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THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow



Ravi Singh & Delisha Gupta

NATURE'S SILENT HEALERS: A TRIBUTE TO WORLD WILDLIFE DAY



Despite their vital role, our botanical heritage is under siege. We are currently losing biodiversity at a rate unprecedented in human history. Over 20% of medicinal and aromatic plants are now threatened with extinction due to habitat loss, climate change, and over-harvesting.

When a plant species vanishes, a library of ancestral knowledge often disappears with it. Indigenous communities, the stewards of this wisdom, rely on these plants for their cultural identity and sustainable livelihoods. To lose these species is to sever a thread that has connected humans to the natural world since the dawn of time.

The message of World Wildlife Day 2026 is one of urgent hope. While the challenges are immense, our capacity for restoration is greater. Global initiatives, like the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, are pushing

nations to protect 30% of the planet's land and seas by 2030.

Conservation is no longer just the work of scientists in lab coats; it is a collective responsibility. It starts with:

- Sustainable Sourcing: Choosing products that respect the "FairWild" standard.
- Digital Innovation: Using satellite data to track and prevent illegal plant poaching.
- Community Empowerment: Supporting indigenous-led conservation efforts that harmonize human needs with ecological health.

World Wildlife Day is a reminder that we are not separate from nature; we are a part of it. The health of the mountain gorilla and the potency of a wild herb are mirrors of our own well-being. As we celebrate the wonders of the wild today, let us commit to being the generation that stopped the silence of the forests and ensured that the healing power of nature remains available for generations to come.

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Every year on March 3rd, the global community pauses to celebrate World Wildlife Day, a date chosen to commemorate the birth of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) in 1973. It is a day to marvel at the breathtaking tapestry of life on Earth, from the apex predators of the savannah to the microscopic fungi of the forest floor. However, in 2026, the celebration takes a deeply personal turn with the theme: "Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage, and Livelihoods."

For millennia, humanity's survival has been inextricably linked to the plant kingdom. This year's focus reminds us that wildlife is not just about the "charismatic megafauna" the lions and elephants but also the silent, leafy healers that grow beneath our feet. An estimated 70,000 plant species are used globally for their medicinal properties. From the aspirin derived from willow bark to the life-saving compounds in the rosy periwinkle, nature has provided the blueprint for modern medicine.

In many parts of the world, these plants are more than just resources; they are a primary source of healthcare for nearly 80% of the population. When we protect a forest, we are not just saving "wildlife" we are preserving a living pharmacy that holds the secrets to future cures.

Durgesh K. Dubey

HOLI IN BRAJ: WHEN FIRE PURIFIED THE HEART AND COLOUR UNITED THE WORLD

Holi is celebrated today with colour, music, and laughter, but its cultural journey begins in a quieter and more serious mood beside a fire. The evening before Holi, the flames of Holika Dahan rise in neighbourhoods across India, reminding people that joy is not meaningful unless it is built on moral clarity. In the traditional narrative, the burning of Holika represents the end of arrogance and the survival of truth. Hiranyakashyap, intoxicated by power, demanded worship as if he were God, while his son Prahlad remained firm in devotion and righteousness. When threats and punishments failed, Holika, protected by a boon, entered the fire with Prahlad to destroy him. The story turns not on power, but on ethics: Holika's pride is consumed, and Prahlad is saved. Over centuries, this became a symbol that evil often carries its own downfall, while innocence and moral courage endure. Holika Dahan therefore stands as a cultural reminder that before we colour the world, we must first burn what darkens the mind such as ego, hatred, jealousy, and cruelty.

Braj Awakens: Where Holi Becomes a Festival of Love

If Holika Dahan is the lesson of inner cleansing, Braj gives Holi its emotional soul. In the sacred geography of Mathura, Vrindavan, Nandgaon, and Barsana, Holi is not merely a festival on the calendar; it is an atmosphere, an inheritance of devotion expressed through joy. Here the story shifts from the drama of moral victory to the gentle, human world of Krishna and Radha, where the message is not only "truth wins," but also "love unites." Braj traditions hold that Holi's colour-filled spirit began through Krishna's playful, affectionate relationship with Radha and the gopis, turning the celebration into an expression of equality and belonging. This is why Braj Holi feels different: it is less about spectacle and more about a lived memory of community, closeness, and the courage to love without fear of judgment.

A Child's Question, A Mother's Wisdom

The beginning is surprisingly simple, almost domestic. Krishna, still young, becomes aware of a difference that many humans notice early in life, the difference of appearance. He sees that he is dark-complexioned while Radha is fair, and this comparison disturbs him. What matters here is not the complexion itself but the human tendency to create distance through difference. Yashoda's response, in cultural memory, is both tender and wise. She does not scold him for questioning; instead, she gently redirects him, implying that love is larger than colour and that closeness is created not by sameness but by affection. Her

playful suggestion—that he may colour Radha's face becomes an unexpected seed of transformation. The moment shows an important value embedded in Indian cultural storytelling: a wise guide does not crush curiosity; a wise guide reshapes it into learning.

The First Colours in Barsana: Joy That Erases Distance

When Krishna reaches Barsana with his companions, colour becomes a language that speaks without argument. He applies colour to Radha, and the moment is remembered not as an act of

when there is trust, balance, and the freedom to express. The playful teasing between Krishna's group and Radha's companions becomes a theatre of affection, not hostility. It teaches that power should never become domination, and that strength should never destroy tenderness. This is a subtle moral lesson for the present generation: the happiest communities are those where people can laugh together without humiliating one another, where confidence exists without cruelty, and where tradition becomes a space for bonding, not bitterness.

The Colours Speak: Forgiveness, Friendship, and Fresh Starts

Over time, the colours of Holi become symbols of emotional renewal. People apply colour not to prove anything, but to reconnect. The festival culturally encourages the softening of old grudges, the rebuilding of friendships, and the courage to begin again. That is why Holi is often remembered as a festival of "meeting" people step out of isolation and enter community life. In Braj, this is strengthened by devotional music and temple traditions, where celebration is infused with bhakti rather than excess. The deeper message is clear: the world becomes lighter when we carry less negativity, and relationships become stronger when we choose reconciliation over pride. In modern life, where stress and competition silently harden the heart, Holi becomes an annual reminder to restore emotional warmth.

Conclusion

Holi, when understood through Indian cultural memory, is not only a festival of colour but a moral journey with two movements: first the burning of Holika, which asks us to destroy the ego and negativity that poison our inner world, and then the playful Holi of Braj, where Krishna and Radha remind us that love can dissolve differences and create belonging. The festival becomes truly meaningful when we treat it as a practice of ethics burning pride before celebrating joy, choosing forgiveness over resentment, and embracing others without judging their appearance or background. In a time when society often feels divided and impatient, Holi offers a timeless discipline: purify the heart, then colour the world with kindness, courage, and unity.

force but as an act of relationship. Radha's response often described as playful resistance turning into laughter creates the emotional permission for the community to join. The gopis enter the scene not as spectators but as equal participants, and soon joy spreads like a wave through the lanes. In that wave, the social meaning of colour is born: it blurs the sharp edges of identity and replaces them with a shared experience. For a society that often categorises people by status, background, or appearance, the act of colouring each other becomes a gentle rebellion. It does not break society; it heals it. It does not insult difference; it dissolves the arrogance attached to difference.

From Play to Principle: Lathmar Holi and the Ethics of Balance

As the Braj tradition grows, Holi develops its own local forms, including the famous Lathmar Holi of Barsana and Nandgaon. When described superficially, it looks like noisy play, but culturally it reflects important ethical relationships thrive



Ravi Singh & Delisha Gupta

COURAGE, CONVICTION, AND CREATION: THE KIRAN MAZUMDAR SHAW STORY

Kiran Mazumdar Shaw was always inclined towards studies and education. She pursued B.Sc in Zoology from Bangalore University. With a thirst to study further, she went to Australia for post-graduation. She studied at Ballarat University in Melbourne and got the qualification of a Master Brewer. In 1974, she got her first job and started working as a trainee brewer with Carlton and United Beverages. She worked there for four years post which her life took a new turn.

She was born on 23 March 1953 in Bangalore, Karnataka state, to Gujarati parents. She was educated at Bangalore's Bishop Cotton Girl's High School, graduating in 1968. She then attended Mount Carmel College, Bangalore, a women's college offering pre-university courses as an affiliate of Bangalore University. She studied biology and zoology, graduating from Bangalore University with a bachelor's degree in zoology in 1973. Mazumdar hoped to go to medical school, but was not able to obtain a scholarship.

In 1978, Mazumdar Shaw joined Biocon Biochemicals Limited, Ireland as a trainee manager. Soon after joining them, she started the Indian arm of the company in the same year. She rented a garage space in Bangalore and with an initial investment of Rs. 10,000 she commenced her entrepreneurial journey. Initially, she did face issues like banks would not trust her idea and loans were a problem since biotechnology was a new field and women entrepreneurs back then were rare. Some would even ask her father to be guarantor. She also faced issues in recruiting and convincing people to join her startup. Her first employee was a retired garage mechanic. Uninterrupted power, superior quality water, sterile labs, imported research equipment, and workers with advanced scientific skills were not easily available. She still did not give up and continued to work hard.

Her father, Rasendra Mazumdar, was the head brewmaster at United Breweries. He suggested that she study fermentation science, and train to be a brewmaster, a very non-traditional field for women. Mazumdar went to Ballarat College, Melbourne University in Australia to study malting and brewing. In 1974, she was the only woman enrolled in the brewing course and topped in her class. She earned the degree as master brewer in 1975. She worked as a trainee brewer in Carlton and United Breweries, Melbourne and as a trainee maltster at Barrett Brothers and Burston, Australia. She also worked for some time as a technical consultant at Jupiter Breweries Limited, Calcutta and as a technical manager at Standard Maltings Corporation, Baroda between 1975 and 1977. However, when she investigated the possibility of advancing her

career in Bangalore or Delhi, she was told that she could not be hired as a master brewer in India because "It's a man's work. She began to look abroad for opportunities and was offered a position in Scotland.

She has received many prestigious awards and honors throughout her career. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 1989 and the Padma Bhushan in 2005 by the Government of India for her contribution to biotechnology and industry. She also received the EY Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2002 for her leadership and business success. In recognition of her global impact, she was honored with the Othmer Gold Medal in 2014 for her contributions to science and chemistry. She has also received the Nikkei Asia Prize for Regional Growth and the Vanitha Woman of the Year Award. In addition, many reputed universities have awarded her honorary

doctorates to recognize her contribution to science, healthcare, and innovation.

From a small garage to building one of India's leading biotechnology companies, her journey reminds us that great things often start with simple beginnings. Her life is not just a success story, it is a story of hope, belief, and the power of never giving up.



KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW
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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.

A WhatsApp message arrives from what appears to be your bank: “Unusual activity detected. Verify immediately to avoid account freeze.” The logo looks authentic, the language is flawless, and the link opens a familiar-looking login page. Within seconds of entering details, access is lost and money vanishes. This is the new face of fraud. Not crude hacking, but AI-powered social engineering, where criminals use technology to imitate trusted institutions and manipulate human trust. In an economy where banking, payments, shopping, and identity are digital, personal cybersecurity has become a basic life skill. For students, professionals, and families alike, protecting data now means protecting money, reputation, and identity.

From Random Spam to Targeted AI Fraud

Earlier cyber scams relied on mass emails or poorly written messages that were easy to ignore. Today, AI allows fraudsters to analyse leaked or publicly available data and create highly personalised deception.

They can generate:

- Personalised phishing emails
- Realistic bank alerts

THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK: PROTECTING YOUR DATA IN THE AGE OF AI SCAMS

- Fake customer care chats
- Voice-cloned calls
- Social media impersonation

A working professional receives a call from “bank support” confirming recent transactions. The caller knows partial card details and address information obtained from past data leaks. Trust builds quickly. An OTP requested for “verification” enables fraud. Technology now amplifies deception at scale.

Your Digital Footprint Is the Entry Point

Every online activity leaves traces that collectively form your digital identity:

- Email accounts
- Phone numbers
- Social media posts
- Location check-ins
- Shopping and payment history
- Contacts and connections

Fraudsters often combine fragments from multiple platforms to create convincing identity profiles. A student's social media profile reveals college name, friends, and recent travel. Hackers clone the account and message contacts requesting urgent funds for an “emergency.” Friends trust the identity and transfer money. Public information becomes private vulnerability.

Why AI Makes Scams Harder to Detect

AI-generated messages now have perfect grammar, natural tone, and contextual relevance. Fraud attempts no longer look suspicious or poorly written.

AI also enables:

- Chatbots posing as service agents
- Fake websites identical to originals
- Automated phishing campaigns
- Deepfake voice impersonation

Detection today depends less on spotting errors and more on conscious verification.

Everyday Digital Habits That Enable Fraud

Many successful scams exploit routine behaviour rather than technical weaknesses:

- Clicking links without checking URLs
- Reusing passwords across sites
- Saving cards on multiple apps
- Sharing OTPs under pressure

- Downloading unknown applications
- Using public Wi-Fi for financial transactions

Convenience often overrides caution.

Students: High Exposure, Low Guard

Young users are highly active online academically, socially, and financially—but often underestimate cyber risk. Digital presence is broad, while awareness is limited.

Common student-targeted scams include:

- Fake internship or job offers
- Scholarship payment fraud
- Gaming account theft
- Payment app phishing
- Social media impersonation

Digital fluency must include digital security.

Professionals: Personal Lapses, Workplace Risks

Professionals handle sensitive data across devices emails, documents, banking apps, and corporate systems. A compromised personal device can expose organisational information. A professional downloads a malicious attachment disguised as an invoice. Malware captures stored passwords and login credentials, enabling access to work email and financial accounts. Personal cybersecurity now intersects with professional responsibility.

Essential Cyber Safety Practices

- Use strong, unique passwords for each account.
- Enable two-factor authentication.
- Never share OTPs or PINs.
- Verify links and sender identity.
- Avoid financial transactions on public Wi-Fi.
- Install apps only from official stores.
- Update devices and software regularly.
- Monitor bank and wallet transactions.

Most fraud succeeds due to behaviour gaps, not technical failure.

Recognising Fraud Triggers



Pause immediately if you encounter:

- Urgent threats or deadlines
 - Account suspension warnings
 - Unexpected refunds or prizes
 - Requests for OTP or credentials
 - Unknown login alerts
 - Payment requests outside official channels
- Urgency is a common manipulation tactic.

The AI Fraud Era Ahead

As AI advances, scams will become even more convincing:

- Deepfake video calls from known contacts
- Voice cloning of family or colleagues
- Automated personalised phishing
- Synthetic digital identities

Future cybersecurity will depend on awareness as much as technological protection.

The Reality of Digital Life

Banking, identity, communication, and commerce now exist largely online. Personal data has become a financial asset and a fraud target. Protecting it is as essential today as safeguarding cash once was. Cybersecurity is no longer a specialised technical concern; it is everyday literacy.

In the digital world, trust can be engineered and stolen. Because today, the most secure device is an alert mind, and the strongest protection is informed caution.

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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.

LITERARY CONCEPT: STRUCTURALISM

Structuralism is a literary theory that studies literature as part of a larger system of language and cultural signs. It was strongly influenced by the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure, who argued that meaning is not fixed but created through relationships between words within a structured system. According to structuralists, a text does not carry meaning on its own; instead, meaning emerges from patterns, structures, and differences within language.

In literary analysis, structuralism focuses on identifying underlying frameworks such as binary oppositions good versus evil, male versus female, and nature versus culture. These oppositions help organize narratives and shape interpretation. Thinkers like Claude Levi-Strauss also showed that myths and stories across cultures share similar narrative structures. Thus, structuralism emphasizes universal patterns in storytelling and views literature as governed by systematic rules rather than purely individual creativity.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Indian National Flag was designed by Pingali Venkayya. It was adopted on July 22, 1947, and the Ashoka Chakra in the center has 24 spokes representing law and progress.
- The Reserve Bank of India was established on April 1, 1935, under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It regulates the monetary policy of the country and issues Indian currency notes.
- The Taj Mahal was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. It is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a symbol of eternal love.
- The Nobel Prize was founded by Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite. The awards were first presented in 1901. Rabindranath Tagore became the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for his work Gitanjali.
- The first successful vaccine was developed by Edward Jenner in 1796 to prevent smallpox.
- India successfully launched its Mars Orbiter Mission, known as Mangalyaan, in 2013, becoming the first country to reach Mars orbit in its maiden attempt.
- The word "literature" comes from the Latin word littera, meaning "letter of the alphabet." Originally, it referred to all written works, but today it primarily denotes creative and artistic writing.

GRAMMAR TIP

8 Ways to Use the Preposition "For"

1. For (Purpose)
This gift is for you.
2. For (Duration of Time)
I waited for two hours.
3. For (Benefit)
She did it for her family.
4. For (Reason)
He was punished for cheating.
5. For (Exchange / Price)
I bought it for ₹500.
6. For (Direction / Destination)
This train leaves for Delhi.
7. For (Support / In Favor Of)
Are you for or against the idea?
8. For (Function / Use)
This knife is for cutting vegetable

WRITER OF THE WEEK

Mahasweta Devi (1926–2016)

Mahasweta Devi was a powerful Indian writer and social activist known for her deep engagement with marginalized communities, especially tribal populations in India. Her works combine literature with activism and highlight issues of injustice, resistance, and human dignity.

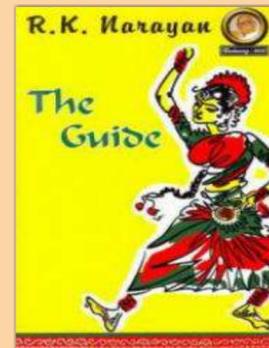
Her famous works include:

- Hajar Churashir Ma (Mother of 1084)
- Draupadi

She received prestigious awards such as the Jnanpith Award and the Ramon Magsaysay Award. Her writing stands as a voice for the voiceless and reminds us that literature can be a form of social responsibility.

BOOK REVIEW

The Guide by R. K. Narayan



R. K. Narayan's *The Guide* tells the story of Raju, a tourist guide who transforms into a spiritual figure. Set in the fictional town of Malgudi, the novel explores themes of identity, illusion, morality, and transformation. Narayan presents a subtle critique of blind faith while also portraying the complexity of human nature. The character of Raju is neither purely good nor entirely flawed; he reflects the contradictions within us all. The narrative style is simple yet profound, making it accessible and thought-provoking.

Why read it?

Because it beautifully blends humour, philosophy, and psychological depth, offering insight into the making and unmaking of a "saint."

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

—John Keats

CREATIVE WRITING

Bright Star

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art,
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task,
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask,
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors,
No yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever or else swoon to death.

Poetry by
John Keats

WORD OF THE WEEK

Ephemeral (adjective)

Meaning: Lasting for a very short time.

Example: The beauty of youth is ephemeral, but wisdom grows with age.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

Break the ice

Meaning: To initiate conversation in a social setting.

Example: The teacher told a funny story to break the ice on the first day of class.

Ravi Singh & Kailashkumar Gaunder

MARICO INNOVATION FOUNDATION'S PILOT TO CUT POST-HARVEST LOSSES IN VEGETABLE VALUE CHAINS

The Marico Innovation Foundation (MIF) has launched a ground-level pilot initiative in Varanasi and Mirzapur districts of Uttar Pradesh aimed at reducing post-harvest losses in vegetable value chains, addressing one of the biggest challenges for smallholder farmers in India's agriculture sector.



The pilot, which began in January 2026, targets more than 1,000 farmers across 20 villages in these key vegetable-producing belts. It focuses on understanding current post-harvest practices and pain points, raising awareness about modern technologies, and demonstrating solutions that can extend shelf life, enhance quality, and improve market access.

By integrating innovation with local realities, the pilot aims not just to reduce spoilage but also to boost income realisations for farmers and build a replicable model that can be adapted to other regions in India.

MIF has partnered with the Samunnati Foundation to implement the project, leveraging the partner's grassroots networks to mobilise farmers and coordinate field activities. The core strategy is to bring in scalable, affordable agritech solutions—such as solar-powered cold storage, smart warehousing, AI-based sorting and

grading tools, and low-energy cooling systems—that can meaningfully cut losses immediately after harvest, when vegetables are most vulnerable to spoilage.

AGRICULTURE MINISTER BACKS DIRECT TRANSFER OF FERTILISER SUBSIDY TO FARMERS

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has renewed his call for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of fertiliser subsidies directly into farmers' bank accounts, asserting that such a move is both feasible and beneficial for India's agricultural sector. Speaking at events including the Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela and related forums, Chouhan said the current system — in which the central government pays around ₹1.7 lakh crore annually in subsidies mainly to fertiliser companies — could be redesigned so that farmers receive funding directly. This, he argued, would empower cultivators with the freedom to select the type and quantity of fertiliser that best suits their needs.



misuse of subsidised inputs.

The minister also called for improved monitoring of funds disbursed for farm mechanisation and irrigation technologies such as drip and sprinkler systems, ensuring that financial support translates into real outcomes on the ground. He reiterated that strengthening delivery systems — not just releasing funds — is critical for effective reform.

Chouhan's push for DBT in fertiliser reflects wider discussions on subsidy reforms, aimed at enhancing transparency, empowering farmers and making agricultural input support more efficient and need-driven.

Under the present arrangement, subsidies are routed primarily to manufacturers and released after verified retail sales, even though the Point-of-Sale (PoS) system helps track actual purchases by farmers through Aadhaar or Kisan Credit Card authentication. Chouhan said moving to a DBT model would make farmers the "actual beneficiaries," strengthen accountability, and reduce diversion or

INDIA'S BLACK MATPE IMPORTS FROM BRAZIL SET TO RISE AMID TIGHT DOMESTIC SUPPLY

India's imports of black matpe (urad) from Brazil are expected to increase by around 25 per cent this year, according to trade estimates from the Indian Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA). This anticipated rise reflects shifting global supply patterns and India's growing dependence on foreign sources to bridge domestic shortfalls in pulses supply.

While India traditionally sourced much of its urad from neighbours like Myanmar, Brazil's role has expanded sharply in recent years. Between 2023 and late 2025, urad imports from Brazil rose from just a few thousand tonnes to tens of thousands, signalling a significant new trading relationship for this key kitchen staple. Brazil's crop calendar and seasonality complement India's needs, providing supply when local production dips, which has encouraged Indian traders to diversify procurement beyond traditional origins.

Market analysts note that rising imports come amid persistent gaps between demand and domestic production of black matpe, a high-protein pulse widely consumed across India. With strong consumption patterns

and fluctuating local output due to weather variability, Brazil's pulse shipments help stabilise prices and availability in Indian markets. The increasing share of Brazilian pulses also reflects broader trends in global agricultural trade, where producers in South America are expanding into new export destinations.

However, higher import volumes may have mixed implications: while they improve supply security and buffer shortfalls, they can also exert downward pressure on domestic prices if not matched with supportive policies for Indian growers. As the fiscal year progresses, stakeholders — from traders to policymakers — will be closely monitoring how this growth in Brazilian imports influences India's internal pulse market dynamics and stock levels.

INDIA'S PULSES IMPORTS EASE 45% IN 2025 AMID IMPROVED DOMESTIC SUPPLIES

In 2025, India witnessed a notable moderation in its import of pulses, with shipments easing to around 65.69 lakh tonnes, down from about 68.75 lakh tonnes in the previous year. This slight reduction reflects changing dynamics in the country's pulses trade and agricultural production landscape.

Pulses, which include staples like tur (pigeon pea), urad (black gram), gram (chickpeas), and lentils, are vital to Indian diets as a key source of protein. Despite this demand, India has traditionally depended on imports to bridge gaps between domestic supply and consumption. The large volumes imported in recent years were partly driven by fluctuating crop yields and policy decisions allowing duty-free entry for certain varieties to stabilise prices.

The slight decrease in total pulse imports suggests that domestic cultivation and stock levels may have improved, easing pressure on foreign purchases. Robust performances in major pulse-producing regions, supportive government schemes to



boost local output, and strategic import planning have collectively contributed to this trend. Policy focus has increasingly been on achieving greater self-reliance in pulse production to reduce import dependency and enhance food security.

However, even with the decline, India remains one of the world's largest importers of pulses, underscoring the continued need for strategies that strengthen domestic supply chains, enhance yields through technology adoption, and support farmers in expanding acreage for pulse crops.

WOMEN POWER IN THE FIELDS — CULTIVATING SUCCESS THROUGH COLLECTIVES



Across India's agricultural landscape, women farmers and agripreneurs are increasingly leading grassroots transformations, not just as labourers but as decision-makers and collective innovators. Recent discussions at agri-industry forums highlighted how women's involvement in producer collectives, self-help groups and cooperatives is strengthening rural enterprises and creating pathways for sustainable growth in farming communities.

Traditionally, women play a significant role in agriculture — often shouldering tasks from sowing and weeding to harvesting — yet their contributions have long remained undervalued or undercounted. Growing recognition of this role has led to a surge in women-led collectives that share knowledge, pool resources, and access credit and markets more effectively. These groups help members obtain better inputs, negotiate fairer prices and develop value-added products, shifting dynamics from individual subsistence to collective empowerment and income generation.

Empowerment through collectives also enhances women's leadership and visibility in agriculture. Their involvement in cooperatives and producer organisations expands decision-making power, improves access to finance, and boosts confidence to embrace innovations such as digital marketplaces and climate-resilient practices. This collective model aligns with broader trends showing women's substantial contribution to agricultural output and rural livelihoods, often exceeding male participation in several regions.

While barriers like limited land ownership and access to formal markets persist, the rise of women-driven collectives points to a reshaping of India's rural economy — where shared effort, mutual support and entrepreneurial spirit help women convert field work into meaningful economic gain and community leadership.

Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay

UP INVITES SINGAPORE'S GIIS TO SET UP GLOBAL -STANDARD SCHOOLS IN LUCKNOW



policy support, streamlined approvals, and an investment-friendly ecosystem to facilitate GIIS's entry and operations in the state.

Officials said the presence of reputed global schools would broaden academic choices for students, introduce international teaching practices, and strengthen cross-border educational linkages. GIIS, which runs schools across Asia and the Middle East, caters to both expatriate and local learners seeking globally benchmarked education pathways.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has invited Singapore-based Global Indian International Schools (GIIS) to establish campuses in Lucknow, signalling the state's intent to attract world-class educational institutions and elevate school education standards. The proposal aims to bring international curricula, modern pedagogy, and global exposure to students in the state capital.

During discussions with representatives of the Singapore education group and members of the Indian diaspora, the Chief Minister highlighted Uttar Pradesh's rapidly expanding education infrastructure and its aspiration to transform Lucknow into a major knowledge hub. He assured

ASSAM UNVEILS 'JIBON' SCHEMES TO PROVIDE CASH SUPPORT TO 1 LAKH STUDENTS

In a major push to strengthen student welfare and reduce financial barriers to education, the Assam government has launched three targeted assistance schemes—Jibon Prerana, Jibon Anuprerana, and Nijut Babu—to provide direct cash benefits to nearly one lakh learners across the state. The initiative aims to support meritorious and economically disadvantaged students, particularly those pursuing higher and professional education.



By easing financial stress, the schemes seek to encourage higher enrolment, improve completion rates, and enable students to focus on skill development and career readiness.

Under the schemes, eligible graduates, research scholars, and job-seeking youth will receive financial assistance to sustain their academic pursuits and career preparation. Officials said the support is designed to help students cover essential expenses such as examination fees, study materials, competitive exam preparation, and living costs during the transition from education to employment.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the programmes are part of a broader strategy to invest in human capital and empower Assam's youth with opportunities for upward mobility.

GOOGLE LAUNCHES AI PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE TO BUILD JOB-READY SKILLS



Google has introduced the Google AI Professional Certificate, a new career-focused programme designed to equip learners with practical artificial intelligence skills for the modern workplace. The self-paced certification moves beyond theory, offering hands-on training through more than 20 real-world exercises that help participants build a portfolio demonstrating their ability to apply AI tools across tasks such as research, planning, writing, data analysis, and app creation.

The curriculum emphasises expert prompting, responsible AI use, and workflow automation by chaining AI tasks into efficient processes. Learners gain direct experience with Google's advanced tools, including Gemini apps, NotebookLM, Gemini Canvas, and AI features integrated into Google Workspace—mirroring industry applications. The programme also includes three months of free access to Google AI Pro, unlocking enhanced model capabilities, productivity tools, and additional cloud storage.

Structured across six modules—AI fundamentals, brainstorming and planning, research and insights, communication, content creation, and data analysis—the course culminates in a capstone project where learners build a functional AI-powered app without coding. This “vibe coding” approach lowers technical barriers and expands participation in AI innovation.

Open to global learners and designed for flexible completion, the certificate reflects the growing demand for AI literacy across sectors. Google notes that AI-skilled professionals demonstrate higher productivity and career value, positioning the certification as a practical pathway to emerging tech roles and future-ready careers.

TELANGANA TO INTRODUCE AI EDUCATION FROM SCHOOL LEVEL

In a forward-looking move to prepare students for the digital future, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to introduce artificial intelligence (AI) education from the school level across the state. The initiative aims to embed emerging technology skills early in the learning journey and position Telangana as a leader in future-ready education.



exposure through labs, projects, and innovation activities.

During a high-level review of the education sector, the Chief Minister emphasised that AI literacy should become a foundational competency for students, alongside core subjects. He instructed the Education Department to design age-appropriate curricula, teacher training modules, and digital learning resources to support effective classroom integration of AI concepts.

The move aligns with Telangana's broader strategy to strengthen its knowledge economy and sustain its reputation as a major IT and innovation hub. By familiarising learners with AI from an early stage, the government aims to nurture problem-solving skills, creativity, and technological confidence among school students.

Officials said the programme will gradually introduce students to areas such as data awareness, computational thinking, automation, and ethical use of technology. The state also plans to leverage partnerships with technology institutions and industry experts to develop content and provide hands-on

MP UNIVERSITIES TO OFFER TEMPLE MANAGEMENT COURSES TO BOOST RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Madhya Pradesh is set to integrate temple management into higher education curricula, aiming to strengthen religious tourism and generate local employment. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced that universities across the state will introduce specialised courses covering religious tourism, financial and administrative governance of temples, and security management.

Samrat Vikramaditya University has already taken the lead by launching diploma and postgraduate programmes in temple management. These courses combine academic study with practical training under the guidance of scholars and heritage experts, preparing students for careers in pilgrimage administration and cultural asset management.

The initiative aligns with the state's broader strategy to expand spiritual tourism infrastructure. Madhya Pradesh is developing religious corridors at 13 major pilgrimage sites, modelled on Ujjain's Shri Mahakal Lok complex. Officials believe professionally managed temple ecosystems can

enhance visitor experience, improve revenue systems, and stimulate local economies through tourism-linked services.

The government has also decided to replace fibre statues in the Shri Mahakal Lok complex with stone and metal idols crafted locally in Ujjain, reviving traditional sculpture practices and creating artisan employment. The move reflects an effort to combine cultural preservation with economic development.

By formalising temple administration as an academic discipline, Madhya Pradesh aims to professionalise the management of sacred institutions while positioning religious tourism as a structured, skill-based sector—bridging heritage stewardship with modern governance and sustainable regional growth.

Durgesh K. Dubey

FROM CODE TO CHIPS: INDIA TAKES A BOLD LEAP INTO THE SEMICONDUCTOR ERA

India has marked a decisive moment in its technological journey with the launch of a major semiconductor assembly and packaging facility in Gujarat — a move that signals the country's transition from being a global software powerhouse to an emerging force in hardware manufacturing. The commencement of commercial production at this state-of-the-art unit reflects more than just industrial progress; it represents a strategic shift toward technological self-reliance and deeper integration into global supply chains.

For decades, India's strength in the technology domain was largely defined by its software expertise and IT services. However, the evolving demands of the digital economy — driven by artificial intelligence, advanced computing, and smart manufacturing — have made semiconductor capability a national priority. With the world increasingly dependent on microchips for everything from smartphones and automobiles to data centers and defence systems, India's entry into this space comes at a crucial time.

The newly operational facility, built with an investment exceeding ₹22,500 crore, is designed to process advanced memory components and transform them into finished semiconductor products for both domestic and international markets. Spread across nearly half a million square feet of cleanroom space — one of the largest of its kind globally — the plant brings cutting-edge manufacturing capability to India's industrial landscape.

This development carries significance far beyond the inauguration

of a single factory. It marks the beginning of India's tangible presence in the global semiconductor value chain — a domain traditionally dominated by a few technologically advanced economies. By initiating domestic production of memory modules, India is positioning itself as a reliable contributor to the global electronics ecosystem.

The importance of this milestone lies in its timing. In the past, the world's economic power structures revolved around access to oil. Today, influence is increasingly shaped by control over digital infrastructure — and microchips form the foundation of that architecture. From artificial intelligence systems to connected vehicles and healthcare technologies, semiconductors are the invisible engines driving modern innovation.

India's semiconductor push is also aligned with its broader ambition to build a comprehensive manufacturing ecosystem. This effort is not limited to one region but is part of a wider national initiative spanning multiple states. With several semiconductor projects already approved and more in the pipeline, a network of technology hubs is gradually taking shape across the country.

Importantly, the emergence of such facilities is expected to catalyse employment, skill development, and research opportunities for India's youth. A semiconductor ecosystem requires a complex interplay of design engineers, material suppliers, logistics networks, and specialized technicians. As production scales up, demand for these supporting industries will grow, creating ripple effects across sectors.

The project also underscores the increasing confidence of global investors in India's manufacturing potential. The rapid pace at which the facility moved from agreement to production demonstrates a shift in policy execution — one that emphasizes speed, transparency, and industrial readiness.

Equally noteworthy is the role of rising domestic demand. With millions of first-time users entering the digital economy each year, India's consumption of electronic devices continues to expand. Meeting this demand through local manufacturing not only strengthens economic resilience but also reduces dependence on external supply chains.

Beyond economics, the development reflects a broader strategic vision — one that views semiconductors as a bridge between traditional industrial growth and the future AI-driven economy. As emerging technologies redefine global competitiveness, the ability to produce advanced chips will be central to national progress.

In essence, this moment represents the beginning of a new chapter — one where India is no longer just writing code for the world but is also building the hardware that powers it. The shift from software leadership to semiconductor participation signals that the country is preparing to play a more influential role in shaping the technological landscape of the 21st century.

INDIA'S GROWTH STORY GAINS FRESH MOMENTUM WITH STRONG QUARTERLY SURGE



India's economic journey continues to display remarkable resilience, as the latest figures reveal that the country has recorded a stronger-than-anticipated growth rate of 7.8% during the October–December quarter. The performance not only surpassed earlier projections but also reinforced confidence in the economy's underlying strength at a time when global uncertainties continue to challenge growth prospects worldwide.

This expansion comes in the backdrop of an upgraded statistical framework designed to better capture the realities of a rapidly evolving economy. With improvements in data collection and analysis, the revised estimates now reflect a more accurate representation of India's economic activity. The shift in the base year and the inclusion of modern data sources such as digital tax records and vehicle registrations are expected

to enhance transparency and policy relevance.

The encouraging growth numbers also build upon the previous quarter's performance, which has now been revised upward under the new methodology. As a result, the outlook for the current financial year has also improved, with projections rising to 7.6%, indicating sustained momentum across key sectors.

One of the primary drivers of this performance has been strong domestic demand. Consumer spending, particularly during the festive season, contributed significantly to economic activity, with sectors such as automobiles and precious goods witnessing a noticeable uptick. Alongside this, investment activity also remained robust, pointing to continued confidence among businesses and industries.

The manufacturing sector, in particular, has emerged as a consistent pillar of support for economic expansion over recent years. Its steady contribution has helped offset moderation in some other segments such as agriculture and parts of the industrial sector. This balanced growth pattern highlights the increasing diversification of India's economic base.

At the same time, external challenges have tested the resilience of exporters. Certain trade restrictions and tariff-related developments in global markets created pressure on some traditional export sectors, including textiles, marine products, leather goods, and gems. However, Indian businesses have demonstrated adaptability by exploring alternative markets and diversifying trade partnerships — ensuring that the broader growth trajectory remains largely unaffected.

Another noteworthy aspect of the latest figures is the role of policy

support in sustaining momentum. Measures aimed at easing tax burdens and stimulating consumption appear to have contributed to a gradual rebound in demand over recent months. This renewed consumer confidence has played an important role in supporting overall economic activity.

The improved data framework also addresses earlier concerns raised by global observers regarding the accuracy of national accounts. By aligning statistical methods more closely with the structure of today's economy, the revised system is expected to strengthen credibility and enable more informed policymaking in the future.

Despite global headwinds such as currency pressures and shifting trade dynamics, India's growth performance continues to position it among the fastest-expanding major economies. While comparisons with other large economies remain fluid and dependent on exchange rates and global trends, the trajectory suggests that India is steadily moving closer to new economic milestones.

Looking ahead, maintaining this pace of expansion will be crucial for achieving long-term development aspirations. Analysts believe that sustaining growth in the range of 7–8% annually could play a decisive role in shaping the country's transformation in the coming decades.

In essence, the latest quarterly performance is more than just a statistical achievement — it reflects the adaptability, resilience, and growing maturity of an economy that continues to evolve amidst global change.

Dr. (Mrs) Chandra Hariharan Iyer

EXPERT



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Q. Employees prefer to gossip when they are not Prepared to Face Ethical Dilemmas, right?

Ans. Exactly. When employees feel unprepared to handle ethical dilemmas, gossip often becomes the default response. Silence or gossip arises from uncertainty, fear of consequences, lack of clarity about procedures, or absence of moral confidence. Instead of addressing the issue constructively, employees may discuss it informally with peers, speculate about the situation, or vent frustrations, which does not resolve the ethical problem and can actually erode trust, morale, and organizational integrity. In every organization, ethical dilemmas are inevitable. Employees routinely encounter situations where the right course of action is unclear, or the consequences of choices are uncertain. How staff respond to these situations reflects the ethical maturity and resilience of an organization. Unfortunately, when employees are unprepared to handle ethical challenges, the natural human inclination to discuss,

speculate, or gossip often fills the void. Gossip, while seemingly harmless, undermines trust, diverts attention from solutions, and erodes workplace morale. The wisdom of ancient India provides enduring insights into this phenomenon, offering guidance on preparedness, responsibility, and the cultivation of moral discernment.

The ancient seers emphasized that knowledge alone does not produce right action; awareness and training in ethical conduct are equally vital. The Subhashitam “वृथा बुद्धिर्विनाऽभ्यासं वृथा अभ्यासो विनाऽधिना; यो हि संयोजयेदेतदुभयं स विजानती” teaches that knowledge without practice and practice without understanding are both futile. Applied to workplaces, this implies that employees may know the rules and policies, but if they lack practical guidance on implementing ethical decisions, they are ill-prepared to act. Uncertainty leads to hesitation, and hesitation can manifest as gossip—rumors, speculation, or passive observation—rather than responsible intervention. Organizations, therefore, must ensure that staff understand not only what is right but also how to act when confronted with ethical dilemmas.

Preparedness begins with clear, communicated policies. Employees cannot be expected to respond appropriately if they do not know the standards or the steps to enforce them. The Subhāṣitam “धर्मेण हि मानवाः संज्ञन्ते, अन्यथा तु विनश्यन्ति” reminds us that social order and harmony are sustained only through adherence to dharma, or righteous action. In organizational terms, dharma translates into ethical codes, escalation protocols, and well-defined procedures. Without clarity, employees default to informal communication channels, often resulting in gossip, speculation, or misjudged interventions. By contrast, structured guidance empowers staff to act responsibly, addressing misconduct without fear or confusion.

Education and awareness programs form the next layer of preparation. Ancient Indian traditions placed immense value on experiential learning alongside theoretical knowledge. The Subhāṣitam “स्वभावो नोपदेशेन शक्यते कर्तुमन्यथा; सुतप्तमपि पानीयं पुनर्गच्छति शीतताम्” highlights that nature and habitual tendencies cannot be changed merely by instruction. In organizational practice, this means that ethics cannot be instilled through policies alone; employees must be guided through workshops, role-playing, and real-life scenarios to internalize ethical reasoning. Exposure to ethical challenges in a controlled environment helps staff cultivate judgment, patience, and courage, reducing reliance on gossip as a coping mechanism.

Gossip thrives where accountability is weak. When employees feel that raising concerns will be

ignored or punished, they often resort to informal discussion rather than responsible reporting. The Subhāṣitam “अन्येभ्यः परं कर्तव्यम्, स्वार्थं परित्यजेत् शीलवान्” emphasizes prioritizing duty over personal convenience. In a modern workplace, this translates to encouraging employees to take ownership of ethical responsibilities, knowing that their actions will be supported by management. Organizations that cultivate trust, transparency, and procedural safeguards reduce the temptation to gossip and increase the likelihood that staff will act decisively.

Psychological factors also play a critical role. Fear of retaliation, peer pressure, or damaging relationships can inhibit action. The Subhāṣitam “क्षमा बलं अशक्तानां, शक्तानां भूषणं मतम्” underscores that true strength lies in patience, forgiveness, and moral courage. For employees, moral courage is the ability to confront wrongdoing constructively, escalating issues through the appropriate channels while maintaining composure and respect. Gossip, in contrast, reflects avoidance and passive engagement, consuming mental energy without resolving the ethical challenge. By cultivating courage and resilience, organizations equip staff to navigate dilemmas proactively rather than reactively.

The role of leadership in preparing staff cannot be overstated. Leaders set the tone for ethical behavior through example, reinforcement, and accountability. The Subhāṣitam “शीलवान् पुरुषः सर्वत्र विजयी भवति, आसक्तिमुक्तः सदा सुखी” teaches that virtue combined with wisdom ensures success and well-being. In organizational practice, leaders who openly address ethical concerns, provide clear escalation procedures, and acknowledge employees who act responsibly create a culture where staff feel empowered to engage with dilemmas directly. This reduces gossip, promotes transparency, and strengthens collective ethical vigilance.

Ancient Indian thought also emphasized that ethical conduct is intertwined with social harmony. The Subhāṣitam “कृतज्ञता एव साधूनां भूषणं हि परं स्मृतम्; अकृतज्ञः पुरुषः पापी लोकद्विष एव च” teaches that gratitude, acknowledgment, and adherence to virtue maintain societal balance, whereas negligence and ingratitude invite disharmony. Applied to workplaces, employees who act ethically preserve relational trust, collaboration, and a harmonious organizational environment. Gossip, by contrast, undermines these bonds, creating friction, distraction, and inefficiency. Staff preparedness, therefore, is not merely a matter of individual integrity but of sustaining the ethical and functional equilibrium of the entire organization.

Practical mechanisms further reinforce preparedness. Clear reporting channels, whistleblower protections, and stepwise procedures help employees navigate ethical dilemmas systematically. The Subhāṣitam “फलमूलाश्रिता नित्यं नापि मूलफला वनाः; संगमूलाश्रिता नित्यं नापि मोक्षफला नराः” highlights that attachment to outcomes without following proper principles leads to failure. Employees must focus on following established ethical processes rather than anticipating rewards or fearing consequences. When staff understand that ethical action is procedural, principled, and supported, gossip diminishes as they are equipped to act responsibly.

Finally, cultivating a culture of reflection, discussion, and learning enhances preparedness. Ancient Indian pedagogy emphasized self-inquiry and dialogue. The Subhāṣitam “मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः; बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयम् स्मृतम्” teaches that the mind governs both bondage and liberation. In organizational terms, employees trained to reflect on ethical scenarios, discuss challenges openly, and deliberate responsibly are more likely to choose principled action over rumor-mongering. Reflection transforms uncertainty and fear into awareness and action. Gossip, by contrast, is reactive and unconstructive, offering temporary emotional release but no solution.

In conclusion, employees unprepared to handle ethical dilemmas often resort to gossip, which undermines trust, productivity, and organizational integrity. Ancient Indian wisdom, expressed through Subhāṣitams such as “वृथा बुद्धिर्विनाऽभ्यासं वृथा अभ्यासो विनाऽधिना,” “अन्येभ्यः परं कर्तव्यम्, स्वार्थं परित्यजेत् शीलवान्,” and “कृतज्ञता एव साधूनां भूषणं हि परं स्मृतम्,” emphasizes that knowledge, duty, and virtue must be combined with practical application to achieve lasting ethical conduct. Organizations can prepare staff through clear policies, structured training, leadership support, and mechanisms for safe reporting. Prepared employees act decisively, uphold ethical standards, and strengthen organizational harmony, while gossip, left unchecked, erodes trust and productivity. Ultimately, the question is not whether staff can avoid gossip entirely, but whether they are equipped with the awareness, courage, and guidance to prioritize principled action whenever ethical dilemmas arise. A workforce prepared in this way is not only more ethical but also more resilient, cohesive, and successful.

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Ravi Singh

THE CULTURE OF APPLAUSE AND THE SILENCE OF POTENTIAL

Every organization has a visible structure and an invisible culture. The structure shows hierarchy designations, cabins, authority lines. The culture reveals something deeper: who is heard, who is ignored, and who is celebrated regardless of performance. In many offices, a troubling pattern quietly unfolds. Highly qualified juniors, equipped with updated knowledge and fresh perspectives, are given limited importance, while top management is elevated to unquestionable superiority.

On paper, meritocracy is the ideal. In reality, hierarchy often dominates competence. A young professional may hold advanced degrees, possess technical expertise, and bring innovative solutions to long-standing challenges. Yet, when such individuals speak, their suggestions are sometimes brushed aside not because they lack merit, but because they lack title.

This imbalance does not always stem from incompetence at the top. Often, it arises from insecurity, tradition, or a deeply rooted culture of unquestioned authority. In some organizations, leadership is associated with status rather than adaptability. Juniors who think critically are perceived as “too ambitious.” Those who ask difficult questions are labeled “immature.” Over time, the message becomes clear: conformity is safer than creativity.

Compounding the problem is the behaviour of colleagues who reinforce this hierarchy. Some employees, intentionally or subconsciously, amplify the authority of top management. Meetings transform into stages for agreement rather than platforms for dialogue. Even flawed decisions are defended. Honest feedback fades. A culture of

silent compliance begins to grow.

The consequences are subtle but significant. When talent is ignored, motivation declines. When ideas are dismissed without evaluation, innovation slows. The brightest employees either reduce their involvement or seek opportunities elsewhere. Organizations then face an invisible drain of potential one that cannot be easily measured in quarterly reports.

Ironically, strong leadership thrives on intelligent subordinates. A confident leader recognizes that a capable junior is not a threat but an asset. Organizations that progress sustainably are those where knowledge flows upward as well as downward. Leadership is strengthened when it listens.

True authority is not established by dominance but by openness. When juniors feel valued, they contribute beyond expectation. When they feel unheard, they withdraw. The cost of undervaluing young talent is not immediate chaos; it is gradual stagnation.

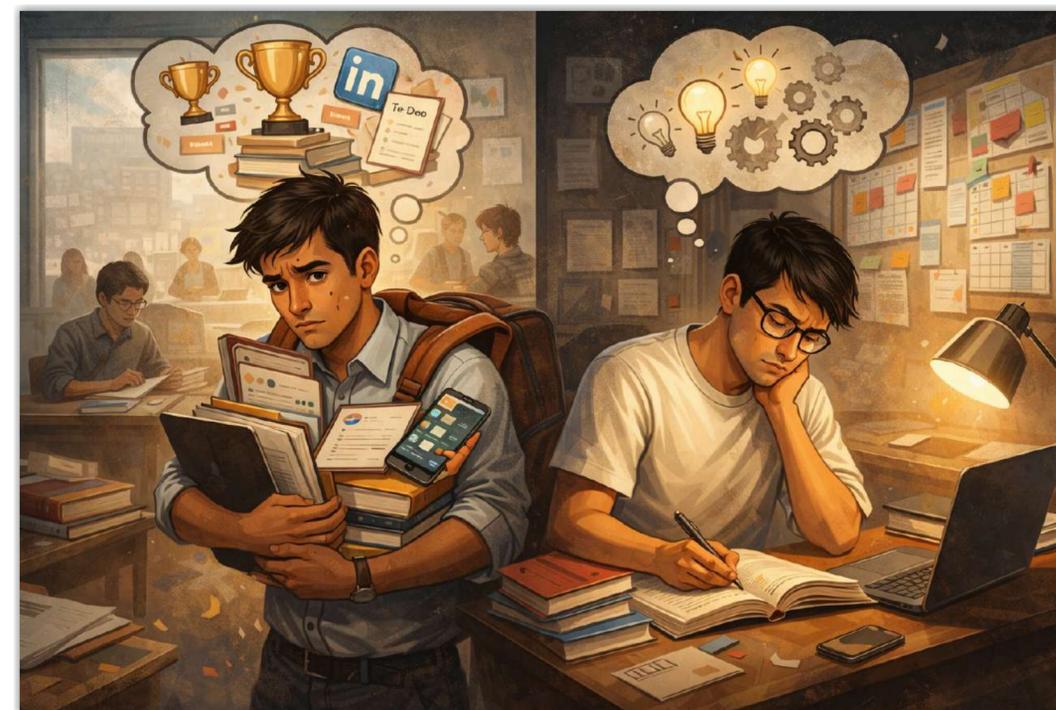


A healthy workplace culture encourages dialogue across levels. Respect should be mutual, not hierarchical. Seniority brings experience; youth brings innovation. Both are essential. The most successful institutions are those that integrate wisdom with fresh thinking, rather than allowing one to overshadow the other.

Ultimately, the applause around leadership should not drown out the voices of those who are building the future of the organization. Titles may command attention, but competence commands progress. An organization that learns to balance both will not only retain its brightest minds it will truly evolve.

Because in the end, the strength of leadership is reflected not in how loudly it is praised, but in how confidently others are allowed to rise.

BUSY OR PRODUCTIVE? THE ILLUSION OF ACADEMIC HUSTLE



Walk through any college campus today and you will meet students who seem constantly occupied. They rush from lectures to internships, from committee meetings to competitive exam coaching, from online certification courses to networking events. Their calendars are full, their resumes expanding, and their social media profiles carefully curated. From the outside, it looks like ambition in motion. But beneath this academic hustle lies an uncomfortable question: are students truly productive, or merely busy?

Modern education has quietly transformed into a performance arena. Students feel the need to demonstrate involvement in everything academic excellence, extracurricular leadership, social engagement, skill development, and professional networking. Being “free” is often interpreted as being unproductive. Rest is mistaken for laziness. Reflection is replaced by constant activity.

The illusion begins when activity is confused with achievement. Attending five workshops does not guarantee learning. Joining multiple committees does not automatically build leadership. Completing numerous online courses does not ensure understanding. Yet the pressure to accumulate experiences often overrides the need to absorb them.

Comparison intensifies this cycle. Social media platforms showcase peers announcing internships, awards, certifications, and achievements almost daily. A student scrolling through such updates may feel inadequate, even if they are progressing steadily in their own journey. The fear of falling behind pushes them to take on more commitments, often without clarity of purpose.

Ironically, this overload reduces genuine productivity. When students multitask excessively, their focus becomes fragmented. Assignments are completed mechanically. Concepts are memorized but not understood. Creativity declines because the mind rarely gets space to think deeply. Instead of mastery, students develop surface-level familiarity with many things.

Burnout becomes an unspoken companion. Exhaustion is normalized. Sleep is sacrificed. Mental health struggles are hidden behind phrases like “I’m just busy.” Over time, enthusiasm fades and learning feels transactional rather than transformative.

True productivity, however, looks different. It is intentional, not chaotic. It involves choosing fewer commitments but engaging with them fully. It means studying to understand rather than to simply pass. It prioritizes reflection alongside action. Productive students are not necessarily the busiest ones they are the most focused.

Depth creates value. When a student spends dedicated time mastering a subject, building one meaningful project, or developing one core skill, the outcome is stronger and more sustainable. Growth is not measured by how packed a schedule appears but by how much clarity and competence it builds.

Institutions and educators also play a role in reshaping this narrative. Encouraging quality over quantity, recognizing thoughtful engagement rather than mere participation, and promoting well-being alongside achievement can help students redefine success.

In the long run, resumes filled with activities may open doors, but competence keeps them open. The goal of education is not to create exhausted multitaskers but capable thinkers. Students must ask themselves: am I moving with direction, or simply moving?

Because being busy may impress others for a moment, but being productive shapes a lifetime.

Afreen Mazgaonkar & Mosina

INDIA, NEPAL SIGN HISTORIC MOU ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION



India and Nepal have signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on biodiversity conservation, which demonstrates their strong ties through shared cultural and religious and environmental connections. The agreement was signed in New Delhi when officials from both governments completed the signing process which included Nepal's Forests and Environment Minister Madhav Prasad Chaulagain and India Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav as witnesses to the event. The MoU establishes a framework for both parties to work together on protecting their shared natural habitats which include their cross-border animal and plant populations. The agreement will establish a framework for both parties to work

together on conservation programs while sharing knowledge and managing protected areas and dealing with climate-related environmental problems. The two sides of the agreement require technical experts to collaborate with field practitioners who will use two-sided sustainable development methods to protect biodiversity. Nepal needs to balance its conservation objectives with the requirements of the renewable energy development and environmentally friendly infrastructure projects which it implements under this agreement. The MoU represents a partnership between both countries to achieve sustainable environmental protection through their shared commitment to maintain ecological balance and protect natural resources.

RANVEER SINGH'S DHURANDHAR: THE REVENGE TO BE NEARLY 4 HOURS LONG; TRAILER SET FOR HOLI RELEASE

The upcoming film Dhurandhar The Revenge will feature Ranveer Singh in a lead role according to reports which indicate the movie will run for almost four hours. The movie's creators intend to establish a final runtime which will exceed three hours and forty minutes thus making it one of the most extended Hindi films to release in recent times. The extended length signals an expansive narrative, packed with high-octane action, dramatic turns, and deeper character arcs. The team will release their trailer during Holi because they want to create excitement for their upcoming film which will benefit from increased holiday celebration activities that will attract more viewers. The trailer will reveal the movie's vast production scale which includes detailed set developments and presents a darker mood that is stronger than the first film. Early discussions about Ranveer's role show that fans want to know how his character will develop throughout the story. The film positions itself as the major cinematic release through its extended runtime and holiday promotional campaign.



INDIA FIRES UP FUTURE: ISRO-IN-SPACE NAIL HISTORIC SEMI-CRYOGENIC ENGINE TEST

India just hit another huge milestone in space tech. For the first time, ISRO teamed up with IN-SPACE to successfully test a "semi-cryogenic engine" cluster right here in the country. This isn't just a win for the government but it's a big green light for private space firms, showing India's space scene is exploding with growth. These semi-cryogenic engines run on liquid oxygen (LOX) and refined kerosene, making them more efficient and powerful than old-school cryogenic ones. The cluster test meant firing multiple engines at once to check their performance, stability, and teamwork which is crucial for beefing up future heavy-lift rockets. The real standout is that private players jumped in too, and the credits goes to IN-SPACE pushing for it. Their whole goal is to hook startups up with ISRO's facilities and know-how, speeding up innovation and cutting costs. Experts believe that this technology will significantly improve India's launch vehicles which will provide India with a competitive advantage in international commercial satellite launch operations. The system directly supports the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative by reducing our need for imported engines. The space test represents a major breakthrough for India's space program because it establishes new possibilities for upcoming exploration projects.



PRESIDENT DROUPADI MURMU LAUNCHES 'BREAK THE SILENCE' MENTAL HEALTH DRIVE



President Droupadi Murmu just launched a major mental health drive in India called "Break the Silence." The big goal is to get people talking openly about mental health and chip away at the stigma holding everyone back. These days, stuff like stress, anxiety, and depression is spiking everywhere, but folks still clam up about it. This campaign is all about smashing that quiet. In her speech, President Murmu nailed it and mentioned that mental health isn't just a brain thing, it hits your body hard too. If your mind's out of whack, your whole body feels drained. That's why we gotta treat mental and physical health with the same respect. The initiative's zeroing in on schools, colleges, and offices, rolling out counseling sessions and awareness drives. Young people are dealing with insane pressure and competition these days, so catching it early with support could prevent bigger issues down the road. The core message is simple: seeking help isn't weakness but it's smartness. If one is struggling, chat with a doctor or counselor. It's time to shift gears and see mental health issues as just another normal health concern. All in all, this is a solid step forward that'll encourage people to open up, share their feelings, and grab help when they need it.

AIRTEL AND GOOGLE TEAM UP TO MAKE RCS MESSAGING SAFER IN INDIA



Bharti Airtel has partnered with Google to create an artificial intelligence system that provides users in India with more secure Rich Communications Services (RCS) messaging. The partnership works to eliminate the three main threats which exist in traditional SMS and business messaging systems. The Airtel network intelligence system combines with its spam detection system to work with Google messaging platform for detecting dangerous senders during phone calls. The service will verify business identities, block malicious links, and throttle repeat offenders, while respecting Do Not Disturb preferences. Users can access RCS features which include high-quality images and videos and interactive buttons while maintaining their security. The rollout process will establish enhanced trust for business messaging which allows banks, retailers, and service providers to conduct secure customer communication. The Airtel implementation delivers nationwide telecom-grade security measures to all modern messaging systems.

US ROLLS OUT 10% BLANKET IMPORT TARIFF, GLOBAL MARKETS ON EDGE

US Customs has implemented a new 10% global tariff which operates at a lower rate than Donald Trump proposed 15% tariff. United States customs authorities have begun implementing a new 10% global tariff on a wide range of imported goods which sets the rate below the 15% levy earlier floated by Donald Trump. The move follows legal and policy reviews after previous trade measures faced challenges in court, including scrutiny tied to limits on executive authority. The updated tariff applies to all products except for particular items and shipments that fall under designated trade agreements. The officials created the lower rate because they intended to protect domestic industries while controlling inflation and handling supply-chain disruptions. The first group of businesses which will experience tariff effects includes exporters who will reevaluate their pricing and logistics for the US market while importing electronics and machinery and consumer goods. Trade groups warn the tariff could raise costs for consumers if companies pass on higher import expenses. Policy watchers say future adjustments remain possible, depending on economic conditions and political negotiations in Washington.



Afreen Mazgaonkar & Mosina

SAMSON MASTERCLASS PROPELS INDIA INTO T20 WORLD CUP SEMI-FINALS



Sanju Samson delivered an innings for the ages at Eden Gardens on Sunday, smashing an unbeaten 97 off 50 balls to guide India to a thrilling five-wicket victory over the West Indies. The win secures India's spot in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 semi-finals, effectively knocking the Windies out of the tournament. Chasing a formidable 196, India stuttered early at 41/2. However, Samson took control, striking 12 fours and 4 sixes in a historic chase—the highest successful pursuit ever recorded at this venue in T20Is. He was supported by brief but vital cameos from Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma (27). Earlier, the West Indies posted 195/4, fueled by an explosive 76-run unbeaten stand between Jason Holder (37*) and Rovman

Powell (34*). Jasprit Bumrah remained India's defensive spearhead, returning figures of 2/36. India now advances to face England in the second semi-final at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium this Thursday, March 5.

INDIAN RAILWAYS WIN 72ND SENIOR MEN'S NATIONAL KABADDI CHAMPIONSHIP



The Indian Railways kabaddi team achieved victory at the 72nd Senior Men's National Kabaddi Championship through their strong competition results which they demonstrated throughout the championship. The championship displayed top kabaddi talent from across the country which Indian Railways used to defeat their opponents through their tactical approach and physical strength and regular scoring. Indian Railways encountered tough competition during the final match but they remained calm while executing their attacking and defensive strategies with exactness. The team obtained victory through their key players who combined agility with game intelligence to transform difficult situations into success. The team achieved victory in the national championship through their ability to control the match by executing effective strategies on both sides of the playing area. The victory adds another national championship to Indian Railways' proud legacy in the sport of kabaddi. The tournament displays the complete talent of domestic kabaddi because it demonstrates the increasing popularity and competitiveness of senior-level kabaddi. The players and coaches saw their victory as evidence that they had dedicated themselves to their work throughout the entire season while preparing for the team.

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PRIDE OF LUDHIANA: PARA TABLE TENNIS CHAMPION WINS INTERNATIONAL GOLD



A para table tennis champ from Ludhiana just lit up the city and the whole country by snagging gold at an international championship. This isn't just some medal but it's the payoff from his blood, sweat, tears, and sheer grit. Competing at that level as a para athlete ain't easy, but she smashed every obstacle to prove willpower can conquer anything. During the event, she was on another level in every match with laser focus, lightning speed, killer technique. The final was a nail-biter with a tough opponent pushing hard, but our Ludhiana star stayed cool as ice, outsmarting every point. His daily grind and rock-solid confidence carried him straight to gold. This win's bigger than his; it's a massive inspo for para sports everywhere. Moments like these wake people up: differently-abled athletes are every bit as fierce. She showed that physical limits can't block ones' dreams. Family, coach, and fans are over the moon, saying this is just the start. Expect more medals in big tournaments ahead. Bottom line, this Ludhiana hero waved the tricolor high on the world stage. His story's pure motivation for every young athlete: never quit, keep fighting for your goals.

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MANAS DHAMNE SHINES BUT QUARTERFINAL RUN ENDS AT MAHA OPEN ATP CHALLENGER 75



Manas Dhamne played an outstanding match at the Maha Open ATP Challenger 75 Men's Tennis Championship which took place in Pune because he displayed both his powerful baseline hits and his determination to win against all opponents. The 18-year-old Indian entered the event as a wildcard and advanced confidently into the singles quarterfinals with solid wins which demonstrated his increasing skill level at professional competitions. Dhamne won the first set 6-3 against Croatia's Duje Ajdukovic during a thrilling quarterfinal battle but he lost the second set after he had two match points. The match ended with him losing after Ajdukovic took the second set through a tiebreak win and then he completed the match with 3-6 7-6 6-4 victory after more than two hours of intense tennis. Dhamne who showed his fighting spirit throughout the match demonstrated his upcoming success potential which ATP events should watch. The tournament continued with Felix Gill from Britain and Federico Cina from Italy advancing to the singles final which demonstrated the intense competition present at the Maha Open.

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INDIA EDGE OUT AUSTRALIA IN THRILLING SHOOT-OUT TO SEAL FIRST FIH PRO LEAGUE 2025-26 WIN



India achieved their first win in the FIH Pro League 2025-26 by edging out Australia in a heart-pounding shoot-out. The game was very brutal from the whistle—both squads put up ironclad defenses for the first three quarters, locked at 0-0. Goalkeepers were on fire, shutting down every shot to force extra time. Australia's always been a beast in hockey, so this was no small feat for India. Our players kept their cool, bossed the midfield, and waited for counter chances. The last quarter cranked up the drama, but no breakthroughs and straight to shoot-out it went. India owned it there, converting shots with gutsy precision while the keeper snatched key saves for the win. It's more than points; this pumps up the team's spirit and screams progress for Indian hockey against top dogs like the Aussies. The boost will fire them up for what's ahead. The fans were buzzing and loved how they stayed ice-cool under pressure to pull it off. What an epic, game-changing moment it was!

MUMBAI PRODIGY AARAV DENGLE BECOMES INDIA'S 93RD CHESS GRANDMASTER



The 17-year-old prodigy from Mumbai, Aarav Dengle, has achieved his status as India's 93rd chess Grandmaster, which creates a significant achievement in his rapidly developing career. The prestigious GM title was awarded to Dengle after he achieved his final norm and reached the 2500 Elo rating requirement through his participation in European international tournaments. His stable performances against experienced players demonstrated his developed skills which enabled him to progress through international competitions. The teenager has achieved his elite title through a pattern of successful performances which he maintained throughout several seasons by achieving exceptional results at norm events and showing distinct progress in classical chess. His coaches attribute his success to three main factors, which include his organized study methods, his advanced endgame skills, and his ability to remain composed during critical situations. The emergence of Dengle as a third Grandmaster from Mumbai demonstrates how the city is expanding its influence within Indian chess. His achievement adds to the legacy popularised by Viswanathan Anand and signals the continued depth of young talent in the country.

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Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay & Ajab Tinwala

FEDERAL BANK ASSOCIATE OFFICER (SALES) RECRUITMENT



Federal Bank has announced the Associate Officer (Sales) Recruitment 2026. This is a good opportunity for graduates who want to build a career in the banking and financial services sector with one of India's leading private banks.

Organization: Federal Bank

- Post Offered: Associate Officer (Sales)
- Total Vacancies: Multiple Posts
- Job Location: Various States / Union Territories (Domicile Based)

Eligibility Criteria

- Age Limit: General Category: Maximum 27 Years
- SC / ST: Maximum 32 Years
- (Age relaxation applicable as per bank rules.)
- Educational Qualification: Graduation from a recognized university with minimum 50% aggregate marks

Selection Process:

- Candidates will be selected through the following stages:
- Group Discussion (Virtual / MS Teams)
- Aptitude Test
- Personal Interview
- Document Verification

Important Dates:

- Online Registration Start Date: 20 February 2026
- Last Date to Apply Online: 04 March 2026 (23:59 Hours)
- GD / Test / Interview Date: To be notified later

Application Fee:

- General / Other Categories: ₹500
- SC / ST Candidates: ₹125
- Mode of Payment: Debit Card / Credit Card / UPI / Internet Banking

How to Apply:

- Candidates must apply online only through the official Federal Bank Careers portal.
- Visit the Federal Bank Careers page at www.federalbank.co.in and open the Associate Officer (Sales) Recruitment link.
- Register using a valid email ID and mobile number.
- Fill the online application form with personal, educational, and domicile details.
- Upload the required documents and pay the application fee online (if applicable).
- Submit the application form and take a printout for future reference

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

NATIONAL FORENSIC SCIENCES UNIVERSITY ASSISTANT & OFFICER RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 51 POSTS



National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) has announced the Assistant & Officer Recruitment 2026 for various administrative posts. This is a good opportunity for graduates seeking a government career in a prestigious national university specializing in forensic sciences.

Organization: National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)

- Post Offered:

Degree from a recognized university

Selection Process:

- Candidates will be selected through:
- Screening Test / Written Test
- Skill Test (wherever applicable)
- Document Verification

Important Dates:

- Online Application Start Date: 23 February 2026 (12:00 PM)

- Section Officer
- Deputy Section Officer
- Assistant
- Total Vacancies: 51 Posts
- Job Location: Gujarat (Gandhinagar & Other Campuses)

Eligibility Criteria

- Age Limit: 21 – 40 Years (Post-wise)
- (Age relaxation applicable as per Government of India rules.)
- Educational Qualification: Bachelor's

- Last Date to Apply Online: 23 March 2026 (11:59 PM)
- Written / Skill Test Date: To be notified later

Application Fee:

- General / EWS / OBC: ₹500 + GST & Transaction Charges
- SC / ST / PwBD / Women: Nil (Fee Exempted)
- Mode of Payment: Online

How to Apply:

- Candidates must apply online through the Samarth Portal.
- Visit the Samarth Portal: <https://nfsunt.samarth.edu.in> and register using a valid email ID and mobile number.
- Login and select the desired post, then fill the online application form carefully.
- Upload scanned photograph, signature, and required documents in the prescribed format.
- Pay the application fee online (if applicable) and submit the application.
- Take a printout of the final submitted application form for future reference.

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

MP APEX BANK RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 1,729 COMPUTER OPERATOR & SOCIETY MANAGER POSTS

M.P. Rajya Sahakari Bank Maryadit (Apex Bank), Bhopal, along with 38 District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) of Madhya Pradesh, invites online applications from eligible graduates for Computer Operator and Society Manager posts. This large-scale cooperative banking recruitment offers stable careers across MP districts. Online applications are open from 06 January 2026 to 07 March 2026.

Vacancy Details

- Total Posts: 1,729
- Computer Operator: 748
- Computer Operator (Sambida): 176
- Society Manager: 805
- Job Location: Various districts of Madhya Pradesh

Salary

- As per DCCB norms (Level-4: ₹19,500–62,000 in most districts; Level-7 in select districts)
- Competitive cooperative bank pay & allowances

Eligibility

- Age: 18–35 yrs (Computer Operator & Society Manager)
- 18–55 yrs (Computer Operator-Sambida)
- Relaxation: 5 yrs (SC/ST/OBC/PwBD/Female etc.)
- Qualification: Graduation + 1-year Computer Diploma (DOEACC/COPA/Polytechnic) or IT degree (BCA/B.Tech/MCA etc.)
- Skills: Hindi & English typing knowledge

Selection Process

- Online Objective Examination (200 marks)
- Document Verification
- Exam Pattern (120 min)
- Computer Knowledge – 40 Q
- Reasoning – 40 Q
- English – 40 Q
- General Awareness – 40 Q
- Quantitative Aptitude – 40 Q

Application Fee

- SC/ST/PwBD: ₹650 + GST
- Others: ₹850 + GST



Important Dates

- Apply Online: 06 Jan – 07 Mar 2026
- Fee Payment: till 07 Mar 2026
- Print Form: till 22 Mar 2026
- Exam: To be announced

How to Apply

- Apply through IBPS portal → MP Apex Bank Recruitment 2026 → Register → Fill form → Upload documents → Pay fee → Submit.

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

Deepika Singh

QUIZ TIME

1. Which Indian institute (IISc) developed a new "electronic skin" to track muscle tremors in elite athletes?
2. Structured transitional training was found to specifically reduce what body composition metric in young Indian soccer players?
3. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) launched a new digital platform to track what recovery metric at all National Centers of Excellence?
4. Mumbai-based research found that collagen supplements showed no improvement in what area for elite cricketers?
5. A recent Indian sports medicine review suggests exercise therapy provides only short-term relief for what joint condition?
6. What physical sensation was highlighted by Indian researchers as an unreliable indicator of dehydration in humid climates?
7. A recent systematic review analyzed the effectiveness of what "resisted" training method for Indian kabaddi players?
8. Indian wearable startups are focusing on extending what hardware feature to support ultra-marathoners in remote terrains?

RIDDLES

1. I am round, orange, and soaked in syrup; who is the "King"?
2. I am a white, spongy chhena ball from West Bengal.
3. I am a layered, crispy ribbon dessert from South India.
4. I am a diamond-shaped cashew fudge with silver leaf.
5. I am a rich, golden chickpea flour fudge from Karnataka.
6. I am a frozen, creamy dessert served on a stick.
7. I am a small, round sweet often given as a temple offering.
8. I am a soft, brown khoya ball soaked in rose-scented syrup.
9. I am a deep-fried, flower-shaped swirl dipped in sugar.

9.	Imarti
8.	Gulab-Jamun
7.	Ladoo
6.	Kulfi
5.	Mysore-Pak
4.	Kaju-Katli
3.	Khaja
2.	Rasgulla
1.	Jalebi
(II) RIDDLES	
8.	Battery
7.	Sled
6.	Thirst
5.	Osteoarthritis
4.	Performance
3.	Heart Rate Variability
2.	Fat
1.	Indian Institute of Science
(I) QUIZ TIME	
ANSWERS	



THE ULTIMATE SMOKY PANEER WITH THECHA

This Week, We're Relishing Smoky Paneer Thecha – Rustic, Fiery, and Boldly Traditional!

Freshly curdled paneer is a delight, but adding a Dhungar (charcoal smoking) step elevates it to a restaurant-style delicacy. By smoking the milk before the paneer forms, the flavor is trapped within the curds, creating a deep, tandoori-style base for this fiery appetizer.

Ingredients:

- 1.5 Litres full-cream milk, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, 1 teaspoon crushed coriander seeds, 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon chilli flakes, 3 tablespoons chilli peanut thecha (coarse spicy peanut chutney), 1 tablespoon butter or oil, 1 small piece of charcoal, 1 teaspoon ghee.

Preparation

1. Infuse Smoke: Place milk in a vessel. Float a small bowl with red-hot coal inside, add ghee and cumin to the coal, and cover for 4–5 minutes.

2. Boil & Spice: Remove the coal. Bring the milk to a boil and stir in crushed coriander, cumin, and chilli flakes.

3. Curdle: Add lemon juice gradually until the paneer separates from the whey.

4. Set: Strain through a cloth, squeeze out excess water, and press under a heavy weight for 45 minutes to set.

5. Coat & Roast: Cut into cubes, coat thoroughly with the chilli peanut thecha, and lightly roast in a pan with butter until golden.

Serving Tip:

Serve hot as a starter with a side of sliced onions, a lemon wedge, and a cooling mint-yogurt dip.



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

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