

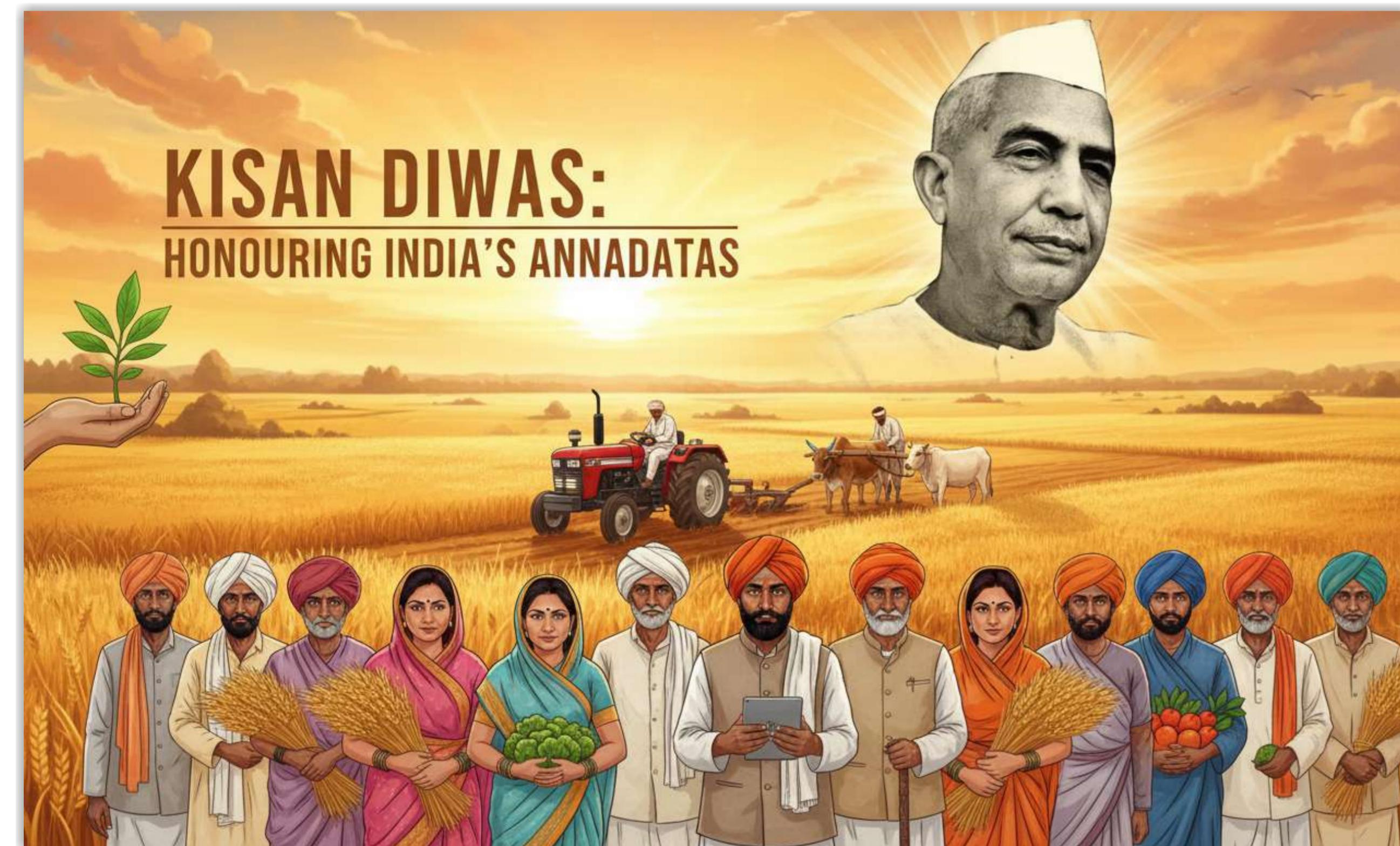


THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow

Ravi Singh & Naaz

KISAN DIWAS: HONOURING INDIA'S ANNADATAS AND THE LEGACY OF CHAUDHARY CHARAN SINGH



Farmers, the backbone of the nation, revered as 'Annadatas', are the foundation of India's economy and its prosperity. Their tireless efforts help feed the nation and sustain the rural economy. Kisan Diwas (National Farmers' Day), observed on 23rd December, pays tribute to their invaluable contribution. This day marks the birth anniversary of Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister, whose career was defined by his commitment to rural development. It serves as an annual reminder of the farmers' dedication and their central role in India's ongoing progress.

India is known as a country of villages and agricultural surpluses. Also, almost 50% of the people in the country depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and constitute the majority of the country's rural population. In 2001, the tenth government decided to recognize Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh's contribution to the agriculture sector and welfare of farmers by celebrating his birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas. Since then, December 23 has been observed as National Farmers' Day. This is usually celebrated by organizing awareness campaigns and drives across the nation to educate people about the significant role of farmers and their contribution to the economy.

Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh served as the fifth Prime Minister of India from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980. Coming from an agricultural background, he was a proponent of rural and agricultural development, and made distinguished efforts to keep agriculture at the center of planning for India.

He was the chief architect of land reforms in Uttar Pradesh; and took a leading part in formulation and finalization of the Dept. Redemption Bill 1939, which brought great relief to rural debtors. As Chief Minister he was instrumental in bringing about the Land Holding Act 1960 which was aimed at lowering the ceiling on land holdings to make it uniform throughout the State. While serving as agriculture minister in 1952, he led UP in its efforts to abolish the Zamindari system.

He founded the Kisan Trust, which was a non-political, non-profit-making body, on 23 December 1978. The aim of the trust was to educate India's rural masses against injustice, and cultivate solidarity among them.

Revered as a "Kisan Leader" for his strong dedication to

farmers' welfare, Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh's strength stemmed from the confidence he enjoyed among millions of peasants.

Farmers' Day is celebrated throughout India by organizing events and initiatives that spread awareness about farmers' welfare and agricultural advancements. Several events like agricultural challenges and policy discussions are conducted through seminars and workshops. Farmers are awarded throughout India for their exceptional contributions in the field of agriculture. Various workshops are conducted to educate farmers about modern farming practices and government schemes and policies. Additionally, the birth anniversary of Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh is celebrated by honoring his achievements through speeches and performances.

The significance of Kisan Diwas lies in the fact that it is observed to recognize the devotion and sacrifice of farmers. To raise awareness among people to ensure farmers' social and economic well-being.

The day significantly highlights the importance of agricultural practices in contributing to India's GDP and employment; and the need of policies in promoting farmers' welfare and sustainable farming practices.

Shedding light on the issues like climate change, financial constraints and adoption of technology in agriculture. The day attempts to focus on providing farmers with the most up-to-date agricultural knowledge, to increase their yield.

As we look towards the future, Kisan Diwas serves as more than just a tribute; it is a call to action. By integrating modern technology with the timeless wisdom of our farmers, we can ensure that the legacy of Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh continues. Honoring our 'Annadatas' today means securing a sustainable, and food-secure India for generations to come.

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Durgesh K. Dubey

BUKKA RAYA I: THE SILENT STRENGTH BEHIND A GREAT EMPIRE

History often remembers the one who lays the foundation, but it is the one who nurtures, protects, and strengthens that foundation who ensures its survival. Bukka Raya I, the younger brother of Harihara I, was such a leader. He was not loud, not boastful, and not driven by ego. He was a man of patience, balance, and deep responsibility a ruler who believed that true power lies in service, not show. His life teaches us that leadership is not always about dramatic beginnings, but about steady commitment to people and values.

A Brother, a Companion, a Learner

Bukka Raya I was born in the early 14th century along with his elder brother Harihara. From childhood, the two shared a bond not just of blood, but of vision. Where Harihara was reflective and philosophical, Bukka was practical and grounded. He understood people, systems, and the everyday struggles of life. He spent time with soldiers, farmers, traders, and temple caretakers, learning how a kingdom truly functioned. He believed that listening was the first duty of leadership. Like his brother, Bukka too experienced hardship when both were captured during the invasions of the Delhi Sultanate. Those painful years away from their homeland shaped him deeply. He saw what happens when power lacks compassion, when rulers forget people. When he returned to the south and helped establish Vijayanagara, Bukka was no longer just a warrior he had become a guardian of values.

The Weight of Responsibility

When Harihara I passed away, the burden of protecting the young Vijayanagara Empire fell on Bukka's shoulders. The empire was still fragile. Enemies waited at the borders, rebellions simmered inside, and resources were limited. Many doubted whether Bukka could hold together what his brother had begun. But Bukka did not rush. He believed that patience was strength. He first secured the trust of local chiefs and village leaders. He reassured them that Vijayanagara was not a kingdom built on fear, but on cooperation. He honoured existing customs and gave space to regional identities. He often said to his ministers: "A kingdom grows when people feel respected, not controlled."

A Ruler Close to the People

Bukka Raya I ruled not from a distance, but from among his people. He regularly travelled across his empire, visiting villages and towns. He listened to farmers talk about water shortages,

traders complain about unsafe roads, and widows seek justice. Once, during a long drought, officials advised increasing taxes to fill the treasury. Bukka refused. Instead, he opened royal granaries and reduced taxes. He said: "If the ruler eats while the people starve, the crown becomes a burden, not an honour." Such decisions earned him loyalty that no army could buy.

Strength Without Cruelty

Bukka knew that compassion alone could not protect a kingdom. He strengthened the army, improved fortifications, and ensured discipline among soldiers. But he made one thing clear the army existed to protect the people, not terrorise them. He avoided unnecessary wars. When conflict became unavoidable, he fought



with strategy, not rage. He valued lives even those of the defeated and avoided destruction of villages and temples. This balance between strength and restraint became the moral backbone of Vijayanagara.

Protector of Knowledge and Culture

Bukka Raya I deeply respected scholars, saints, and thinkers. Under his rule, temples became centres of learning. Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, and Tamil literature flourished. He supported debates between different schools of thought and encouraged harmony between faiths. He believed that knowledge without

tolerance is dangerous, and faith without wisdom is blind. Guided by sage Vidyaranya, Bukka ensured that Vijayanagara became a refuge for scholars fleeing destruction elsewhere. In doing so, he protected India's intellectual and spiritual heritage during a turbulent age.

Human Leadership

What truly made Bukka special was his humanity. He remembered his own days of suffering and captivity. That memory kept him humble. He never insulted the poor, never ignored a plea, and never punished without listening. When a minister once mocked a farmer's simple speech in court, Bukka corrected him:

"Wisdom does not speak in polished words alone. It also lives in honest labour." He rewarded honesty more than lineage, service more than flattery.

A Lasting Contribution

Bukka Raya I ruled for nearly twenty-one years, a period during which Vijayanagara grew stronger, safer, and more organised. By the time he passed the throne to the next generation, the empire stood firm ready to face future challenges. His contribution was not dramatic conquest, but consolidation. He turned a young kingdom into a stable empire. He proved that quiet leadership often builds the strongest foundations.

Moral of the Story

The life of Bukka Raya I teaches us that leadership is not always about standing in the spotlight. Sometimes, it is about standing firm when others doubt, serving quietly when others seek praise, and choosing ethics over ego. He shows us that strength guided by compassion creates trust, and trust creates lasting power. In a world that celebrates loud success, Bukka reminds us of the power of silent responsibility.

Conclusion

Bukka Raya I was not just a king he was a caretaker of people, culture, and conscience. He carried forward his brother's dream not with ambition, but with devotion. He ruled with fairness, protected knowledge, and served without pride. His life reminds us that great empires are sustained not by ambition alone, but by moral courage and human kindness. Though centuries have passed, Bukka's values still speak to us: "Rule with humility. Serve with honesty. And history will stand by you."

Ravi Singh & Naaz

LIGHTING HOMES, LIGHTING LIVES: THE VISION OF DR. HARISH HANDE

When we talk about the future of India, we often imagine high-tech cities and digital networks, but Dr. Harish Hande looks for progress in the flickering kerosene lamps of rural villages. Often called the 'Solar Man of India,' Dr. Harish Hande, a Ramon Magsaysay awardee has spent three decades advocating that the underprivileged people do not look for charity; they look for partners. Through his venture, SELCO (Solar Electric Light Company), Dr. Harish Hande hasn't just sold solar panels; he has innovated a way of doing business that respects the dignity of everyone including street vendor or a tribal farmer. He believes that if we want India to truly prosper, we have to stop seeing the marginalized as "beneficiaries" and start seeing them as innovators who just need a fair chance.

Dr. Harish Hande's own journey didn't start in a boardroom but in the villages, where he had to "unlearn" almost everything he studied at IIT and in the US. He often shares a story about a vegetable vendor in Bangalore who gave him his biggest business lesson. When he tried to sell her a solar light, she told him that 300 rupees a month was way too expensive, but 10 rupees a day was perfectly fine. This was a turning moment. It wasn't that she couldn't afford the tech; it was that the banking systems were built for monthly salaries, not for daily wage earners. This insight became central to SELCO. Instead of asking the underprivileged to change how they live, Dr. Harish Hande changed how technology and finance work for them, creating daily payment plans that suited their needs.

Early years were quite challenging for him. Dr. Harish Hande actually lived in villages without electricity, installing the first few hundred solar systems with his own hands. He used the money from one sale to buy the equipment for the next. Bankers used to laugh at the idea of giving loans to people without "papers," but Dr. Harish Hande didn't give up. He convinced local banks to look at a solar light not as a luxury, but as a tool that helps a tailor sew more clothes or a student study longer.

What distinguishes Dr. Harish Hande from others is his belief in sharing. In today's time where companies hide their secrets to beat the competition, he does the opposite. For more than sixteen years, he has made SELCO's business models and even its failures publicly visible. He doesn't want to build a giant, mega



corporation, instead he wants to see thousands of "mini-SELCOs" run by local entrepreneurs across the country. He even hosts entrepreneurs from Africa and other parts of Asia, encouraging them to copy his models. For him, success isn't about how much profit one company makes, but how many young people are inspired to solve problems in their own backyards.

His impact is visible in the most practical ways. Think of a midwife in a remote village who can now safely deliver a baby at night because she has a solar headlamp, or a silk weaver whose hands are no longer burnt by kerosene sparks. SELCO has designed solar-powered sewing machines, pottery wheels, and even portable dental chairs for river islands where a regular clinic is miles away. These aren't just gadgets; they are tools that lower the cost of living and help people in most efficient manner. Dr. Harish Hande's work reminds us that there is a big difference between "financial

poverty" and "intellectual poverty." He believes there is a Madame Curie or an Einstein in every village, but they are generally held back by a lack of basic resources like light.

Dr. Harish Hande envisions a future where medical devices, agricultural tools, and even schools are designed specifically to run on solar power at the local level. Further, he isn't afraid of new technology like AI; in fact, he believes that it can help rural entrepreneurs find even better solutions. His advice to young engineers is to get out of the city and "immerse yourselves" in the real problems of the country. Additionally, he believes that India's greatest strength is its diversity.

He famously says he wants SELCO to eventually "kill itself" which means the world should become so inclusive that a specialized company for the underprivileged would not be needed anymore. It is the selfless personality of

Dr. Harish Hande that keeps humanity over profit. He reminds us that the brightest future for India is not found in the lights of a shopping mall, but in the sustainable glow of a solar lamp in a home that was once dark.

The story of Dr. Harish Hande is a true inspiration that real change doesn't always come from big achievements. It comes from a strong dedication to solve grassroot problems and having the humility to realize that our degrees don't always have the answers. It's about building a nation where a child in a remote area has the same "right to light" as anyone else. As he often says, the goal is to equalize the playing field so that every Indian, regardless of where they are born, has the chance to reach their full potential.

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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.

You may believe that every purchase you make is a rational decision. But the truth is less comforting and far more fascinating. Long before logic steps in, your brain has already reacted. The colour of the package, the background music, the smile on the model, even the placement of a product on a shelf are all carefully engineered to influence how you feel, think, and buy.

Welcome to the world of neuromarketing, where companies study the human brain to design advertisements, packaging, and experiences that quietly guide consumer choices. It is marketing that reaches your mind before your eyes.

What Is Neuromarketing?

Neuromarketing explores how brain activity and psychological responses shape buying behaviour. Instead of simply asking consumers what they like, companies study how the brain reacts to images, colours, sounds, prices, and messages. Using tools such as eye-tracking, facial coding, EEG scans, and behavioural analysis, brands observe:

NEUROMARKETING: HOW BRANDS INFLUENCE THE BUYING BRAIN

- Which advertisements grab attention
- Which colours trigger excitement or trust
- Which packaging makes products appear "premium"
- Which words activate emotional responses

In simple terms, neuromarketing answers one critical question:

What makes the brain say "yes" before the wallet opens?

Why Your Brain, Not Logic, Buys

Human decisions are largely emotional. Studies show that nearly 90% of purchase decisions are subconscious. Logic often arrives later mainly to justify what the brain has already chosen. In other words, you don't choose products; your brain reacts to them.

This explains why red and yellow dominate fast-food logos by stimulating appetite, why blue is widely used by banks and technology brands to signal trust, why luxury brands prefer black, gold, and minimalist design, and why "limited-time offers" trigger urgency and fear of missing out.

Real-Life Example: Packaging That Persuades

Consider a supermarket shelf with two identical chocolates:

- One wrapped in plain brown packaging
- The other wrapped in glossy gold foil with elegant fonts

Even if both chocolates cost the same, most shoppers instinctively reach for the gold-wrapped bar. The brain associates shine, weight, and refined design with higher quality. Similarly, matte-finish bottles often feel more "premium" than glossy ones. This perception is not accidental; it is carefully engineered.

Ads That Bypass Awareness

Have you noticed how certain advertisements make you feel nostalgic, happy, or hungry without explaining much? That is neuromarketing at work.

Music, storytelling, facial expressions, and pacing activate memory and emotional centres in the brain. A soft background tune creates warmth, slow-motion visuals increase perceived value, and smiling faces trigger mirror neurons, making viewers experience positive emotions themselves.

For students scrolling through reels or professionals watching ads after work, these cues quietly influence preferences often without conscious awareness.

Why Brands Invest in Neuromarketing

For companies, neuromarketing reduces guesswork. Instead of relying only on surveys where people may not always tell the truth, brands rely on actual brain responses. When brands understand the brain, marketing becomes precision-driven.

This helps companies:

- Design more effective advertisements
- Improve product placement
- Increase recall and brand loyalty
- Reduce marketing failures
- Boost sales with fewer changes

The Ethical Question

Neuromarketing also raises an important concern: Is influencing the subconscious ethical?

While it can improve user experience and reduce irrelevant advertising, it can also encourage impulsive spending especially among students and young consumers. That is why awareness matters. Understanding neuromarketing does not make you immune, but it makes you less vulnerable.

Smart Tips for Consumers

Students and adults can shop smarter in a neuromarketed world by pausing before purchasing and allowing logic to catch up with emotional impulse. Packaging should not be the sole basis for judging quality. Urgency cues such as "only today" or "limited stock" should be treated with caution. Comparing price, quantity, and value helps shift decisions from reaction to evaluation, while tracking impulse



purchases builds financial awareness. Ultimately, awareness is the strongest defence against manipulation.

A Learning Opportunity for Students

For commerce, marketing, and management students, neuromarketing is not just theory; it is a powerful career path. Roles are emerging in -

- consumer behaviour analysis,
- brand psychology,
- UX and experience design,
- advertising strategy, and
- data-driven marketing.

Understanding how the brain influences buying gives future professionals a competitive edge both as marketers and as mindful consumers.

The Bottom Line

Neuromarketing proves one thing clearly: buying is less about products and more about perception. Brands that understand the brain don't shout louder; they communicate smarter. In a marketplace filled with colours, sounds, and signals designed to influence you, the real power lies in awareness. Because when you understand how marketing works on your mind, you don't just become a better buyer; you become a smarter decision-maker. And in today's marketplace, that may be the most valuable skill of all.

Echoes of Expression

Prof. Dr. Savita Kishan Pawar

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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.

AESTHETIC ROMANTICISM IN LITERATURE

Aesthetic Romanticism emphasises beauty, imagination, emotion, and artistic freedom over strict rationalism and moral didacticism. Emerging as a response to the Industrial Revolution and Enlightenment rationality, Romantic writers believed that art should elevate the soul and celebrate individual perception.

Nature occupies a central place in Romantic aesthetics, symbolising purity, spiritual truth, and emotional renewal. Poets such as Wordsworth and Shelley viewed nature as a living presence capable of shaping moral consciousness. Imagination, rather than reason, was considered the highest faculty of the human mind.

Romantic aestheticism also valued spontaneity, lyrical expression, and intense emotional experience. Literature was seen not merely as instruction but as an artistic expression of inner truth. This movement laid the foundation for later literary developments that prioritised creativity, subjectivity, and artistic autonomy.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Your brain sometimes creates fake memories to fill gaps without you ever realizing it.
- The human body glows very faintly, but the light is invisible to the naked eye.
- H. G. Wells is often called the “Father of Science Fiction”, and *The Time Machine* (1895) was one of the first novels to explore time travel using a scientific framework.
- A single cloud can weigh more than one million kilograms.
- There are more possible games of chess than atoms in the observable universe.
- Butterflies remember being caterpillars even after turning into liquid inside the cocoon.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

“A leap of faith”

Meaning: An act of believing or trusting in something without complete evidence.

Example: The poet takes a leap of faith by trusting imagination over reason.

GRAMMAR TIP

Subject-Verb Agreement

Rule: A singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject takes a plural verb.

Examples:
The writer explores emotional depth in poetry.
The critics analyse literary movements.

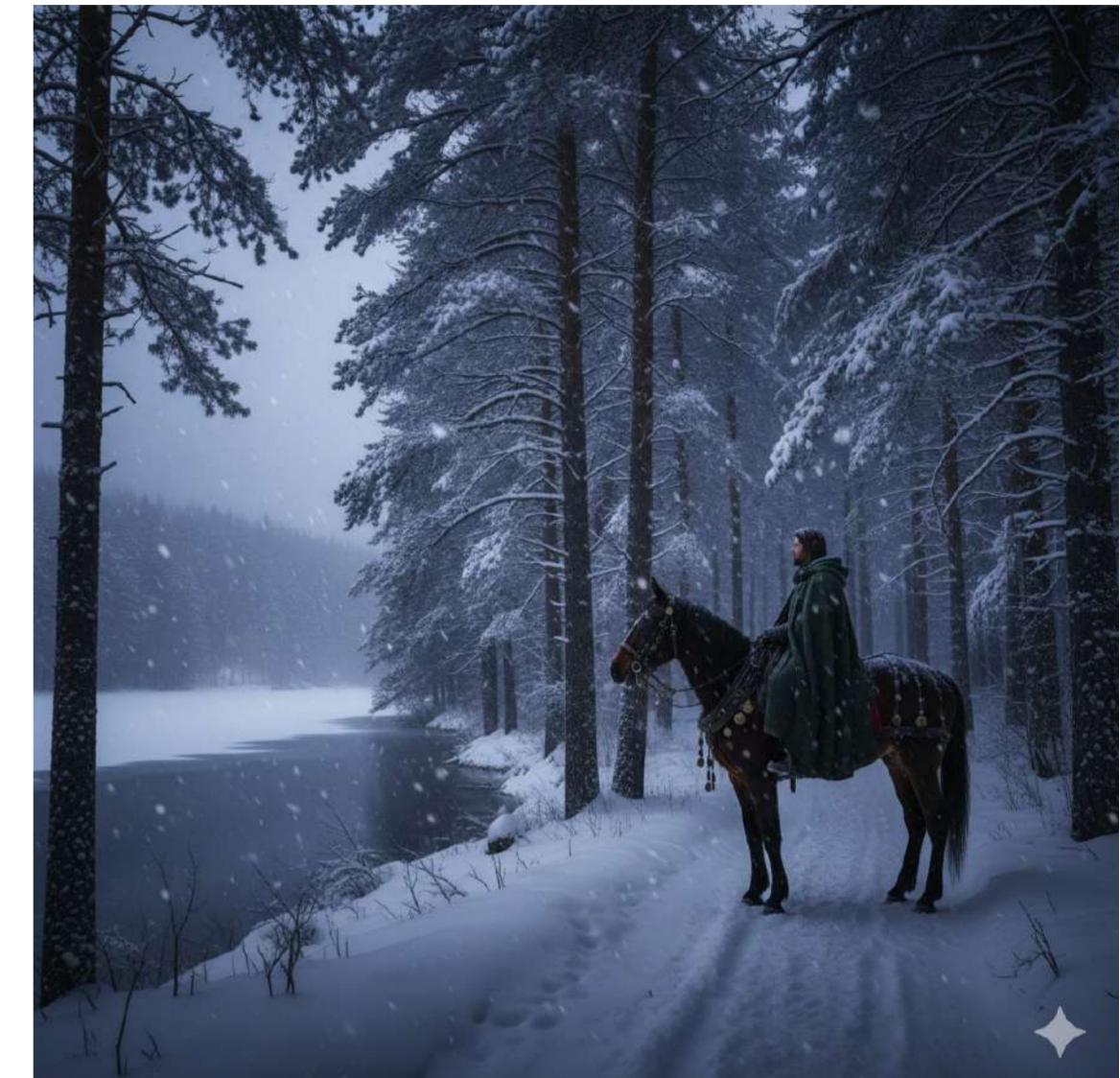
WRITER OF THE MONTH

Robert Frost (1874–1963)



Robert Frost was an American poet whose works reflect rural life, human dilemmas, and philosophical inquiry. His poetry balances traditional forms with modern concerns, making his voice timeless and relevant.

CREATIVE WRITING



STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

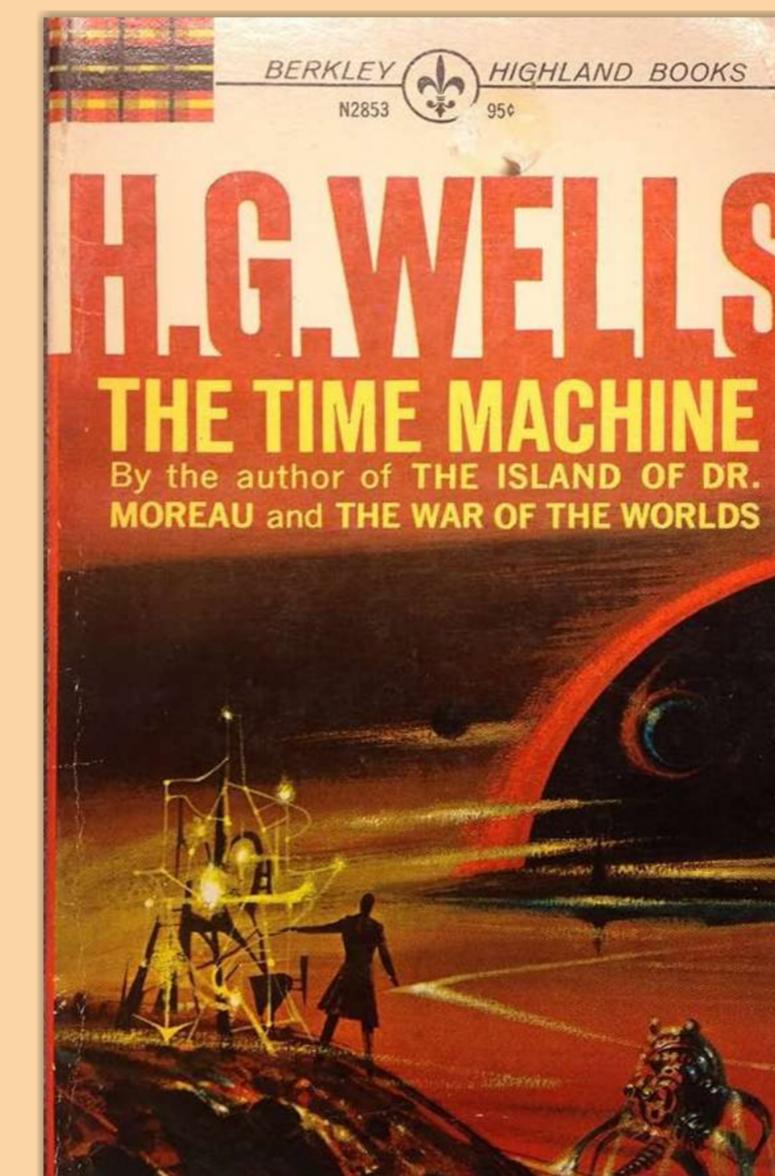
Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Poem by
Robert Frost



The Time Machine is a pioneering science fiction novel that explores time travel as a means to critique social inequality and human evolution. Through the journey of the Time Traveller, Wells presents a haunting vision of the future divided between the Eloi and the Morlocks, symbolising class conflict. The novel blends scientific imagination with philosophical reflection, making it a landmark text in speculative literature.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words.”

— Robert Frost

WORD OF THE WEEK

Transcendent (adjective)

Meaning: Going beyond ordinary limits; surpassing the usual range of experience.

Example: Romantic poetry often seeks a transcendent experience through nature and imagination.



Ravi Singh & Kailashkumar Gaunder

RELIANCE CONSUMER ACQUIRES MAJORITY STAKE IN UDHAIYAMS AGRO FOODS

Reliance Consumer Products Ltd (RCPL), the fast-moving consumer goods arm of Reliance Industries, has taken a majority stake in Udhaiyams Agro Foods Pvt Ltd, a well-established Tamil Nadu-based food company known for its heritage brand Udhaiyam. Under the agreement, RCPL holds controlling ownership while the original promoters, S. Sudhakar and S. Dinakar, retain a minority stake and will continue to participate in the business.



offering quality products at affordable prices nationwide. He expressed confidence that Udhaiyam, long trusted in its regional market, will scale up to become a nationally recognized brand under the new partnership.

The deal is part of a broader strategy by Reliance Consumer to strengthen its presence in branded food categories and compete with established players in regional and national markets. Bringing Udhaiyam into its fold enables RCPL to leverage its distribution and marketing capabilities to expand the brand's reach and relevance across India.

According to RCPL Director T. Krishnakumar, the move reflects a commitment to promoting India's heritage and legacy brands while

KRISHIVITTA 2025: AGRI STARTUP INVESTOR MEET IN BENGALURU



promising agritech startups pitched their ideas to a panel of seven investors, seeking capital and strategic mentorship to scale their ventures. Alongside pitching sessions, the event featured a startup expo and interactive workshops on topics such as branding, packaging, banking solutions for startups, and key success factors for agri-founders.

The KrishiVitta 2025 – Agri Startup Investor Meet was hosted in Bengaluru by the Agri Innovation Centre of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore (UASB) as part of the institution's 60th Foundation Day celebrations. The flagship event aimed to bridge the gap between agricultural entrepreneurs and investment opportunities, fostering growth in agritech innovation and rural enterprise development.

Inaugurated with emphasis on the role of innovation in strengthening rural prosperity, the meet attracted over 250 stakeholders, including investors, policymakers, and startup founders from the agricultural sector. Eleven

The KrishiVitta meet not only celebrated innovation but also strengthened networks between entrepreneurs and capital providers, reinforcing Bengaluru's role as a thriving hub for agri-startup activity.

UREA AVAILABILITY ROW IN RAJASTHAN INTENSIFIES AS RABI SEASON PEAKS

As Rabi sowing nears completion in Rajasthan, a dispute has erupted over the availability of urea fertiliser, with farmers reportedly standing in long queues at sale centres and still unable to obtain the quantities they need. Many cultivators have expressed frustration, saying that shortages are hampering timely fertiliser application for winter crops, a critical input for optimal yields this season. The state government maintains that urea stocks are adequate and that supplies are being dispatched to districts with reported shortfalls. Officials have highlighted ongoing efforts to monitor quality, prevent hoarding, and ensure proper distribution according to demand patterns at the block and district levels. They have also requested additional rakes of urea from the central government to bolster supplies.

However, senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has challenged these claims, questioning why farmers are still forced to wait in long lines if supplies are indeed sufficient. This political criticism has amplified tensions around agricultural support during a critical



sowing period.

Local reports also indicate that limited deliveries at some centres have resulted in only a small number of urea bags being available, intensifying farmers' hardship and reinforcing perceptions of uneven access.

The dispute highlights broader issues around fertiliser distribution logistics, demand forecasting, and supply chain management in one of India's key agricultural states during the peak Rabi season. Continued dialogue between state and central authorities, along with improved distribution oversight, will be essential to ensure farmers receive timely access to urea.

WEAK MARKET PRICES LIKELY TO REDUCE CUMIN CULTIVATION THIS RABI SEASON



demand has not grown at the pace needed to absorb the surplus, further pressuring domestic prices. Rising input costs, including seeds, fertilisers, and labour, have added to farmers' concerns, making cumin cultivation a riskier option for small and medium growers.

Cumin cultivation in India is expected to face a setback during the current Rabi season, as farmers show reluctance to expand acreage due to weak market prices and uncertain profitability. After witnessing a sharp correction in prices over the past year, cumin growers are reassessing their sowing decisions, especially in major producing states such as Gujarat and Rajasthan. Lower returns compared to previous seasons have reduced farmer confidence, leading many to consider alternative crops that promise better income stability.

Market experts point out that high production in recent years created excess supply, which pushed prices downward. At the same time, export

Overall, unless prices recover or export demand strengthens significantly, cumin acreage is likely to decline this Rabi season, reflecting the strong link between market signals and farmers' cropping choices in India's spice sector.

NFCSF PUSHES FOR HIGHER SUGAR EXPORTS AND GREATER ETHANOL DIVERSION TO STABILISE SECTOR



The National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) has urged the Indian government to enhance sugar exports and increase diversion of sugar to ethanol production to manage surplus stocks and support the struggling sugar sector. With domestic production rising significantly this season and ethanol diversion falling short of earlier expectations, cooperative mills are facing pressure from excess inventory, weak ex-mill prices, and large cane payment obligations to farmers.

NFCSF officials welcomed the recent government approval to export 15 lakh tonnes of sugar for the 2025-26 season but said this allocation alone will not sufficiently ease the liquidity crunch across the sector. The federation has proposed raising the Minimum Selling Price (MSP) of sugar to around ₹41 per kilogram and diverting an additional 5 lakh tonnes of sugar for ethanol production, which it estimates could generate nearly ₹2,000 crore in revenue and improve cash flows for mills.

Enhanced exports and ethanol diversion are viewed as complementary tools to balance supply and demand, reduce storage burdens, and stabilize prices. While export quotas help reduce domestic glut, boosting ethanol production provides immediate cash returns since ethanol payments from oil marketing companies are typically faster than sugar sales cycles. These combined measures are part of broader industry calls for policy support to ensure timely payments to sugarcane farmers and strengthen cooperative mills' financial health amid rising production costs and falling market rates.

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Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay & Gargi Date

VIJAI PATHA: A NEW ERA OF AI LABS IN KARNATAKA GOVT SCHOOLS



Cyient AI Labs (CyAILS) has introduced 'VijAIpatha', an initiative launched on Saturday aimed at increasing access to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), robotics, and artificial intelligence education in local government schools. The event was graced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a government school in Hosapete taluk. This initiative includes the establishment of five advanced laboratories focused on AI, STEM, and robotics within selected government schools.

These laboratories will be equipped with high-performance computers, AI-ready software, robotics kits, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, sensors, and secure broadband connectivity. 'VijAIpatha' is in line with the National Education Policy (NEP)

AI IN CLASSROOMS: DHARMENDRA PRADHAN REVIEWS NEP-DRIVEN CURRICULUM REFORMS



multilingual access, career guidance, teacher support, personalized learning, and real-time tracking of student progress.

Furthermore, the education ministry announced the introduction of interdisciplinary and skill-based courses, incorporating AI-enabled curriculum revisions in centrally funded higher education institutions. The government aims to boost graduate employment, foster advanced learning and research, and sustain the competitiveness and inclusivity of India's higher education system on a global scale. This meeting featured participation from key educational leaders and stakeholders, underscoring a collaborative effort towards educational reform.

During a recent meeting, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced plans to formally incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) as a skill subject in schools and to revise higher education curricula in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP). He highlighted AI's potential to address significant challenges in education, emphasizing its ability to enhance accessibility, equity, and inclusivity of high-quality education for all students in India. The ministry plans to implement a student-centric approach, focusing on personalized learning to cater to the diverse needs of the student body. Key curriculum updates include the introduction of AI as a competency subject at the secondary level and the integration of project-based learning alongside age-appropriate computational thinking and AI literacy from the foundational stages of education. The minister also highlighted several digital initiatives, such as DIKSHA 2.0, e-Jaadui Pitara, Guru-Mitra, TARA app, My Career Advisor, and Vidya Samiksha Kendra. These initiatives utilize AI for various purposes, including assessments,



DELHI EDUCATION MINISTER ANNOUNCES 10,000 CLASSROOM AIR PURIFIERS

In a recent press conference, Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood announced a significant initiative aimed at improving air quality in schools by installing air purifiers in 10,000 classrooms. This measure is part of a broader commitment by the current administration to address pollution through long-term strategies.

Sood outlined plans to gradually install air purifiers in a total of 38,000 classrooms, emphasizing the importance of providing clean air for students to learn. He mentioned that the initial phase would focus on 10,000 schools, and tenders for the project have already been initiated. Furthermore, he revealed that there are 1,047 government and government-aided schools in Delhi, underscoring the extensive nature of this project.

In addition to air purifiers, the minister highlighted that the Public Works Department plans to procure mechanical road sweepers for each assembly constituency, funded by the



environment cess. He also pointed out that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will be allocated funds for similar purposes. Sood questioned the previous government's approach, stating that they failed to disclose sanitation workers' salaries and took no significant action during their two years in charge.

Concluding his remarks, Sood reiterated the administration's dedication to combating pollution, assuring Delhi residents that substantial results would be visible soon as part of their commitment to improving air quality in the region.

SWAYAM PLUS PRESENTS AI-ENABLED HR ANALYTICS BY IIT MADRAS PRAVARTAK

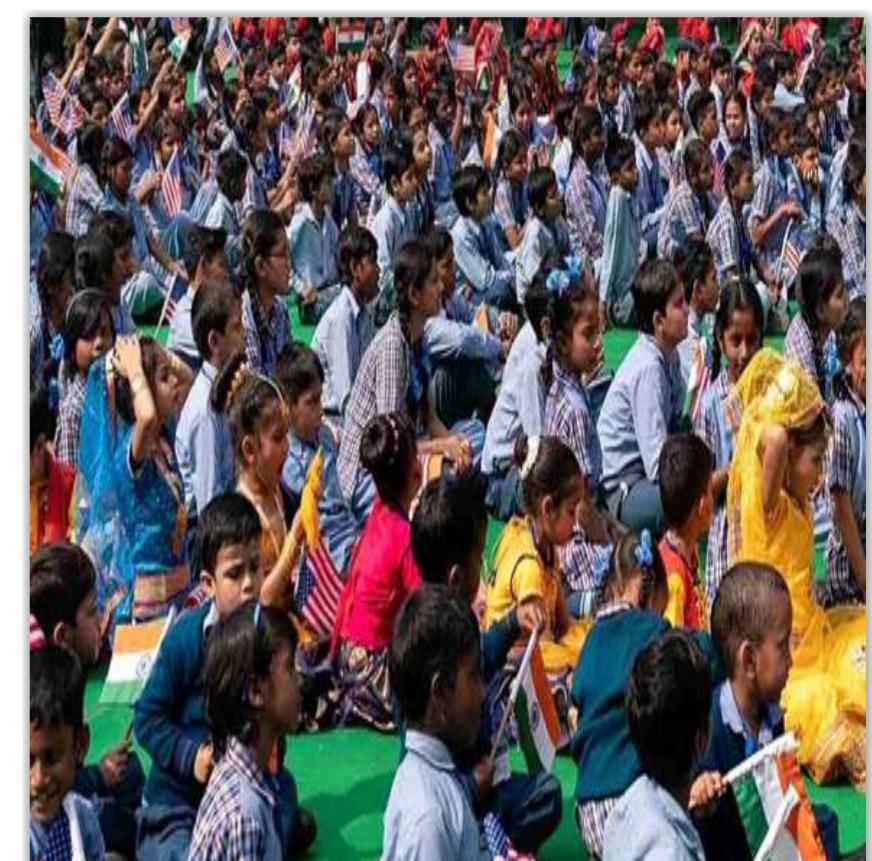


IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation has collaborated with the Union Ministry of Education's SWAYAM Plus initiative to introduce an AI-enabled HR Analytics Programme. The programme, set to begin in January 2026, intends to provide students and professionals with the analytical, digital, and strategic people management skills required for modern workforce needs. Participants will learn to leverage workforce data, HR metrics, and AI insights to enhance organizational talent strategies and informed decision-making.

The programme will span four months and feature two days of on-campus instruction at IIT Madras, led by both faculty and industry experts in HR analytics and AI. Participants will undertake an industry-oriented capstone project that focuses on HR dashboards, AI in HR, predictive modeling, HR metrics, and data-driven decision-making. The programme is aimed at students and working professionals, especially entry- to mid-level HR practitioners and aspiring leaders in sectors such as aviation,

The HR Analytics Programme is designed to merge fundamental HR principles with advanced analytics, predictive modeling, and AI applications, along with real-case learning experiences, as announced by IITM Pravartak.

AP CM LAUNCHES MUSTABU, PROMISING HEALTHIER SCHOOL DAYS



In the Anakapalli district of Andhra Pradesh, AP Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu introduced the "Mustabu" personal cleanliness initiative for students on Saturday. "Mustabu," which translates to "getting ready" in Telugu, was introduced throughout the state from the Tallapalem social welfare residential school.

Prabhakar Reddy, the district collector of Parvatipuram Manyam, came up with the "Mustabu" initiative and introduced it to tribal pupils. While addressing the students, CM Naidu said, "We are launching Mustabu statewide from Tallapalem residential school. We took it up as a programme to elevate personal hygiene, health and self-confidence among students."

The CM claimed that programs like "Mustabu" will build leadership qualities in students in addition to cleanliness and that there is no need to specifically invest money on such an effort.

Naidu wished the youngsters a bright future and noted that, like their parents, the state government had placed hopes on them, noting that hard work from an early age is essential to succeeding in life.

Furthermore, Naidu added that the government will test the health of 75 lakh pupils throughout the state and that it will assume the responsibility for ensuring that they have a bright future.

Durgesh K. Dubey

LOWER OIL PRICES EASE INDIA'S IMPORT BILL, EVEN AS ENERGY DEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL RISKS GROW

India's crude oil import bill has offered a measure of relief in the current financial year, falling sharply despite rising volumes of imports and sustained global uncertainty in energy markets. Between April and November of FY26, the country's spending on crude oil imports declined by around 11 per cent to about \$80.9 billion, compared with nearly \$92 billion in the same period a year earlier. This moderation has largely been driven by softer international crude prices, providing temporary fiscal comfort to an economy that remains heavily dependent on imported energy.

At first glance, the numbers appear encouraging. Lower prices helped contain the import bill even as India brought in more crude oil to meet growing domestic demand. Total crude imports during the eight-month period rose to over 163 million tonnes, up from around 159 million tonnes in the corresponding period of the previous year. This increase reflects the steady expansion of economic activity, higher fuel consumption, and the continued recovery of sectors such as transport, manufacturing, and aviation.

However, beneath this headline relief lies a more complex and fragile picture. India's dependence on imported crude increased further, with imports accounting for over 80 per cent of total consumption during the period, up from just under 80 per cent a year ago. At the same time, domestic crude oil production slipped marginally to about 18.8 million tonnes, highlighting long-standing challenges in boosting indigenous output. For policymakers, this combination of higher demand, rising import dependence, and declining domestic production underscores the vulnerability of India's energy security.

The month of November offered a snapshot of these dynamics in action. India imported over 21 million tonnes of crude oil during the month, a significant jump from under 19 million tonnes a year earlier. Yet the import bill remained broadly unchanged at around \$9.9 billion, reflecting the cushioning effect of relatively lower prices. For refiners and planners alike, this balancing act between volumes and prices has become critical in managing external pressures on the economy.

A major factor shaping India's crude sourcing strategy in recent months has been the surge in imports from Russia. In November, purchases of Russian crude climbed to a five-month high, touching nearly 1.8 million barrels per day. This spike was driven largely by refiners accelerating imports ahead of tighter sanctions imposed by the United

States on major Russian oil companies. With deadlines looming, refiners moved quickly to schedule shipments and speed up vessel turnarounds, ensuring supplies reached Indian ports before restrictions could complicate transactions.

Even though the deep discounts offered on Russian crude in the immediate aftermath of the Ukraine conflict have narrowed, these grades

non-designated Russian entities, increased use of intermediaries, and more complex trading structures to navigate sanctions. Simultaneously, Indian refiners are stepping up sourcing from alternative regions, including the Middle East, West Africa, and the Americas, to spread risk and ensure supply continuity.

These adjustments are taking place against a broader backdrop of India seeking to strengthen its long-term energy and economic resilience. A recent comprehensive economic partnership agreement with Oman signals a strategic push to deepen ties beyond conventional oil trade. The pact opens doors for full foreign direct investment by Indian companies in Oman, expands workforce opportunities for Indian professionals, and places a strong emphasis on future-facing sectors such as green steel, hydrogen, and services. Such agreements reflect a conscious effort to balance immediate energy needs with longer-term diversification and sustainability goals.

For ordinary citizens, these shifts may seem distant, but their impact is tangible. Lower crude import bills help ease pressure on the current account, support currency stability, and reduce the risk of sharp fuel price hikes. At the same time, rising dependence on imports leaves the economy exposed to sudden global shocks, whether from geopolitical conflicts, sanctions, or supply disruptions.

Looking ahead, India faces a delicate transition. While lower prices have provided short-term relief, the underlying challenge of energy dependence remains unresolved. Expanding domestic production, accelerating the transition to cleaner energy sources, and building resilient international partnerships will be crucial to navigating an increasingly uncertain global energy environment. The recent data serves as both reassurance and warning: relief today does not eliminate risk tomorrow.

continue to remain among the most cost-effective options in India's import basket. In November, Russian oil accounted for more than a third of India's total crude imports, underlining how central it has become to the country's energy strategy. For refiners operating in a price-sensitive domestic market, such cost advantages can significantly improve margins and help keep fuel prices stable.

At the same time, this reliance carries growing geopolitical and operational risks. Recent sanctions mark a significant escalation in global efforts to curb Russia's energy revenues, and analysts expect India's crude import strategy to evolve in response. Early data from December suggest that while imports from Russia remain elevated, refiners are beginning to reassess exposure. Some state-owned refiners continue sourcing Russian crude, while others have started trimming volumes and diversifying supply.

In the medium term, the landscape is expected to become more opaque and fragmented. Energy analytics point to a gradual shift toward



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Q. I should be a Good Person or a
Nice person?

Ans. Let me wish all the readers a happy and prosperous 2026! What an insightful question to start the year 2026! The distinction between being a good person and being nice is subtle yet profound. Society often conflates these terms, assuming that kindness, politeness, or agreeableness automatically equate to moral virtue. However, ancient Indian wisdom suggests a deeper understanding: being a good person is rooted in dharma, ethical principles, and moral courage, while being nice may focus primarily on external harmony, social approval, or avoidance of conflict. The verse “धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः” illustrates this principle: Dharma protects those who uphold it. A truly good person prioritizes righteousness and integrity over superficial approval, understanding that moral choices sometimes require firm action, even if it displeases others.

Being nice often involves accommodating others, maintaining pleasant appearances, and avoiding confrontation. Niceness, while socially desirable, can sometimes compromise authenticity or moral responsibility. The verse “सत्यं वद, धर्मं चर, न हि विनश्यति आत्मा” teaches that truth and righteous conduct sustain the soul. A person who is good follows this principle consistently, speaking and acting in alignment with moral truth, even when it may seem harsh or uncomfortable. In contrast, being merely nice may lead to avoidance of necessary honesty, superficial compliance, or silent agreement with injustice. The good person, therefore, may not always be nice in the conventional sense, but they are unwaveringly just, courageous, and principled.

Goodness is reflected in the alignment between intention, thought, and action. The verse “अकृत्यं मनुष्यस्य दुःखमूलं, कृत्यं सुखस्य आधारः” reminds us that actions consistent with duty and virtue produce stability and well-being. A good person acts ethically and courageously, even when their choices evoke disagreement, criticism, or emotional discomfort. Niceness, on the other hand, may prioritize external harmony over moral alignment. A nice person may refrain from confronting wrongdoing or expressing necessary criticism to avoid displeasing others. Ancient wisdom, therefore, emphasizes that moral integrity, rather than mere likability, defines true goodness.

Emotional resilience is another key difference between goodness and niceness. A good person is self-aware, able to regulate emotions, and acts with discernment. The verse “शीलवान् पुरुषः सर्वत्र विजयी भवति, आसक्तिमुक्तः सदा सुखी” highlights that virtue, detachment, and self-discipline enable a person to thrive universally. Such a person may deliver difficult truths, enforce boundaries, or resist peer pressure, understanding that ethical action sometimes involves discomfort. A nice person, while socially agreeable, may struggle to assert boundaries or face criticism, because maintaining approval takes precedence over inner principles. Thus, emotional balance and ethical fortitude distinguish the good person from the nice person.

The ethical courage to act rightly, even when it is socially unpopular, defines a good person. The verse “अन्येभ्यः परं कर्तव्यम्, स्वार्थं परित्यजेत् शीलवान्” reminds us that a virtuous individual prioritizes duty to others and moral responsibility over self-interest or superficial approval. A good person may challenge injustice, refuse complicity, or uphold fairness, even if this displeases friends, colleagues, or society. Niceness, in contrast, may compromise ethical responsibility to avoid conflict or maintain likability. The difference lies in motivation: goodness is guided by dharma, niceness is guided by desire for acceptance.

Goodness also manifests in long-term consistency, whereas niceness may be situational. A genuinely good person acts ethically in private and public, when observed or unobserved. The verse “अकृतज्ञः पुरुषः पापी लोकद्विष एव च” teaches that ungrateful or unethical conduct attracts disapproval and turmoil. True goodness is not performative; it persists even when social reward is absent. Niceness, by contrast, is often performative, dependent on social feedback and context. A person may act nice to gain approval, avoid criticism, or maintain relationships, but such behavior may falter under stress, ethical challenge, or when convenience conflicts with likability.

Another dimension is the balance between empathy and honesty. The verse “सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम्; प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयात् एष धर्मः सनातनः” teaches that truth should be spoken pleasantly, without falsehood or harshness. A good person embodies this balance: they are empathetic and considerate, yet honest and principled. Niceness, however, may prioritize pleasure over truth, telling what is comforting rather than what is morally necessary. Goodness integrates kindness with truth, compassion with discernment, while niceness may favor comfort, avoiding the difficult but necessary moral action.

Long-term impact also separates the good person from the nice person. Ethical goodness builds trust, credibility, and respect over time, influencing relationships, communities, and society positively. Niceness may generate short-term likability but lacks the deep foundation of trust and moral authority. The verse “सत्येन सह मित्रता, धर्मेण सह सहयोगः” emphasizes that relationships grounded in truth and righteousness endure, whereas superficial pleasantries alone cannot sustain deep connections. The good person cultivates meaningful bonds by aligning actions with ethical principles; niceness cultivates transient favor.

Finally, a good person recognizes that moral responsibility often requires difficult choices. The verse “मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः। बन्ध्या विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम्” reminds us that the mind, if unregulated, can create bondage or liberation. A good person exercises discernment and ethical judgment, even when these actions are uncomfortable, challenging, or socially inconvenient. Niceness may avoid difficult decisions to maintain appearance or approval, sacrificing long-term moral integrity for temporary comfort.

In conclusion, being a good person and being nice are related but distinct qualities. Goodness is rooted in moral principles, ethical courage, truthfulness, and long-term consistency. It prioritizes integrity, duty, and righteousness over social approval. Niceness emphasizes agreeableness, politeness, and short-term harmony, sometimes at the expense of moral truth or authenticity. The good person may not always be nice, but they are consistent, principled, and morally courageous, leaving a lasting impact on both self and society. By embodying ethical truth rather than mere superficial agreement, individuals achieve authenticity, emotional balance, and the enduring respect of others, demonstrating that moral goodness transcends polite behavior, shaping a life of purpose, integrity, and lasting value. I prefer to be a good person rather than a nice person, yes, I agree, those who show being a nice person always achieve materialistic success, but nothing at the cost of my principles and values, so I stick to be a good person, rather than a nice person. Choice is yours; you choose the best fit for you! Live your life with grace, stay blessed!

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Ravi Singh

PROTECTING YOUR SPACE, PRESERVING YOUR PEOPLE

There comes a quiet moment in adult life when you realise that exhaustion is not always caused by work, deadlines, or responsibilities. Sometimes, it comes from people. From the constant need to be available, agreeable, accommodating, and understanding even at the cost of your own peace. In that moment, the idea of setting boundaries appears not as an act of rebellion, but as an act of survival.

Yet, for many of us, boundaries feel uncomfortable. We fear that saying "no" will make us appear rude, distant, or ungrateful. We worry that protecting our space might damage relationships we value. This fear often keeps us trapped in patterns of overgiving, silent resentment, and emotional burnout. The truth, however, is simple: boundaries do not burn bridges; poor communication and unresolved resentment do.

Boundaries are not walls meant to shut people out. They are guidelines that define how others can engage with us respectfully. They clarify what we can offer without harming ourselves. When expressed thoughtfully, boundaries actually strengthen relationships by replacing unspoken expectations with honesty.

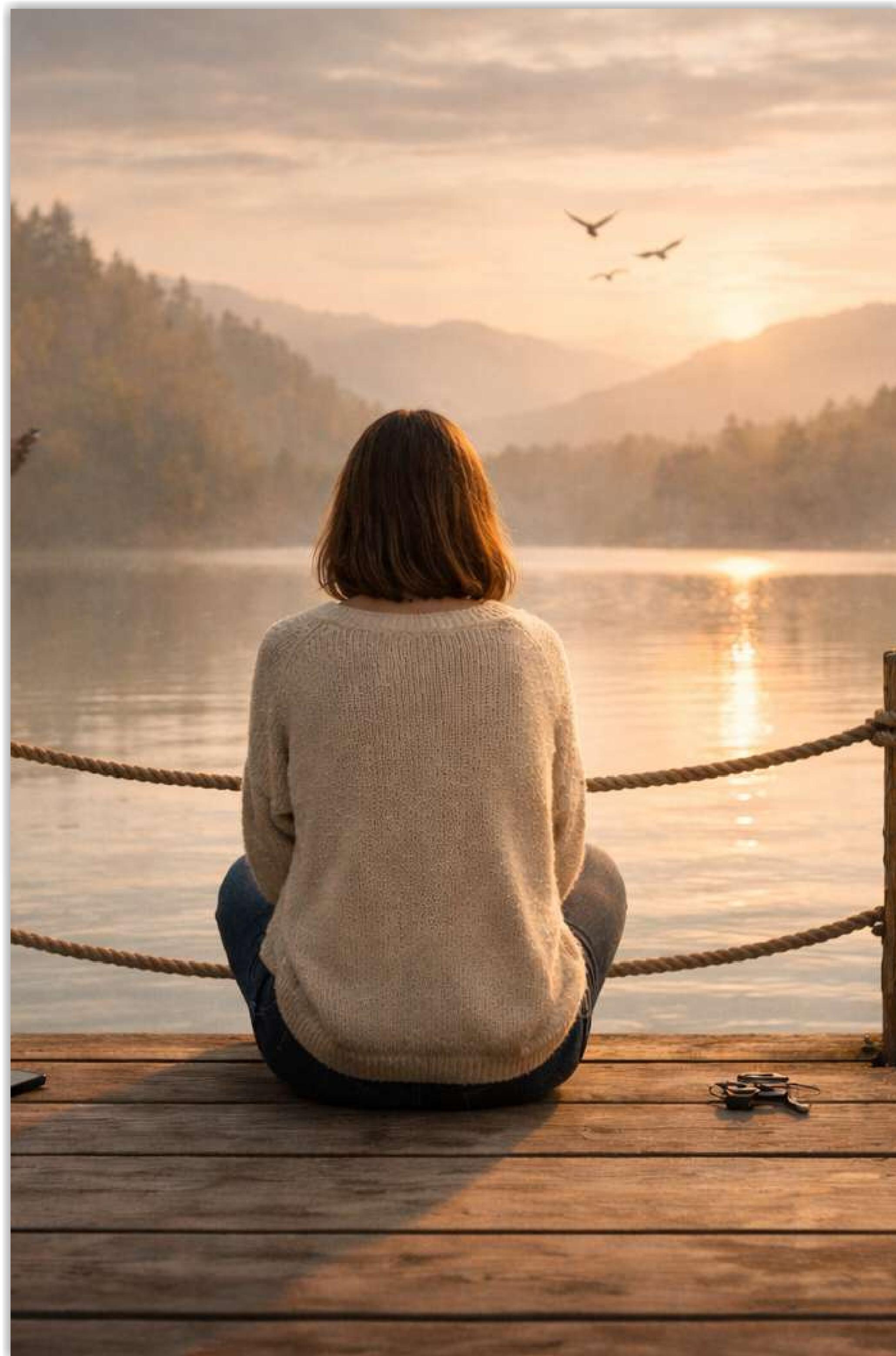
One reason boundaries feel so difficult is that many of us were raised to prioritise harmony over honesty. We learned early that being "nice" meant being available. That love was proven through sacrifice. That discomfort should be swallowed to keep the peace. Over time, this conditioning teaches us to ignore our own limits. We say yes when we mean no. We agree when we feel uncomfortable. And slowly, our silence turns into frustration.

What we fail to realise is that unspoken resentment does more damage to relationships than a clearly expressed boundary ever could. When needs are not communicated, they don't disappear; they accumulate. They show up as passive aggression, emotional withdrawal, or sudden outbursts that confuse the very people we are trying not to hurt.

Setting boundaries begins with self-awareness. Before communicating limits to others, we must first identify them within ourselves. What drains you? What feels unfair, overwhelming, or invasive? What situations leave you feeling resentful or exhausted? These emotions are not signs of weakness; they are signals. They point to areas where boundaries are needed.

Once you understand your limits, the next step is communication calm, clear, and respectful. Boundary-setting does not require lengthy explanations or apologies. A simple, honest statement is often enough. Phrases like "I'm not available for that right now," or "I need some time before committing," or "I'm comfortable helping in this way, but not beyond that" communicate self-respect without hostility.

Tone matters. Boundaries delivered with anger or blame can feel like rejection. Boundaries



delivered with clarity and kindness feel like self-care. The goal is not to control others' behaviour, but to take responsibility for your own well-being. When you focus on what you can and cannot do, rather than what others should do, conversations remain constructive.

Another fear that holds people back is the possibility of disappointing others. It is important to remember that disappointment is not the same as harm. You are allowed to prioritise your mental health, time, and energy even if it makes someone uncomfortable. Healthy relationships can tolerate disappointment. Unhealthy ones demand self-erasure.

Not everyone will respond positively to your boundaries, and that can be unsettling. Some people may resist, guilt-trip, or accuse you of changing. This reaction often says more about their expectations than your actions. People who benefit from your lack of boundaries may feel threatened when you begin to set them. But those who genuinely respect you will adjust, even if it takes time.

Maintaining boundaries requires consistency. Setting a limit once and then repeatedly breaking it sends mixed signals. Consistency teaches others how to treat you. It reinforces that your words carry meaning. Over time, people learn where you stand, and many conflicts dissolve simply because expectations are clear.

Boundaries also need compassion both for others and for yourself. You may struggle at first. You may overexplain, feel guilty, or doubt your choices. That's normal. Learning to honour your needs after years of neglect takes practice. Be patient with yourself. Growth is rarely graceful.

Importantly, boundaries should evolve. What works at one stage of life may not work at another. Changing roles, responsibilities, and priorities require reassessment. Communicating these changes openly prevents misunderstandings and keeps relationships grounded in reality rather than assumption.

Setting boundaries is not about becoming distant or selfish. It is about becoming honest and sustainable. Relationships thrive when both people feel respected, not drained. When giving is voluntary, not forced. When connection is rooted in choice, not obligation.

In the end, the bridges worth keeping are the ones that allow you to cross without losing yourself. True connection does not require constant sacrifice; it requires mutual respect. When you honour your boundaries, you teach others how to honour you. And in doing so, you don't burn bridges you build stronger, healthier ones that can actually last.

Afreen Mazgaonkar & Nancey Kujur

OZEMPIC IN INDIA: COST AND AFFORDABILITY FOR DIABETES AND WEIGHT LOSS



India has a very large number of people with type-2 diabetes, around 101 million adults, making it second only to China. At the same time, obesity is increasing rapidly, which is causing more health problems such as heart disease and other metabolic issues. Because of this, there is a growing need for medicines that can control blood sugar, help with weight loss, and lower heart-related risks. Recently, a once-a-week injectable medicine called semaglutide has been launched in India by global drug maker Novo Nordisk. The drug is approved in India to treat type-2 diabetes, but it is also being widely used for weight loss, even though that is not its main approved

purpose. Semaglutide works by copying a natural hormone called GLP-1. This hormone helps the body release insulin, slows down digestion, and reduces appetite. Because of these effects, people often see better blood sugar control and weight loss. Studies from other countries have also shown that the drug may help protect the heart and kidneys. This hormone helps the body release more insulin, digest food more slowly, and feel less hungry. Because of this, many people get better control of blood sugar and also lose weight. Studies from other countries show that the medicine may also help protect the heart and kidneys. However, the launch of this medicine brings some concerns. People want to know how much it will cost in India, how it is different from other diabetes medicines, and whether the price will become lower when cheaper (generic) versions are available. These questions are important for both patients and the healthcare system, as problems like diabetes and obesity are increasing in India.

NASA WARNS LATE STUBBLE BURNING MAY WORSEN INDIA'S AIR POLLUTION

NASA researchers have pointed out a worrying alteration in the stubble burning patterns of northern India that might further worsen the quality of air. Crop residue burning is being done by farmers more and more at night, especially around 4 to 6 PM, instead of during the afternoon that was the traditional time. This change will mean that many of the fires are not visible to the regular satellites' sensors which are operating in the area only once or twice a day leading to a situation where fire activity and pollution levels are underestimated. After the paddy harvest between October and December the farmers set fire to the stubble and that releases a large amount of smoke and particulate matter which then spreads all over the Indo-Gangetic plains. The cities like Delhi are badly hit in this regard and hence they face serious air quality problems during the winter months. Now the later fires are even more of a concern because the evening atmospheric conditions usually consist of a very low wind speed and the ground layer of the atmosphere being lower, thus the pollutants getting trapped near the ground and remaining there for several hours during the night. Experts indicate that this changing practice makes it difficult to do both monitoring and mitigation. They insist that advanced and more frequent satellite monitoring systems, together with policy measures and sustainable options for the management of crop residue, are necessary. This problem must be solved not only to eliminate winter smog but also to safeguard the health of people living in northern India.



GOOGLE PLEDGES \$8 MILLION TO BOOST INDIA'S AI ECOSYSTEM



Google has announced major support to strengthen India's artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem. The announcement was made during Google's "Lab to Impact" dialogue on December 16 and supports the India AI Impact Summit 2026. This effort matches India's goal to "Make AI in India and Make AI work for India." As part of this initiative, Google will provide \$8 million to support four AI Centers of Excellence set up by the Indian government. These centres aim to boost research, innovation, and real-world use of AI across the country. Google also stressed the importance of India's role in the global AI future.

Dr. Manish Gupta from Google DeepMind said that India's strong adoption of AI can help it become a global leader in AI-powered growth. To support India's many languages, Google announced a \$2 million contribution to create the Indic Language Technologies Research Hub at IIT Bombay. In addition, all 22 Gemma open AI models developed by Google have been uploaded to AIKosh, a national open platform under the India AI Mission. Indian startups using these models for Indian language solutions will receive \$50,000 in funding. Google has also given \$2.5 million to Wadhwani AI to test a conversational AI assistant based on large language models. Another \$2 million grant will help develop an AI language model specially designed for agriculture, supporting farmers and the farming sector.

STARLINK'S INDIA ENTRY SPARKS DEBATE OVER SPACE CONGESTION AND SATELLITE SAFETY

The long-awaited entrance of Starlink in the Indian market indicates that there will be easier and faster internet access particularly in the remote and unserviced areas. This satellite-based broadband service will be a boon to digital inclusion, emergency response, education, and rural connectivity, however, it will also raise the issue of space being congested eventually and the non-sustainability of low Earth orbit (LEO) as a place for satellites to stay. Starlink operates through a network of thousands of small satellites in the low Earth orbit (LEO). The problem is even more complicated because more and more private companies and nations are planning to send similar swarms of satellites into the sky. According to the experts, what was once a huge and open area in orbit is now becoming more and more crowded. Such congestion will inevitably give rise to the danger of satellite collisions, resulting in the creation of space debris, and possibly even a chain reaction of further collisions, thereby putting at risk not only the communication, navigation, and meteorological satellites that are of utmost importance but also the whole space infrastructure. Moreover, there is the question of how to cope with the satellites all through their life spans, which means having to deorbit them safely once their missions are over. Space experts and regulators are urging countries to collaborate globally, have better tracking systems, and have clearer guidelines on space traffic management. While India has approved the use of high-tech satellite connectivity, it has also made the integration of technology with responsible and sustainable space practices a key priority.



AKSHAY KUMAR TO BE HOST FOR WHEEL OF FORTUNE INDIA ON SONY TV



Bollywood celebrity Akshay Kumar is going to host the Indian version of the iconic global game show, Wheel of Fortune India. The news has created a lot of excitement among the fans and viewers of the TV, which indicates a new phase of Akshay's return to the small screen. Wheel of Fortune India will be shown on Sony TV, which means that there will be an Indian version of the famous word guessing and puzzle game, which has been loved by audiences all over the world for many generations. For the viewers, it will be an all win situation as Akshay will also be bringing his energy and charm along with the show, as usual, the contestants will be spinning the wheel to win, solve puzzles and compete for the rewards. Akshay Kumar, who has been known for his versatility in movies and mass appeal, is expected to attract a large audience with his presence and the show's concept of blending entertainment with interactive fun. The trend of film stars hosting television formats, which is on the rise, is also the reason for this move, as it helps to connect cinema and TV audiences. Wheel of Fortune India, with its combination of nostalgia, competition, and celebrity magic, is ready to be a major attraction in the weekend lineup of Sony TV. People can't wait for the premiere and Akshay's captivating presence as host.

INDIA AND US NEAR DEAL TO REMOVE ADDITIONAL TARIFFS

India and the United States are close to finalising a framework trade agreement that could lead to the removal of reciprocal and penalty tariffs imposed by the US on Indian exports, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday. At present, the total additional tariffs imposed by the US on India are around 50%. Although he did not give a fixed deadline, Agrawal said both countries are working positively and hope to complete the agreement soon. Recently, a US delegation led by Deputy US Trade Representative Rick Switzer visited India on December 10–11. The visit was mainly to help Switzer understand India's priorities and to review the progress of talks on the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) and the framework deal. During the visit, Switzer met Commerce Secretary Agrawal, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri. Separately, India is also making progress in trade talks with the European Union (EU). An EU team led by its trade commissioner visited New Delhi from December 3–9. Both sides are trying to finish negotiations by the end of the year and are regularly discussing unresolved issues. One key concern in India–EU talks is the carbon tax under the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). From January 1, the EU will charge a tax on carbon emissions for products like steel, aluminium, cement, and fertilizers. This tax could reduce the benefits Indian exporters might receive under a free trade agreement, especially since India exports large amounts of steel and aluminium.



Afreen Mazgaonkar & Nancey Kujur

UNNATI HOODA AND KIRAN GEORGE VICTORY AT ODISHA MASTERS BADMINTON SUPER 100



The badminton competition in India is seeing very young talented players like Unnati Hooda and Kiran George who got the singles crowns in Odisha Masters Badminton Super 100 tournament in Cuttack. In a contest that was composed of very good matches and strong competition, both Indian shuttlers showed great skills and fierce wills to take the awards and make a solid statement in the international circuit. Unnati Hooda, who is on her way of becoming a major player, exhibited her aggressive way of playing and steady performance all through the competition to be crowned the winner in the ladies' singles event. Her showing not only at the competition's end but all the way through has, however, matured her a lot as a player since she was able to dispose of the challengers one

after the other and therefore claim the title and also gain some world-ranking points along the way. This victory continues to be a strong support for her being viewed as one of the brightest and most promising female players among the Indian badminton players. On the men's side, the experienced player Kiran George put together skills with strong character to win the championship. Due to his strategic playing style and physical condition, George had a very hard path in the tournament but managed to be the last man standing which pleased the local spectators. The combined win demonstrated not only India's budding talents in badminton but especially among singles players and it means more ahead of the BWF calendar's next higher-level events. The performances of the winners have attracted praise not only from the audience but also from the experts for their future prospects in the sport.

68TH NATIONAL SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIPS: RAIZA DHILLON SHINES WITH TWO GOLDS

Olympian Raiza Dhillon gave an excellent performance at the 68th National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC) held at the Karni Singh Shooting Range, Tughlaqabad. On Saturday, she won two gold medals, one in the Women's Skeet event and another in the Junior Women's Skeet event. In the Women's Skeet final, Raiza scored 56 points to win the gold medal. Yashasvi Rathore finished close behind with 55 points to win silver, while Olympian Ganemat Shekhon won bronze with 45 points. Other shooters like Darshna Rathore, Risham Kaur Gurur and Vanshika Tiwari finished fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Earlier in the qualification round, Yashasvi topped the list with 118 hits, while Raiza and Ganemat both scored 116 hits. Raiza finished second after a shoot-off. In the Women's Skeet Team event, Rajasthan won the gold medal, followed by Madhya Pradesh with silver and Punjab with bronze. Raiza continued her strong performance in the Junior Women's Skeet final, scoring 55 points to win gold again. Vanshika Tiwari won silver and Mansi Raghuwanshi took bronze. In the Junior Women's Team event, Madhya Pradesh won gold, Rajasthan secured silver and Punjab won bronze. The championship will continue in the coming days, with more shooting events scheduled next.



LADAKH ARCHERY TEAM MAKES HISTORY, QUALIFIES FOR NATIONAL GAMES

The archery team of the Union Territory of Ladakh performed so remarkably at the Senior Archery National Championships held in Hyderabad that it has gained the right to participate in the National Games. Besides, the Ladakh archers showed their outstanding skills, calmness, and ambition to be nominated for the prestigious multi-sport event by getting through the whole tournament of teams from 31 states. Through a series of victories, the team reached the Round of 16 and, on the way, scored an important win over Punjab, a usually powerful team in Indian archery. Then they went to the quarter-finals for a fight that was loud, against Andhra Pradesh; they lost but only by two points in a very tight game. However, the overall performance of Ladakh was so strong that it resulted in qualification, so a historic moment for the area was celebrating. The team made up of Hussain Phokar, Nurboo Phyang, Nubu Thiksay, and Ali Sanku, worked together perfectly to get this success. Sports authorities and fans in Ladakh regard this victory as a significant and uplifting event for archery in the region, and they are feeling that it will encourage more young players from this part of the world to enter the national arena.



IDCA TEAM CLINCHES 3-0 T20 DEAF CRICKET SERIES VICTORY IN DUBAI

The Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA) team won the three-match T20 Deaf Cricket Series against the Inclusive Warriors Deaf Dubai (IWDD) with a clean 3-0 sweep. The matches were played at the DCS You Selects Arena in Sharjah from December 11 to 13. In the first match on December 11, IDCA scored 212 runs and bowled out IWDD for 123, winning by 89 runs. Santosh Kumar Mahapatra was named Player of the Match. The second match was held on December 12, where IWDD scored 134 runs. IDCA chased the target easily, winning by 8 wickets, with Santosh again winning Player of the Match. In the final match on December 13, IDCA scored 187 runs and restricted IWDD to 124, winning by 63 runs. Virender Singh was named Player of the Match. For the series awards, Virender Singh won Player of the Series and Best Bowler, while Santosh Kumar Mahapatra won Best Batsman. Vaibhav Paranjpe received the Best Fielder award. Several dignitaries praised the team's performance. They highlighted the players' hard work, dedication, and passion for the game. IDCA officials also thanked their partners and sponsors for their continuous support, which has helped the team achieve this success and promote inclusion through sports.



PICKLEFEST: YANNIV SAINAANI AND NIRVAIR BHAN WIN U-14 DOUBLES TITLE



Yanniv Sainaani and Nirvair Bhan won the Under-14 gender-neutral doubles title on the first day of Picklefest, an Indian Pickleball Association (IPA)-approved PWR 400 event, held in Mumbai on December 13. The young pair played with confidence in the final and won the match 15-4, clearly dominating their opponents to win the title. Throughout the tournament, Yanniv and Nirvair showed great teamwork and maturity for their age. They played smartly, controlled the game well, used their chances to score points, and remained calm even in tough situations. Their strong coordination and smart play helped them stand out among tough competition. The one-sided final score showed how confidently they played from the start. Picklefest brought together many talented young players and gave them a good chance to compete at a high level. Winning this title is a big achievement for Yanniv and Nirvair and shows that they have a bright future in India's junior pickleball. The Indian Pickleball Association (IPA) is the official body that manages and promotes pickleball in India. It organises tournaments across the country and encourages people of all ages to play the sport. IPA is linked with the Asian Pickleball Association (APA) and the Global Pickleball Federation (GPF). The PWR ranking system is India's official national ranking for pickleball. It covers all age groups and match formats and helps identify top players for selection at school, state, and national levels.

INDIA'S FIRST TRANSGENDER FOOTBALL LEAGUE LAUNCHED IN JAMSHEDPUR

The first transgender football league in the country was launched in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, and it is a very important step in inclusive sports by India. It is the first-ever such league in India and it is intended to be a means for the transgender community to compete, get acceptance and challenge the already-established barriers in the sports culture of India. The league was conducted with the help of local NGOs and sports organizations that were dedicated to the cause of disadvantaged communities. Transgender athletes from the entire area took part in the event and displayed their skills, determination and athleticism on the field. The event was not only a showcase of sports talent but also a strong supporter of the values that are necessary for the transgender community's integration and their rights in the sports world. The participants shared their feelings of being very happy and proud and stated that the league was instrumental in their being seen and feeling part of a community that usually excludes them. The coaches and the ushers pointed out that such activities are a must for building confidence and taking the lead among the transgender youth while making them the role models for others to follow in the sports area. The kickoff of the transgender football league in Jamshedpur is a major cultural landmark and a further move towards more inclusiveness in Indian sports.



Job Junction

Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay & Ajab Tinwala

BANK OF INDIA RECRUITMENT 2026



The Bank of India (BOI), a leading Public Sector Bank with its Head Office in Mumbai, has released a major recruitment notification for 629 Officer vacancies for the year 2025–26. This recruitment drive offers excellent career opportunities for qualified graduates aspiring to build a long-term career in India's banking sector.

Overview

- Organization: Bank of India
- Post Name: Credit Officer & Officers (Various Grades)
- Total Vacancies: 629
- Job Type: Permanent
- Job Location: Across India
- Application Mode: Online

Vacancy Details

- Credit Officers: MMGS-II: 418, MMGS-III: 60 & MMGS-IV: 36
- Other Officer Posts : Chief Manager – 15, Senior Manager – 54, Manager – 44 & Law Officer – 02

Eligibility Criteria

Educational Qualification: Graduation in any discipline from a recognized University with minimum 60% marks

Age Limit (as on cut-off dates): MMGS-II: 25–32 years, MMGS-III: 28–38 years & MMGS-IV: 30–40 years
Age relaxation applicable as per Government of India rules

Pay Scale: MMGS-II: ₹64,820 – ₹93,960, MMGS-III: ₹85,920 – ₹1,05,280 & MMGS-IV: ₹1,02,300 – ₹1,20,940

Selection Process

- Online Examination (125 / 150 Marks as applicable)
- Personal Interview
- Final merit list based on combined scores

Application Fee

- SC / ST: ₹175/-
- General & Others: ₹850/-
- Payment Mode: Online

Important Dates (Credit Officer Posts)

- Application Start: 20 December 2025
- Last Date to Apply: 05 January 2026

How to Apply

Interested candidates must apply online through the official website: <https://bankofindia.bank.in/>

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

INDIAN AIR FORCE APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT 2025–26 APPLY ONLINE FOR 144 TECHNICAL TRADE POSTS

The Indian Air Force (IAF) invites online applications from fresh male and female Indian citizens for Apprenticeship Training (Technical Trades) at the Base Repair Depot, Air Force, Chandigarh. This is an excellent opportunity for ITI-qualified candidates to gain hands-on technical training in one of India's most prestigious defence organisations.

Recruitment Overview

- Post Name: Apprentice (Technical Trades)
- Total Vacancies: 144
- Training Location: Base Repair Depot, IAF, Chandigarh
- Stipend: ₹10,500/- per month
- Application Mode: Online (Apprenticeship India Portal)

Important Dates

- Online Application: 07 December 2025 – 30 December 2025
- Written Test: 18 January 2026
- Interview & Medical DV: 19 January 2026
- Merit List: 23 January 2026
- Training Commences: 09 February 2026

Eligibility Criteria

- Age Limit: 17 to 35 years (as on 09.02.2025)

- Education Qualification:
- 10th / 12th pass from a recognized board
- ITI certificate (NCVT/SCVT) in the relevant trade with minimum 40% marks
- Nationality: Indian
- Trades Available (Partial List)
- Fitter, Turner, Machinist, Electrician, Welder (Gas & Electric), Sheet Metal Worker, Carpenter, Painter, CNC Programmer cum Operator, Mechanic (Motor Vehicle / Instrument / Electrical Maintenance), TIG/MIG Welder, Lab Assistant (Chemical), Quality Assurance Assistant and more.

Selection Process

- Written Examination
- Interview
- Document Verification
- Medical Examination
- Final Merit List

AIR FORCE APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT 2025



How to Apply

- Visit the Apprenticeship India Portal from 07.12.2025
- Register and fill in personal, educational, and trade details
- Upload photograph, signature, and certificates
- Submit the application before 30.12.2025

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

DSSSB MTS RECRUITMENT 2026 | APPLY ONLINE FOR 714 VACANCIES



The Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB) has released Advertisement No. 07/2025 inviting online applications for 714 Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) posts across various Departments, Autonomous Bodies, and Local Bodies of the Government of NCT of Delhi. This is a prime opportunity for 10th pass candidates seeking a stable government job in Delhi.

Recruitment Details

- Post: Multi Tasking Staff (MTS)

- Total Vacancies: 714
- Pay Scale: ₹18,000 – ₹56,900 (Pay Level-1)
- Job Location: Delhi
- Application Mode: Online

Important Dates

- Online Applications: 17 December 2025 – 15 January 2026 (11:59 PM)
- Fee Payment (if applicable): Up to 15 January 2026
- Exam Date: To be announced
- Eligibility
- Qualification: Matriculation (10th Pass) or



equivalent (higher qualifications acceptable)

- Age Limit: 18–27 years (as on 15.01.2026)
- Relaxation as per Delhi Govt rules (SC/ST: 5 yrs, OBC: 3 yrs, PwD: 10 yrs, etc.)

Selection Process

- One-Tier Written Examination (MCQs)
- Skill/Trade/Endurance/Driving Test (where applicable)
- Document Verification

Minimum Qualifying Marks:

- Gen/EWS: 40% | OBC (Delhi): 35% | SC/ST/PwD: 30%
- Ex-Servicemen: 5% relaxation (minimum 30%)

Application Fee

- General/OBC: ₹100/-
- Women/SC/ST/PwD/Ex-Servicemen: No Fee
- Payment Mode: Online (SBI e-Pay)

How to Apply

- Visit dsssbonline.nic.in from 17.12.2025
- Register/Login and complete the application
- Upload photo, signature, and documents
- Pay fee (if applicable) and submit before 15.01.2026

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

Deepika Singh

QUIZ TIME

1. Which country hosted the recent UN climate talks?
2. Which gas is the main cause of global warming?
3. Which Indian state topped renewable energy capacity?
4. Who won the latest Men's international cricket series for India?
5. Which planet was studied in the new NASA space update?
6. Which Indian athlete won gold in a recent international meet?
7. What device measures earthquake intensity?
8. Which sport uses the Davis Cup trophy?
9. Which virus variant was recently monitored globally?
10. Which mission is India's upcoming human spaceflight?

RIDDLES

1. I wake before the sun and feed the nation. Who am I?
2. I grow in fields and become your daily food. What am I?
3. I fall from the sky and help crops grow. What am I?
4. I turn seeds into harvest with care and patience. Who am I?
5. I am cut after months of hard work in fields. What am I?
6. I am a tool that ploughs the land. What am I?
7. I protect crops from thirst. What am I?
8. I am stored after harvest and feed families all year. What am I?

ANSWERS

I. RIDDLES	1. Farmer	6. Neeraj	11. Gaganayan
II. QUIZ TIME	2. Crop	5. Mars	12. UAE
ANSWERS	3. Rajasthan	4. India	13. Carbon
	7. Seismograph	8. Ternis	14. QUIZ TIME
	9. O'micron	10. Gaganyaan	15. Farmer
	11. Grains	12. Farming	16. Rain
	13. Irrigation	14. Harvest	17. Plough
	15. Irrigation	16. Farming	18. Farmer
	17. Grains	18. Rain	19. Crop
	18. Irrigation	19. Farming	20. Rain
	19. Grains	20. Farming	21. Irrigation
	20. Irrigation	21. Farming	22. Rain

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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Khajur Pak – A Power-Packed Winter Sweet!



This Week, We're Relishing Khajur Pak – A Power-Packed Winter Sweet!

Khajur Pak is a traditional Indian winter sweet made mainly from dates, dry fruits, and desi ghee. Popular in Gujarat and other parts of India, it is known for providing warmth, energy, and strength during cold seasons. This nutritious sweet is often consumed in small portions as it is rich and filling.

Ingredients:

- Seedless dates (Khajur) – 2 cups
- (chopped)Desi ghee – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
- Edible gum (Gond) – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
- Cashews – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (chopped)
- Almonds – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (chopped)
- Pistachios – 2 tbsp (chopped)
- Dry coconut (copra) – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (grated)
- Nutmeg powder – $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp
- Cardamom powder – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp
- Milk – 2–3 tbsp (optional, for softness)



Preparation

- Heat ghee in a heavy-bottom pan and fry gond until it puffs up. Remove and crush lightly.
- In the same ghee, lightly roast cashews, almonds, pistachios, and coconut. Keep aside.
- Add chopped dates to the pan and cook on low flame, stirring continuously until they soften and form a thick paste.
- Add roasted dry fruits, crushed gond, nutmeg powder, and cardamom powder. Mix well.
- Add a little milk if needed to adjust the consistency. Cook for 2–3 minutes. Grease a plate or tray with ghee and spread the mixture evenly.
- Allow it to cool slightly, then cut into squares or set into a roll.

Serving Tip:

Serve Khajur Pak in small portions with warm milk. It is best enjoyed in the morning or evening during winter.