rev up Chipmaking and grow in the technology world.



INDIA TO FAST- TRACK HYDROPOWER APPROVALS FOR GREEN GOALS



India declared that it will increase the speed for the approval process for new Hydropower projects as a part of its push towards gaining clean energy and sustainable growth. Hydropower has been marked as the most important and reliable form of renewable energy, as it not only generates electricity but also supports water storage and food control. To outsource geological investigation and speed up clearances has been planned by the government, so that projects may run forward without long delays. This action can be seen as crucial because hydropower and pumped storage play a major role in handling and balancing India's growing share of solar and wind energy. Some sources of sunlight and wind as renewable sources are not available all the time, so hydropower provides much-needed stability to the power grid. For India, climate goals need to be ambitious, and in the same way, the coal dependency needs to be reduced while the share of clean energy in electricity generation needs to be augmented. In order to curb carbon emissions and meet the ever-increasing power needs in a developing economy, the government shall very fast move toward the approval of hydropower projects. The move signals India's desire to become a player in pure green energy while at the same time securing energy and the health of the planet for future generations. convergence of Android across tablets, smartphones, and now PCs represent a new stage in computing.

INDIA - EFTA TRADE PACT COMES INTO FORCE

The landmark moment in India's trade history has reached as the India-EETA trade pact officially came into force on October 1,2025. The agreement has been set to unlock \$100 billion in investments and make nearly 1 million jobs over the coming years. The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) consists of Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. India will achieve highest access to European Markets, through this pact, while EFTA countries will benefit from stronger economic ties with one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. The deal focuses on strengthening the supply chains, attracting foreign investments, and encouraging collaboration in technology, Pharmaceuticals, and renewable energy. It also seems to provide Indian factories with the highest global presence, making them perfect exporters and generating employment opportunities across different sectors. Analysts trust the pact is a win-win, as it combines India's largest workforce and market potential with EFTA's capital and advanced technologies. The agreement promises growth and also strengthens diplomatic and economic relations between India and Europe. The move took place as a major milestone in India's journey towards becoming and gaining a global economic powerhouse while ensuring sustainable development and inclusive growth.



CHIKUNGUNYA VACCINE DEVELOPMENT ACCELERATES IN INDIA



Delivering a tremendous growth in India's health centre, the race for the development of a vaccine for Chikungunya is gaining traction with Zydus Lifesciences joining Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute of India. The mosquito-borne viral disease, which can be seen frequently in the country, has long lacked a licensed vaccine, leaving millions vulnerable. As per the reports, Zydus has now joined the efforts, boosting hopes of an effective solution. Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute are already directing advanced research, and with Zydus coming in, India's opportunities of growing into a global leadership in Chikungunya prevention have grown stronger. Healthcare professionals noted that the competition is not just about being first, but also about creating a safe , affordable, and effective vaccine that can be distributed in large numbers. India's best and strongest pharmaceutical industry and research capacity are in the best position to give better solutions not only for its own citizens but also for the international South, where Chikungunya is a recurring threat. The government is aiming to support the initiative through their fast track approvals and collaboration with research institutes. India can easily deliver the vaccine worldwide very soon, marking a more significant milestone in its fight against vector borne disease.

ISRO AND SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC EXPAND TO COLLABORATION ON INDIA'S SPACE MISSIONS

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has created a significant breakthrough in the storage of energy in technology by developing batteries that could outperform traditional lithium ion ones. The innovation which is made can bring a huge change in the electronics and electric mobility sectors. Lithium -ion batteries are currently the backbone of smartphones , laptops, and electric electric vehicles. However, they face a limitation, they can store only some limited amount of energy per unit of mass or volume. This limits their performance, usually when it comes to long term use and powering heavy systems. The Batteries which have been developed at IISc are designed to resolve these challenges. With high energy density, modified efficiency, and potentially longer lifespans, they assure to minimize dependence on conventional lithium sources. This also addresses environmental and supply chains concerns, as lithium mining is often costly and harmful to ecosystems. Experts trust in such research will provide India and opportunities in the international race for sustainable energy technologies. As electrical vehicles and renewable energy storage achieve momentum, these advanced batteries may become a crucial part of the clean energy future soon. The achievement of IISc represents India's growth role in Scientific Innovation and Green Technology.





Afreen Mazgaonkar & Khushi Sharma

SUMIT ANTIL CAPTURED GOLD NARROWLY MISSING A WORLD RECORD AT WORLD PARA CHAMPIONSHIPS



At the 2025 World Para Athletics Championships in Delhi, Sumit Antil from India captured the gold in the men's F64 javelin throw with a powerful throw of 71.37 m and he narrowly missed to make own world record of 73.29 m. Sumit Antil showed his breakthrough throw on his third attempt, which left him to secure the top spot in the championship. He had already set the tone earlier with a powerful throw of 65.59 m in the opening round. He steadily built momentum in the second round through the competition to outpace all rivals. Although Antil fell short of breaking his own world record in championship, his powerful performance established a new championship record and let him surpass the previous great mark of 70.83 m. After the match, reflecting on his journey, Antil remarked that he had hoped to reach beyond the 75 m mark throw. The tournament was organised in Delhi and competing at home brought both excitement and pressure, with thousands of fans cheering him on. An opportunity like this on home soil might not come so often. Antil's gold adds to India's growing medal tally at the championships, where the country's para-athletes have delivered record-breaking performances.

ROHIT B BENEDICTON WINS SILVER IN 50M BUTTERFLY, SRIHARI NATARAJ BAGS FIFTH MEDAL AT AQUATICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj added one more medal to his tally at the 11th Asian Aquatics Championships in Ahmedabad. He earned a bronze in the 100m freestyle and took his collection haul to five. In the race, Srihari was in third place at the 50m mark and the first and second position secured by China's Haoyu Wang and Qatar's Ali Tamer Hassan. He acknowledged his training and performance while reflecting on his journey and admitted that the opponent had swum exceptionally well and showed great performance and learned a lot from them. Rohit B Benedicton clinched silver with a time of 23.89 seconds, in the men's 50m butterfly. He was narrowly behind Kazakhstan's Adilbek Mussin, who won gold in 23.74 seconds. His effort helped push India's overall medal count at the event to nine. Other Indian swimmers Dhinidhi Desinghu and Shashidhara Rujula made it to the women's 100m freestyle final, finishing sixth and eighth respectively, though they did not finish with podium positions but their hard work really took India upward and surely will give them a medal in future.



ANUSHKA THOKUR, OJASVI THAKUR, AND HIMANSHU STRIKE GOLD AT ISSF JUNIOR WORLD CUP

Anushka Thokur clinched gold in the 50m rifle 3 Positions (3P) in the junior women's event at the ISSF Junior World Cup held at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi. In finals, Anushka scored 461.0, finishing an impressive 6.1 points ahead of her nearest competitor, Anastasiia Sorokina from Russia. Her consistent resilience and standing positions was key in that she delivered a perfect 10.9 on her 35th shot in the standing segment claiming one of the finest moments of the competition. The success in this event made this her second gold of the tournament as she had a gold medal in rifle prone event. In the women's finals at ISSF, Ojasvi Thakur captured gold with a breakthrough score of 252.7, delivered two perfect 10.9s on her 8th and 16th shots. Silver was secured by Hrudya Shri Kondur, and Shambhavi Kshirsagar completed the podium with bronze. Meanwhile, in the men's event, Himanshu, who had topped qualification with 633.7, carried his form into the final and captured gold with 250.9. India's performance across both the women's and men's junior rifle events tally India's medal and shows consistency, and rising strength of athletes on the international stage.



10-YEAR-OLD SHARVAANICA A.S. WINS GOLD AT WORLD U-10 GIRLS CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

The event was organised in Almaty from September 18 to October 1, 2025. The great chess player from Tamilnadu showed victorious moves, finishing with 9 out of 11 moves that led her to win the gold medal. Sharvaanica started the tournament with a loss in the first round and followed by this she won continuously in the upcoming 9 rounds of the tournament. In the final round that was held on Tuesday, Sharvaanica was facing USA's Zhou Abigail and lost in this rivalry. Nandinjiguur Chinzorig from Mongolia drew her game on board 2 and also ended with 9 points. But the first tiebreak was a direct encounter, and since Sharvaanica had defeated Nandinjiguur earlier in the event, she was crowned the champion. Despite facing troubles in one of the rounds, Sharvaanica held her nerve in the final rounds and maintained her score and clinched the top spot. This is a landmark achievement for the young Indian chess player that led her on the international youth chess map. With this yellow metal in Almaty, Sharvaanica joins India's talented chess talents, and her victory is inspiring more youth and encouraging the youth chess circuit.



YOGESH KATHUNIYA CAPTURED SILVER AT WORLD PARA ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN NEW DELHI



Ludhiana's rising swimming star, Ojas Sund gave a breakthrough performance at the CBSE National Swimming Championship that was held from September 17 to 21, at the M.D. University pool in Rohtak where Ojas Sund gave rivalry performances and secured three gold. A student of class 10th at Jesus Sacred Heart School, South City, Ludhiana, Ojas topped the podium in the Boys-I (U-17) category in 50m freestyle, 50m butterfly, and 50m backstroke. Additionally, he clinched bronze in the 50m breaststroke event. His journey to the national stage was backed by his many notable regional successes throughout his journey. In the championship of Swimming held by CBSE in North Zone Swimming Championship at Sonapat. Ojas had already secured five medals in which three were golds and two were silvers that let him earn the qualification for the Rohtak event. He had also made headlines in the 46th Punjab State Swimming Championship in Ludhiana by showing breakthrough performances and breaking four meet records. Ojas's achievement and performance was acknowledged by the whole nation as a boy from the Punjab marked the Punjab involvement in sports. Punjab Swimming Association and his school authorities. Surjit Singh Sandhu (President) and Balraj Sharma (CEO) of the association joined school representatives in congratulating him on a remarkable performance.

DOMINANT INDIA CRUSH PAKISTAN BY 88 RUNS TO GO TOP OF WORLD CUP TABLE

Colombo, October 5, 2025: India continued their dominance over arch-rivals Pakistan with a comprehensive 88-run victory in their ICC Women's World Cup 2025 clash at the R. Premadasa Stadium today. The win extends India's flawless ODI record against Pakistan to 12-0 and propels them to the top of the points table. After opting to bat, India posted a respectable total of 247, powered by crucial contributions from Harleen Deol (46), Jemimah Rodrigues (32), and a vital late cameo of 35 not out off 20 balls by Richa Ghosh. Pakistan's Diana Baig was the standout bowler, claiming 4/69. In response, Pakistan's chase faltered against a disciplined Indian bowling attack. Opener Sidra Amin fought a lone battle, scoring a resilient 81, but lacked support as wickets fell regularly. Debutant pace bowler Kranti Gaud was sensational, claiming the Player of the Match award for her figures of 3/20, ably supported by Deepti Sharma's 3/38. Pakistan were eventually bowled out for 159 in 43 overs, handing India a commanding victory.





RRB SECTION CONTROLLER  
RECRUITMENT 2025



The Government of India, Ministry of Railways, through the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), invites online applications for Section Controller Posts under the Centralized Employment Notification (CEN) No. 04/2025. This national-level recruitment drive offers 368 prestigious vacancies across all Railway zones of India.

Online Registration: 15th September to 14th October 2025  
Official Portal: [rbapply.gov.in](http://rbapply.gov.in) (Apply only through the centralized portal; no individual RRB forms required.)

- Post Details**
- Post Name: Section Controller
  - Total Vacancies: 368
  - Pay Scale: Pay Level 6 – ₹35,400/- (Initial Pay)
  - Age Limit: 20–33 years as on 01/01/2026
  - Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in any discipline from a recognized university

- Important Dates**
- Online Registration Starts: 15/09/2025
  - Last Date to Apply: 14/10/2025 (till 23:59 hrs)
  - Fee Payment Deadline: 16/10/2025
  - Application Correction Window: 17/10/2025 to 26/10/2025
  - Scribe Details Submission: 27/10/2025 to 31/10/2025
  - RRB-Wise Vacancy Snapshot

- Major vacancies include:**
- Mumbai: 44 posts (CR, WR, SCR)
  - Ajmer: 33 posts (NWR, WCR)
  - Bangalore: 24 posts (SWR)
  - Bilaspur: 27 posts (CR, SECR)
  - Kolkata: 28 posts (ER, SER)
  - Thiruvananthapuram: 19 posts (SR) (Full zone list available in official notification.)

**Why Join Indian Railways?**  
Be part of India's largest employer offering secure government service, growth opportunities, and nationwide postings.

Education loans are available for preparation support.

Apply Now: [rbapply.gov.in](http://rbapply.gov.in)

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

EMRS RECRUITMENT 2025 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 7,267 TEACHING &  
NON-TEACHING POSTS!

The National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, has announced the much-awaited EMRS Recruitment 2025. This mega drive aims to fill 7,267 vacancies across Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) nationwide, offering golden opportunities for Teachers and Administrative Staff dedicated to quality education for tribal students.

- Vacancy Details – Total 7,267 Posts**
- Principal: 225
  - Post Graduate Teachers (PGTs): 1,460
  - Trained Graduate Teachers (TGTs): 3,962
  - Female Staff Nurse: 550
  - Hostel Warden (Male/Female): 635
  - Accountant: 61
  - Junior Secretariat Assistant (JSA): 228
  - Lab Attendant: 146

**Job Location:** Across India Online Registration: 19th Sept – 23rd Oct 2025

- Eligibility Criteria**
- Principal: Master's Degree + B.Ed. + 12 years of teaching experience.
  - PGT: Postgraduate degree in relevant subject + B.Ed.

- TGT: Graduate with B.Ed. / 4-year integrated NCERT degree.
- Nurse: Degree in Nursing + 2.5 years hospital experience.
- Hostel Warden: Graduate in any discipline.
- Accountant: B.Com.
- JSA: 10+2 with typing speed of 35 wpm (English) / 30 wpm (Hindi).
- Lab Attendant: 10+2 in Science stream.

**Age Limit:** 30–50 years (as per post and Govt. rules).

- Salary Structure**  
Pay Levels range from Level 1 (₹18,000) to Level 12 (₹2,09,200) based on post. Application Fee
- Principal: ₹2500 | PGT/TGT: ₹2000 | Non-Teaching: ₹1500
  - SC/ST/PwBD: ₹500 (Processing Fee)
- Pay online via Net Banking, Debit/Credit Card.

- Selection Process**
- Eklavya Model Residential Schools Staff



- Selection Exam (ESSE) 2025
- Document Verification

**Apply Now**

- Visit [examinationservices.nic.in](http://examinationservices.nic.in)

Submit your EMRS online form by 23rd October 2025 (11:50 PM).

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

PUNJAB & SIND BANK SPECIALIST OFFICER RECRUITMENT 2025 –  
APPLY ONLINE FOR 190 POSTS!

Punjab & Sind Bank (A Government of India Undertaking) invites talented Graduates and Postgraduates to join as Specialist Officers (SO) in MMGS-II. This is your chance to secure a prestigious, permanent government bank job across India!

- Vacancy Details**  
Total Posts: 190
- Credit Manager (MMGS II): 130
  - Agriculture Manager (MMGS II): 60
- Advertisement No.: PSB/SO/2025  
Last Date to Apply: 10th October 2025 (Friday)

- Eligibility Criteria**
- Age Limit: 23–35 years (born between 02/09/1990 and 01/09/2002) Relaxation: SC/ST – 5 yrs | OBC (NCL) – 3 yrs | PwBD – 10 yrs

- Educational Qualification:**
- Credit Manager: Graduation with 60% marks (55% for SC/ST/OBC/PwBD) OR CA/CMA/CFA/MBA (Finance) + 3 years of experience.
  - Agriculture Manager: Bachelor's in Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary Science, or related field with 60% marks (55% for SC/ST/OBC/PwBD) + 3 years of experience.

**Pay Scale**  
MMGS II: ₹64,820 – 23,40/1 – 67,160 – 26,80/10 – ₹93,960 per month



- Selection Process**
- Online Written Test
  - Screening
  - Personal Interview
  - Final Merit List

- Exam Pattern (100 Marks | 105 Minutes):**
- English Language – 20 Qs
  - General Awareness – 20 Qs
  - Professional Knowledge – 60 Qs

- Application Fee**
- UR/OBC/EWS: ₹850 + Taxes

- SC/ST/PwBD: ₹100 + Taxes (Online payment via UPI/Net Banking/Cards)

- Key Dates**
- Apply Online: 19 Sept – 10 Oct 2025
  - Print Application: Till 25 Oct 2025

Apply Now at: [www.psbindia.com](http://www.psbindia.com)

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





1. Which is the largest planet in our solar system?
2. Who is known as the “Missile Man of India”?
3. What is the national animal of Australia?
4. In which year did the Titanic sink?
5. Who discovered gravity after seeing an apple fall from a tree?
6. Which Indian city is called the “Pink City”?
7. What is the square root of 144?
8. Which gas do humans exhale during respiration?
9. Who was the first President of the United States?
10. What is the currency of Japan?



1. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have nobody, but I come alive with the wind. What am I?
2. The more of me you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
3. I have cities but no houses, mountains but no trees, and water but no fish. What am I?
4. I am not alive but I grow; I don't have lungs but I need air; I don't have a mouth but water kills me. What am I?
5. I have branches yet I have no fruit, trunk or leaves. What am I?
6. I can fill a room but take up no space. What am I?
7. The person who makes me doesn't want me. The person who buys me doesn't need me. The person who uses me never sees me. What am I?

1. An echo
2. Footsteps
3. A map
4. Fire
5. A bank
6. Light
7. A coffin

10 RIDDLES

10. Yen
9. George Washington
8. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
7. 12
6. Jaipur
5. Sir Isaac Newton
4. 1912
3. Kangaroo
2. Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam
1. Jupiter

10 QUIZ TIME

ANSWERS



## Sandesh Recipe – A Delightful Bengali Sweet

This Week, We're Relishing Sandesh - A Delightful Bengali Sweet.

Sandesh is a traditional Bengali sweet made from fresh paneer (chhena). Soft, mildly sweet, and fragrant, it's perfect for festive occasions or as a quick homemade dessert.

### Ingredients:

- 1 litre full-cream milk
- 2 tbsp lemon juice or vinegar (diluted with 2 tbsp water)
- 4–5 tbsp powdered sugar (adjust to taste)
- ½ tsp cardamom powder
- Few strands of saffron or drops of rose essence (optional)
- Chopped pistachios or almonds for garnish

### Steps:

#### 1. Prepare Chhena

Boil the milk, then add diluted lemon juice. Once the milk curdles, strain it through a muslin cloth. Rinse with cold water and hang for 30 minutes to remove excess water.

#### 2. Knead

Transfer the chhena to a plate and knead gently for 5–7 minutes until smooth and soft.

#### 3. Cook the Mixture

In a non-stick pan, add the kneaded chhena, sugar, and cardamom powder. Cook on low flame for 4–5 minutes, stirring continuously. The mixture should come together but not turn dry.

#### 4. Shape the Sandesh

Let it cool slightly, then shape into small balls or flatten slightly into discs. Garnish with saffron strands or nuts.

*Serve Sandesh at room temperature or slightly chilled. It stays fresh for up to two days when refrigerated.*



### 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](mailto:thehulahultimes@gmail.com)
- Subject Line: ARTWORK
- Include: Your Name, Age, School/College Name, and Phone Number

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone  
+91-7977005423

Email  
[thehulahultimes@gmail.com](mailto:thehulahultimes@gmail.com)

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