THE STRATEGIC MIND OF CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

Maharaj promoted Marathi and Sanskrit in official work, strengthening regional identity and cultural pride.

Another remarkable yet lesser-discussed aspect of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's rule was his visionary naval policy. While most rulers focused primarily on land warfare, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj understood the strategic importance of maritime power. He established a strong naval force and constructed sea forts like Sindhudurg Fort to safeguard the Konkan coastline from foreign invasions. This foresight places Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj among the pioneers of organized naval defense in India.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was also known for his strict moral code during warfare. Unlike many rulers of his era, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj ensured that women and civilians were never harmed, even in enemy territories. Historical accounts highlight that captured women were treated with dignity and safely returned. This humane conduct distinguished Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj not only as a warrior king but also as a just and ethical leader.

The coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in 1674 at Raigad Fort marked the formal establishment of an independent kingdom. The ceremony was performed with elaborate Vedic rituals, symbolizing sovereignty and cultural revival. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj also introduced the Ashta Pradhan Mandal, a council of eight ministers, ensuring structured governance and administrative efficiency.

A lesser-known strength of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was his highly organized intelligence network. His effective spy system played a critical role in the success of his guerrilla warfare strategy, known as Ganimi Kava. Victories achieved by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj were not solely due to courage but also strategic planning, information management, and adaptability.

Beyond military achievements, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj believed in inclusive governance. He respected all religions and appointed individuals based on merit rather than caste or background. The leadership of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj reflected a balance of courage, compassion, discipline, and visionary statecraft.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti is therefore more than a historical observance. It is a tribute to visionary leadership, ethical governance, and unwavering commitment to justice. The lesser-known contributions of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj from naval innovation to administrative reforms reaffirm why his legacy continues to inspire generations.

As we commemorate this significant day, we are reminded that true leadership lies in integrity, courage, and dedication to the welfare of the people.

Jai Bhavani, Jai Shivaji!

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Every year on 19th February, India celebrates the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha Empire and the visionary behind the idea of Swarajya. While many recognize him as a fearless warrior and brilliant strategist, several lesser-known facts reveal the depth of his leadership, foresight, and governance.

Born in 1630 at Shivneri Fort, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was profoundly influenced by his mother Jijabai's teachings. An often-overlooked fact is that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was well-versed in multiple languages, including Marathi, Sanskrit, and Persian. At a time when Persian dominated administration, Chhatrapati Shivaji

Durgesh K. Dubey

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA: A LIFE OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE AND TRANSFORMATIVE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, born as Gadadhar Chattopadhyay in 1836 in the village of Kamarpukur in Bengal, emerged as one of the most influential spiritual figures of nineteenth-century India. His life represents a rare synthesis of devotion, experiential spirituality, universality of religions, and practical moral guidance. Unlike many reformers who worked primarily through institutional structures or intellectual debate, Ramakrishna's influence was rooted in lived spiritual experience and personal transformation.

From early childhood, Gadadhar displayed a natural inclination toward contemplation and devotional absorption. Village accounts describe episodes of deep spiritual ecstasy triggered by simple sights in nature, such as the flight of white cranes across dark monsoon clouds. These experiences were not the result of formal scriptural study but arose spontaneously from an intense emotional sensitivity toward the sacred. This early disposition later matured into a disciplined spiritual pursuit.
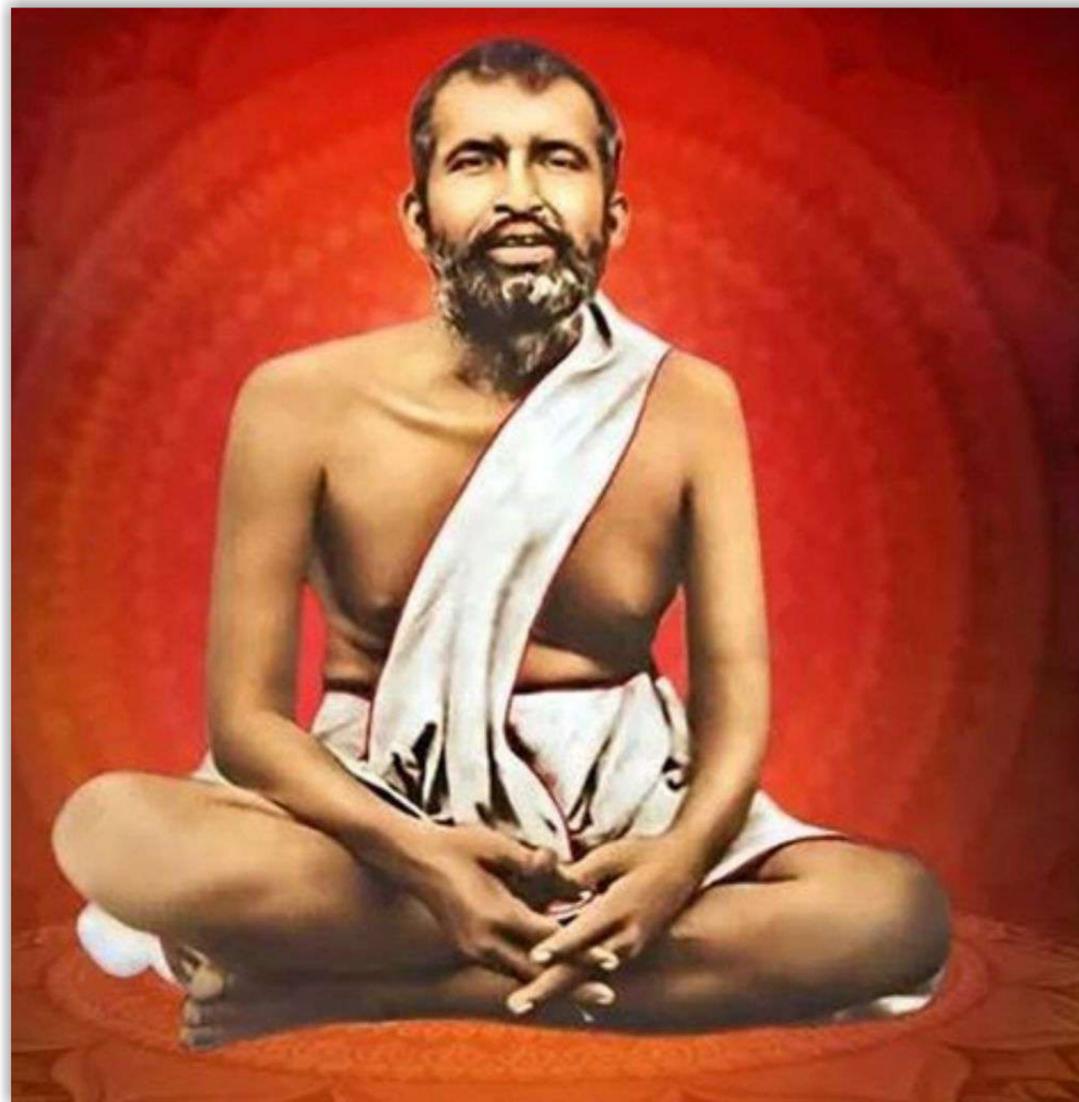
His appointment as priest at the Dakshineswar Kali Temple marked a decisive phase in his life. At Dakshineswar, Ramakrishna's devotional practices toward the Divine Mother Kali were marked by unusual intensity. His spiritual aspiration was not confined to ritual correctness; rather, it was directed toward direct perception of the Divine. In The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, he is recorded as saying, "God can be seen. One can talk to Him as I am talking to you." This statement was not metaphorical but reflected his conviction that spiritual truth must be experiential rather than speculative.

A distinctive feature of Ramakrishna's life was his systematic practice of multiple religious disciplines. Under different teachers, he practiced forms of Tantra, Vaishnavism, Advaita Vedanta, and even Islamic and Christian contemplative disciplines. His conclusion, later articulated in the well-known saying recorded in the Gospel, was: "As many faiths, so many paths." This was not a philosophical theory of pluralism but the outcome of experiential verification. For Ramakrishna, religious harmony did not require intellectual compromise; it required spiritual sincerity.

One of the most historically significant aspects of his life was his relationship with the young Narendranath Dutta, later known as Swami Vivekananda. Narendranath approached Ramakrishna with intellectual skepticism and a rational temperament shaped by Western education. He sought empirical certainty regarding the existence of God. Ramakrishna's response, as documented in The Gospel, was firm and experiential: he affirmed that God could indeed be realized. What gradually transformed Narendranath was not argumentation but the authenticity and spiritual authority evident in Ramakrishna's life. This mentorship eventually produced a global spiritual movement, but its foundation lay in Ramakrishna's method of guiding youth through inner awakening rather than doctrinal imposition.

Ramakrishna frequently communicated complex spiritual truths through simple metaphors. One such teaching, recorded in the Gospel, compares different religious paths to various rivers flowing into the same ocean. Another of his widely cited teachings states, "The breeze of God's grace is always blowing; you have only to raise your sail." This aphorism reflects his belief that divine grace is universally available, but human effort and receptivity are necessary conditions for realization.

Equally significant was his emphasis on inner purity over external display. He repeatedly warned against religious pride and sectarian arrogance. In the Gospel, he remarks that "The nearer you approach God, the less you are inclined to argue." This teaching addressed not only religious conflict but also intellectual egoism. For Ramakrishna, genuine spirituality produces humility, not superiority.

Ramakrishna's moral teaching extended beyond personal devotion to include compassion and service. He articulated the ideal later summarised as "Shiva jnane jiva seva," meaning service to living beings in the awareness that they are manifestations of the Divine. Though the institutionalization of this principle occurred later through the Ramakrishna Mission under Swami Vivekananda, its spiritual origin lay in Ramakrishna's experiential understanding of divine immanence.

Another important aspect of his guidance was his sensitivity to individual temperament. He did not prescribe identical disciplines to all seekers. To some he recommended devotional practice, to others meditation, and to others ethical service. This pedagogical flexibility reflects a nuanced understanding of human psychology. He once observed that different people require different spiritual medicines, just as patients require different treatments according to their condition. This individualized approach made his guidance particularly transformative for young seekers navigating doubt, ambition, and moral confusion.

In his later years, Ramakrishna suffered from throat cancer. Despite physical pain, he continued to receive disciples and guide them. His illness became a demonstration of detachment and equanimity. Rather than focusing on suffering, he emphasized spiritual perseverance. His composure during this period reinforced the authenticity of his teachings, as his philosophy was embodied in lived conduct.

Historically, Ramakrishna is best understood not as a social reformer in the conventional sense, nor as a philosopher constructing systematic doctrine, but as a mystic whose experiential spirituality revitalized religious consciousness in colonial India. His influence on educated youth occurred indirectly through his capacity to reconcile faith with reason, devotion with universality, and spirituality with practical life. Through his disciples, particularly Vivekananda, his teachings contributed to a renewed confidence in India's spiritual heritage during a period of intellectual and cultural challenge.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's life demonstrates that spiritual realization need not conflict with intellectual inquiry, and that religious diversity need not produce division. His teachings, grounded in direct experience rather than abstraction, emphasize sincerity, humility, universality, and inner transformation. By affirming that God can be realized, that all sincere paths lead to the same truth, and that divine grace is accessible to all, he offered a framework for moral clarity and spiritual confidence. His legacy endures not through institutional authority alone, but through the continuing relevance of his lived example: that authentic spirituality transforms both the individual and society through purity of heart, disciplined practice, and compassionate service.

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Ravi Singh

NIKHIL KAMATH: A STORY OF DISRUPTION, DISCIPLINE, AND DEPTH

On any given day in Bengaluru's ever-evolving startup ecosystem, conversations revolve around funding rounds, valuations, exits, and unicorn status. Amid this noise stands a figure who built one of India's most successful financial companies without chasing the spotlight. Nikhil Kamath's journey is not merely about wealth creation; it is about rewriting the rules of ambition, leadership, and influence in modern India.

His story does not begin elite institution or global consulting firms. It begins with an unconventional choice dropping out of school after Class 10. For many, this would signal limitation. For Kamath, it became liberation. Free from traditional academic pathways, he immersed himself in real-world learning. Chess became his training ground for strategic thinking. The stock market became his classroom for understanding risk, patience, and human psychology.

As a young trader, he learned early that markets are not only about numbers they are about behavior. Patterns repeat, fear drives decisions, and discipline separates winners from impulsive players. These insights would later shape his entrepreneurial philosophy.

In 2010, alongside his elder brotNithKaath, he co-founded Zerodha. At the time, India's brokerage industry was dominated by high commissions and opaque systems. Retail investors were often discouraged by complexity and cost. Zerodha introduced a radical idea a flat-fee discount brokerage model combined with clean, technology-driven platforms.

What seemed like a simple pricing innovation soon transformed the industry. Zerodha democratized stock market access for millions of Indians. Unlike many startups that chased aggfunding and rapid scaling, Zerodha grew organically. It remained bootstrapped, profitable, and focused on long-term sustainability. This disciplined growth distinguished it from the hype-driven startup culture .Over time, Zerodha became India's largest retail brokerage by active clients. Yet, despite its scale, the company retained a lean structure and customer-centric ethos. For Nikhil Kamath, success was not about media visibility but about solving structural inefficiencies in the system.

As wealth accumulated, so did perspective. Many entrepreneurs, after achieving financial independence, turn inward. Kamath chose to turn outward. He began to view himself not just as a founder but as an ecosystem builder.

Through Rainmatter, Zerodha's investment and incubation arm, he started backing startups aligned with financial inclusion, health innovation, and climate sustainability. Rainmatter's philosophy is not centered on speculative growth but on purposeful development. It supports companies building long-term solutions rather than chasing short-term valuations.

This shift from operator to mentor marked a new chapter in his narrative. Kamath understood that ecosystems thrive when knowledge and capital circulate freely. Instead of positioning himself as a distant investor, he engaged with founders in candid conversations, sharing insights drawn from his own journey.

Perhaps the most unconventional extension of this philosophy is WTFund. Unlike traditional venture capital firms that exchange funding for equity, WTFund offers non-dilutive grants to founders under the age of 25. The premise is simple yet powerful: give young entrepreneurs financial runway without demanding ownership.

In a startup environment often defined by valuation negotiations and dilution pressures, this approach feels almost countercultural. It reflects Kamath's belief that creativity flourishes when freed from immediate financial constraints. By trusting young founders, he reinforces a culture of experimentation over fear.

Parallel to his investment initiatives, Kamath built a platform for conversation. His podcast, WTF is with Nikhil Kamath, quickly became one of India's most followed business podcasts. What makes it distinctive is not celebrity appeal but depth. Instead of rehearsed success stories, listeners encounter honest discussions about anxiety, burnout, market bubbles, and life beyond wealth.

In these conversations, Kamath often strips away the glamour associated with entrepreneurship. He speaks openly about the psychological burden of leadership and the illusion that financial success automatically guarantees happiness. This transparency resonates deeply with a generation navigating intense societal expectations.

His candidness stands out in an ecosystem where personal branding is often meticulously curated. Kamath does not project invincibility. He acknowledges uncertainty. He questions hype cycles. He emphasizes balance over blind hustle. In doing so, he humanizes the startup narrative.

In many ways, his influence extends beyond fintech. He represents a cultural shift from aggressive expansion to mindful building, from external validation to internal clarity. Young founders look to him not just for funding but for perspective.

There is also a philosophical undertone to his journey. Chess taught him patience. Markets taught him humility. Entrepreneurship taught him responsibility. Together, these experiences shaped a leadership style grounded in reflection rather than impulsiveness.

As India's startup ecosystem matures, the need for such grounded voices becomes more pronounced. The era of unchecked optimism is giving way to an era of sustainability and discipline. Kamath's approach aligns with this transition. He advocates building profitable, resilient businesses rather than chasing vanity metrics.

In 2026, Nikhil Kamath occupies a unique position. He is not merely the co-founder of a brokerage giant. He is an investor shaping climate and health innovation. He is a mentor enabling first-time founders. He is a conversationalist redefining how success is discussed.
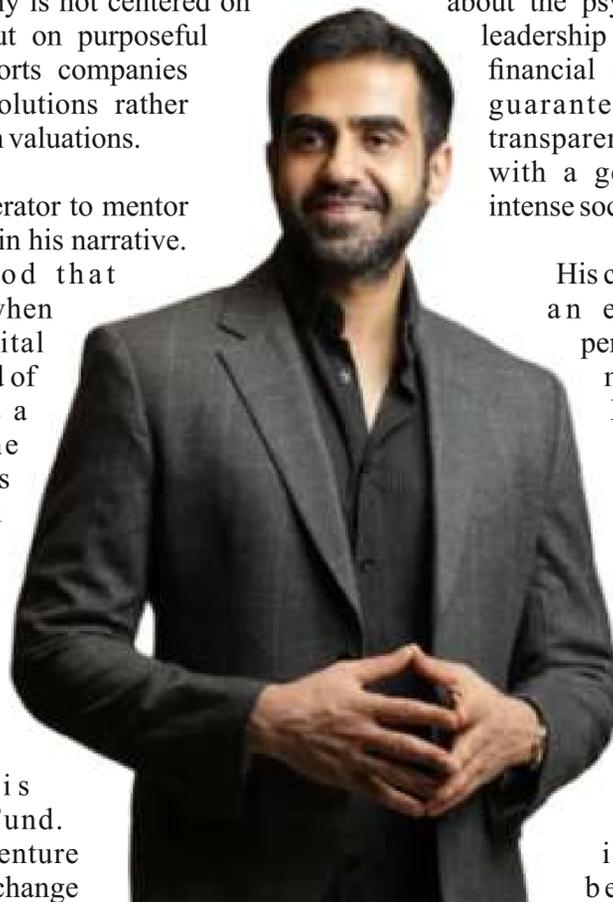
His journey challenges traditional metrics of achievement. It demonstrates that formal education, while valuable, is not the sole pathway to impact. It underscores that wealth, when combined with intention, can nurture ecosystems rather than dominate them.

Most importantly, his story reminds aspiring entrepreneurs that disruption is not always loud. Sometimes, it is quiet, strategic, and sustained. Zerodha did not emerge through dramatic headlines. It grew steadily, reshaping an industry from within. Similarly, Kamath's broader influence is unfolding through thoughtful investments, meaningful dialogue, and trust in the next generation.

In a country where millions aspire to build startups, stories like his offer both inspiration and caution. They highlight the power of innovation but also the necessity of discipline. They celebrate ambition while advocating introspection.

Ultimately, Nikhil Kamath's narrative is less about becoming a billionaire and more about becoming a builder of builders. From a school dropout to a fintech pioneer and ecosystem architect, his journey encapsulates the evolving spirit of India's entrepreneurial landscape.

And as the ecosystem continues to expand, his role seems poised to grow alongside it not as a symbol of excess, but as a voice of balance, clarity, and purposeful growth.

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NIKHIL KAMATH

Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay

EDITOR

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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.

SMART ACCOUNTING: HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING ACCOUNTING & FINANCE CAREERS

Accounting is undergoing its biggest transformation since the shift from handwritten ledgers to computers. For generations, the profession relied on registers, vouchers, and manual verification, with accuracy dependent on human effort and meticulous human attention. Today, intelligent systems process and monitor financial data faster and more accurately than traditional methods ever could. Platforms such as Tally ERP, SAP, and Oracle now automate bookkeeping, compliance, reconciliations, and audit analysis fundamentally expanding the scope and strategic importance of accounting work. For students and professionals, the message is clear: the future accountant is not just a bookkeeper, but a digital finance professional.

From Data Entry to System Oversight

Earlier, bookkeeping required manual journal entries, ledger posting, reconciliations, and trial balance preparation routine tasks that consumed significant time and effort. Modern accounting systems now perform much of this processing automatically through transaction feeds and document recognition.

Example: A manufacturing firm once required accountants to manually enter supplier invoices. Today, invoices are scanned and auto-posted, while accountants review exceptions and validate classifications.

Shift: The role has shifted from performing entries to overseeing automated accounting processes.

Continuous Accounting and Real-Time Insights

Earlier, financial positions were known only after monthly or quarterly closing cycles. AI-driven systems now update financial data continuously as transactions occur.
Managers can instantly view:
- Cash flow status
- Payables and receivables ageing
- Expense patterns
- Product or branch profitability

Example: A distribution firm notices rising transportation costs mid-month through ERP dashboards. Finance teams analyse route-wise expenses, identify specific logistics vendors causing the increase, and renegotiate contracts before quarter-end. Real-time visibility enables faster decisions and cost control.

Impact: Accounting is shifting from past reporting to live financial monitoring and advisory.

Auditing in the Age of Data Analysis

Traditional auditing depended on sampling checking selected transactions due to time and resource limits. AI tools now allow auditors to analyse entire datasets, making audits deeper and more reliable.
Modern audit systems can:
- Scan transactions across periods
- Identify unusual patterns
- Detect duplicate or split payments
- Flag policy or approval breaches

Example: An audit tool detects repeated expense claims just below approval thresholds suggesting possible splitting to bypass higher approval. Such patterns are difficult to identify through manual sampling.

Evolution: Auditing is evolving from document verification to pattern recognition and risk analytics.

AI and Fraud Detection

AI-enabled accounting systems learn normal financial behaviour and flag deviations automatically.
They can detect:
- Abnormal transaction frequency
- Unusual vendor activity
- Suspicious timing patterns
- Round-figure anomalies

Example: An employee expense pattern suddenly shifts higher frequency and repeated vendors. The system flags the anomaly for review. Investigation reveals fabricated claims.

Trend: Fraud detection is shifting from reactive investigation to predictive, real-time prevention through early alerts.

New Job Roles Emerging in AI-Driven Accounting

As accounting becomes automated and data-driven, new career roles are emerging for commerce graduates that combine finance knowledge with technology and analytics.
- ERP Accounting Executive — manages accounting within systems like Tally, SAP, or Oracle
- Audit Analytics Associate — Analyses transaction data to detect risks
- Financial Systems Analyst — Connects finance processes with accounting software
- Compliance & Controls Analyst — Monitors automated controls and approvals
- Fraud Detection Analyst — Identifies suspicious financial patterns using AI tools
- Digital Reporting Specialist — Creates dashboards and automated reports
- RPA Accounting Associate — Manages bots that automate accounting tasks
- Forensic Data Accountant — Investigates financial manipulation using data analysis

These roles show that the future accountant will work as much with systems and data as with numbers.

Students: How to Prepare for AI-Driven Accounting Careers

- Learn at least one accounting/ERP software during graduation
- Practice working with digital invoices, datasets, and dashboards
- Build strong conceptual clarity in accounting standards and taxation
- Develop analytical thinking, not just procedural learning
- Take internships involving accounting software
- Stay aware of fintech and automation trends
- Learn basic data handling tools such as Excel analytics
- Students who combine accounting knowledge with system familiarity enter the job market with strong workplace readiness.

Professionals: Staying Relevant in the AI Era

- Shift from manual work to ERP-based systems
- Focus on analysis rather than data entry
- Build digital audit and reporting skills
- Participate in automation or ERP projects
Adaptable professionals move into higher-value finance roles.

The Profession Is Evolving, Not Ending

Accounting is transitioning from:
Manual entry → Automated processing
Sampling audit → Data-driven audit
Periodic reporting → Continuous insight
Record keeping → Financial intelligence

This shift mirrors many professions where technology handles routine work while humans focus on judgement, interpretation, and decision-making.

The Takeaway

AI tools are not replacing accountants they are redefining and elevating their role. Because in today's financial world, those who understand both accounting principles and intelligent systems will lead the profession forward.

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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.

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS NOVEL

The stream of consciousness novel is a narrative technique that attempts to capture the continuous flow of a character's thoughts, feelings, memories, and sensations. Instead of presenting events in a clear, linear order, this style mirrors the natural movement of the human mind. The technique gained prominence in the early twentieth century through writers like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and William Faulkner.

In such novels, readers enter directly into the inner world of characters, experiencing their mental processes without strict grammatical structure or logical sequence. This method allows authors to explore psychological depth and subjective reality. Time often shifts between past and present as memories interrupt present thoughts.

Stream of consciousness writing demands attentive reading but offers rich insight into character psychology. It breaks traditional storytelling rules and focuses more on perception than action. This technique has influenced many modern novelists and remains a powerful tool for portraying inner life in literature.

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DID YOU KNOW?

- Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway is considered one of the finest examples of the stream of consciousness technique in modern literature.

- The Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 empowers Indian citizens to request information from public authorities, promoting transparency and accountability in governance. It is considered one of the strongest transparency laws in the world.

- The decimal number system, widely used in mathematics and competitive examinations, was developed in India. The concept of zero as a number was formalized by Indian mathematician Aryabhata, revolutionizing global mathematics.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established on April 1, 1935, and was nationalized in 1949. It regulates monetary policy, controls inflation, and supervises the banking system of the country.

- The Nobel Prize is awarded in six categories: Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature, Peace, and Economic Sciences. The prize in Economic Sciences was established later in 1968 by Sweden's central bank.

- The United Nations was founded in 1945 after World War II to promote international peace and cooperation. India is one of its founding members and has actively participated in peacekeeping missions worldwide.

- The term "GDP" (Gross Domestic Product) measures the total value of goods and services produced within a country during a specific period. It is a key indicator used in economics and competitive exams to assess a nation's economic performance.

GRAMMAR TIP

Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences

Simple Sentence: Contains one independent clause.
Example: She reads every day.

Compound Sentence: Contains two independent clauses joined by a conjunction.
Example: She reads every day, and she writes notes.

Complex Sentence: Contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.
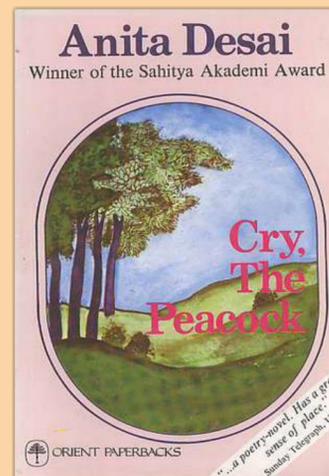Example: She reads every day because she loves literature.

WRITER OF THE WEEK

Shanta Gokhale

Shanta Gokhale is a respected Indian writer, translator, and theatre critic known for her contributions to Indian literature and performing arts. She has translated several important Marathi works into English and has written insightful essays on theatre and culture. Her novel Rita Welinkar is widely appreciated for its sensitive portrayal of a woman's search for identity. Gokhale's work bridges languages and cultures, making regional literature accessible to a wider audience.

BOOK REVIEW

Cry, the Peacock by Anita Desai

Cry, the Peacock is Anita Desai's psychological novel that explores loneliness, marital discord, and mental instability through the character of Maya. Married to Gautama, a practical and emotionally distant man, Maya feels isolated and misunderstood. Haunted by a childhood prophecy predicting death, she gradually descends into paranoia and emotional imbalance.

Desai uses rich imagery, symbolism, and psychological depth to portray Maya's inner turmoil. The novel reflects the clash between sensitivity and rationality, emotion and detachment. Maya's intense emotional world contrasts sharply with Gautama's philosophical calmness.

The novel is a powerful study of the human mind and highlights the consequences of emotional neglect. It is regarded as a pioneering work in Indian English fiction for its psychological realism and narrative style.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"There is no friend as loyal as a book."

— **Ernest Hemingway**

CREATIVE WRITING

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both

And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth;
Then took the other, as just as fair,

And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,

Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.

Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way

I doubted if I should ever come back.
I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,

I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

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**Poetry by
Robert Frost**

WORD OF THE WEEK

Introspective (adjective)

Meaning: Examining one's own thoughts and feelings.
Example: The novel is deeply introspective in nature.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

Hit the nail on the head

Meaning: To say or do something exactly right.
Example: Your explanation of the poem hit the nail on the head.

Ravi Singh & Kailashkumar Gaunder

MAHARASHTRA TO HOST MAJOR AI FOR AGRICULTURE SUMMIT IN MUMBAI

The Government of Maharashtra is set to host a two-day global conference titled AI for Agri 2026 in Mumbai on February 22–23, 2026, focused on harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) for agricultural innovation, climate resilience and farmer empowerment. The event is part of the state's Maharashtra Agriculture–Artificial Intelligence Policy 2025–2029, which aims to build a data-driven ecosystem for India's farm sector and make Maharashtra the first state with a dedicated AI framework for agriculture.

The summit will take place at the Jio World Convention Centre and draw participation from global agricultural experts, agritech startups, investors, financial institutions, international organisations and policy leaders. Partners include the World Economic Forum (WEF), World Bank Group, Asian Development Bank (ADB), FAO, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, among others, underlining the event's international scope.

The AI policy has an initial allocation of ₹500 crore for infrastru-cture development, including digital platforms such as MahaAgriX (a data exchange), an AI-enabled traceability system, a geospatial intelligence engine and the farmer advisory platform MahaVistaar. These tools are intended to help farmers make informed decisions, improve productivity, manage risks such as climate variability, and enhance market access.

Besides keynote discussions and investment sessions, the summit will feature an exhibition showcasing agritech innovations and panels on issues such as inclusive AI, responsible technology use and women's empowerment, aligning with the United Nations' declaration of 2026 as the International Year of Women Farmers.

Overall, the summit aims to accelerate the adoption of AI across the agriculture value chain, bridging cutting-edge technology with real-world farming needs and positioning Maharashtra as a leader in digital agricultural transform-ation.

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CONGRESS URGES END TO FARMER VILIFICATION OVER STUBBLE BURNING DEBATE

The Indian National Congress on Monday criticised recent remarks by the Union Agriculture Minister related to stubble burning, saying they contribute to unfairly blaming farmers for air pollution, and urged that farmers should not be targeted for broader environmental issues. The party pointed to data showing that while crop residue burning does contribute to seasonal air quality problems, it is just one of several factors, with vehicle emissions, industrial pollution and other sources also playing significant roles in urban air quality deterioration.

Congress leaders emphasised that farmers often resort to burning stubble due to time pressure, lack of viable alternatives and the economics of farm operations. Many growers find it difficult to manage large quantities of crop residues with limited labour and equipment, especially during short harvest windows. Rather than vilifying the farming community, the party argued that the government should focus on practical, farmer-friendly solutions such as expanding access to machinery for residue management, incentivising in-field composting and strengthening crop diversification initiatives.

The opposition also reiterated calls for enhanced support programmes that subsidise machinery like happy seeders and balers, and for improved procurement and market linkages that reduce dependency on practices like burning. Stressing cooperative approaches, Congress said sustained engagement with farmers and agricultural experts is necessary to develop workable strategies that reduce pollution without placing undue burden on rural communities. The statement ended with a plea to policymakers to treat farmers as partners in environmental protection rather than scapegoats.

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FARMER UNIONS OPPOSE INDIA–US TRADE PACT, RAISE CONCERNS OVER AGRICULTURE

Farm unions and opposition parties in India have strongly criticised the proposed India–US trade agreement, expressing fears that it could negatively impact domestic farmers. Farmer organisations argue that opening Indian markets to foreign agricultural products may weaken local producers, reduce farm incomes, and increase dependence on imports. They believe that Indian farmers, already facing rising input costs and climate-related challenges, may not be able to compete with subsidised agricultural goods from developed countries.

Leaders of major farmer unions have vowed to intensify protests and awareness campaigns to oppose any provisions that threaten India's agricultural sovereignty. They have demanded transparency in negotiations and assurance that minimum support prices (MSP), public procurement systems, and farmer welfare schemes will not be compromised. Opposition political parties have also supported farmers' concerns, stating that agriculture is a sensitive sector that should be protected in international trade deals.

The government, however, maintains that trade agreements can open new export opportunities and strengthen India's position in global markets. Officials claim that safeguards are being considered to protect small and marginal farmers.

Overall, the debate highlights the delicate balance between global trade integration and protecting domestic agriculture. The outcome of this discussion will be crucial for India's farming community and future trade policies.

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INDIA–US TRADE DEAL SPARKS APPLE GROWER ANXIETY IN KASHMIR & HIMACHAL

Apple farmers in Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh are expressing deep concern over the proposed India–US trade agreement, fearing it could weaken existing protections for India's fruit sector and disrupt local markets. These regions account for the bulk of the country's apple production, with annual output around 2–2.1 million tonnes against an overall demand of about 2.5 million tonnes. Domestic growers are worried that changes in tariff structures under the trade deal could make imported apples more competitive in price and more readily available, threatening farmer incomes and long-term viability.
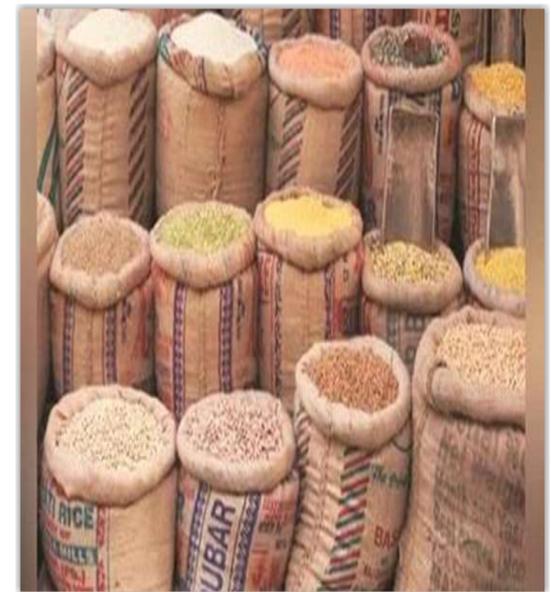
Previously, high import duties — up to 50 per cent — coupled with a Minimum Import Price (MIP) acted as a buffer that kept cheaper foreign apples out of Indian markets. However, under the present arrangements, duties from countries like New Zealand and the EU have been reduced, and similar concessions are expected for the US, with potential duty rates capped at around 25 per cent alongside an MIP of ₹80 per kg. Farmers fear that importers may undervalue shipments near the MIP, thereby exerting downward pressure on prices and reducing revenue for domestic producers.

Leaders of growers' associations argue the horticulture economy — valued at thousands of crores and supporting hundreds of thousands of rural livelihoods — could be hit if imports become cheaper and more attractive than locally grown apples. They have called for stronger safeguards, clear quota limits and stringent enforcement of MIP to protect local growers, emphasizing that without these measures, the apple industry in the hills could face intensified competition and market erosion.

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INDIA–US TRADE DEAL MAY MAKE CERTAIN PULSES A SENSITIVE ISSUE

Under the emerging India–United States trade agreement, pulses such as lentils and yellow peas could become a contentious subject, raising concerns among farmers and policymakers about their future access and price protection in Indian markets. The joint fact sheet from negotiators indicates that "certain pulses" might be included in reduced-tariff lists, even though the exact items have not been clearly specified yet, prompting debate within the agriculture community.

Traditionally, India has imported significant volumes of pulses particularly yellow peas and lentils that are used in household diets and food processing. Pulses such as lentils from the United States often command higher prices compared with those from Canada and Australia, which have long been dominant suppliers to India. Earlier trade data show that India has been among the top buyers of U.S. pulses in some years, although import shares have fluctuated over time.

A key point of tension is India's 30 per cent import duty on yellow peas, imposed in late 2025 to protect domestic pulse prices and support farmers. U.S. lawmakers, particularly from pulse-producing states, have urged their government to seek tariff reductions on such crops, arguing that existing duties put American producers at a disadvantage in India's market.

India's negotiators are under pressure to balance trade liberalisation with protecting farmer interests, and pulses remain a sensitive category because they directly affect rural incomes and food security. As talks continue, clarity on tariff treatment for specific pulses will be crucial for stakeholders in both countries.

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Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay

KERALA TO LAUNCH GLOBAL SCHOLAR CONNECT PORTAL FOR UNIVERSITIES

The Kerala government is set to launch a dedicated digital portal to connect higher education institutions in the state with leading scholars and academics from countries such as the US, UK, Japan, and the UAE. The initiative aims to strengthen international academic collaboration and elevate research and teaching quality across Kerala's universities and colleges.

Announced under the leadership of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, the platform will serve as a structured interface for institutions to engage with global experts for visiting faculty programmes, joint research projects, lectures, curriculum enrichment, and mentorship initiatives. The portal is being developed in coordination with the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC).

Officials said the initiative will also encourage participation from Indian diaspora scholars willing to contribute to Kerala's academic ecosystem. Institutions will be able to identify domain experts, invite them for short- or long-term engagements, and collaborate on innovation-driven research aligned with global standards.

The government believes the portal will help internationalise higher education in the state by exposing students and faculty to global perspectives and best practices. It is also expected to strengthen interdisciplinary research and enhance institutional rankings and global visibility.

By creating seamless academic linkages with international scholars and institutions, Kerala aims to position itself as a knowledge hub with strong global networks, high-quality research output, and future-ready graduates equipped for an increasingly interconnected academic and professional world.

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BHARAT BODHAN AI CENTRE TO ANCHOR NATIONAL EDUCATION INNOVATION NETWORK

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has described the upcoming Bharat Bodhan AI Centre as the "National Centre for Public Innovation (NCPI) of education," positioning it as a transformative hub for research, collaboration, and technology-driven learning in India's academic ecosystem.

The initiative will bring together premier institutions including IIT Bombay and IIM Ranchi, which are set to establish dedicated research and innovation nodes under the Bharat Bodhan framework. These centres will focus on advancing artificial intelligence applications in education, interdisciplinary research, and next-generation academic programmes.

The Bharat Bodhan AI Centre aims to integrate technology, management, and public policy to reimagine higher education delivery and research collaboration. Officials said the platform will enable joint projects, faculty exchanges, and industry partnerships to accelerate innovation in teaching, assessment, and skill development.

Pradhan emphasised that the initiative aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 vision of leveraging emerging technologies to enhance accessibility, quality, and global competitiveness of Indian education. He noted that collaboration among top institutes will create a powerful innovation network capable of shaping future-ready academic models.

The programme is also expected to support dual-degree and interdisciplinary pathways combining technology and management education, reflecting evolving industry demands. By positioning Bharat Bodhan as a national innovation anchor, the government aims to foster cutting-edge research, strengthen institutional partnerships, and build an AI-enabled education ecosystem that prepares learners for a rapidly changing global knowledge economy.

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DELHI TO TRANSFORM 75 CM SHRI SCHOOLS INTO AI-ENABLED GREEN CAMPUSES

The Delhi government has unveiled an ambitious plan to modernise 75 CM SHRI schools into future-ready institutions equipped with artificial intelligence tools, smart classrooms, and sustainable green infrastructure. The initiative aims to redefine public schooling by integrating advanced technology with environmentally responsible campus design.

Under the plan, classrooms will be upgraded with interactive digital boards, AI-supported learning platforms, and modern ICT infrastructure to enhance personalised and experiential learning. Teachers will receive specialised training to effectively use AI-based educational tools, enabling data-driven instruction and improved student engagement.

Beyond digital upgrades, the schools will adopt green campus features such as solar energy systems, rainwater harvesting, waste-management solutions, and eco-friendly landscaping. The government said these measures will create healthier learning environments while fostering environmental awareness among students.

Officials emphasised that the CM SHRI model schools are envisioned as centres of excellence that demonstrate the future of government education in India. The modernisation will also include improved laboratories, libraries, sports facilities, and inclusive learning spaces to support holistic development.

The project aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 vision of technology-integrated and competency-based education, while also supporting Delhi's broader climate-responsible urban development goals. The upgraded schools are expected to serve as replicable models for other institutions across the capital.

By combining AI-enabled pedagogy with sustainable infrastructure, Delhi aims to prepare students with digital skills, environmental consciousness, and innovation mindsets required for the emerging knowledge economy.

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PRADHAN–BINDRA MEET SPARKS PUSH FOR SPORTS-INTEGRATED SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan recently met Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra to discuss advancing sports education at the school level, with a focus on integrating physical activity, mental wellness, and lifelong fitness into mainstream learning.

The meeting explored ways to leverage Bindra's expertise to design sports-based curricula and embed structured sports learning within school systems. Both leaders emphasised that sports should complement academic education by nurturing discipline, teamwork, resilience, and healthy habits among students from an early age.

The discussions align with India's broader ambition to become a leading global sporting nation by 2036. Bindra, who chairs the national task force on capacity building of sports administrators, has recommended systemic reforms to strengthen sports governance and training frameworks. Key proposals include establishing a National Council for Sports Education & Capacity Building and introducing professional certification pathways for sports administrators.

Pradhan underscored that schools are the foundation of a strong sporting culture and must provide opportunities for holistic development beyond academics. Integrating sports pedagogy, he noted, can also support mental well-being and character formation among youth.

The dialogue highlighted the need to connect school sports ecosystems with national talent pathways and ongoing sports sector reforms. The Pradhan–Bindra collaboration signals a strategic push to embed sports, wellness, and fitness within India's education framework, nurturing healthier, confident, and future-ready students.

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DELHI LAUNCHES 100 ADVANCED ICT LABS TO BRIDGE DIGITAL LEARNING GAP

Government schools in Delhi received a major digital upgrade as Chief Minister Rekha Gupta inaugurated 100 advanced ICT laboratories across the capital. The initiative, implemented under the Digital Equalizer Program by the American India Foundation (AIF) in partnership with the Ladli Foundation Trust, aims to strengthen digital learning infrastructure and expand technology access for students.

Each participating school has been equipped with a state-of-the-art ICT lab featuring 20 computers and an interactive flat panel display (IFPD). Trained instructors will support effective classroom integration, enabling students to develop essential digital literacy and technology skills in line with modern educational needs.

The inauguration ceremony was held at Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, Mansarovar Garden, where the Chief Minister also unveiled a new school building block designed to improve classroom capacity and learning facilities. In addition, she inaugurated a new District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) campus at Dilshad Garden. The DIET facility includes 36 rooms and specialised laboratories aimed at enhancing teacher education, training, and professional development.

The Delhi government said the initiative reflects its commitment to modernising public education through public–private partnerships and technology-driven learning. By strengthening digital infrastructure alongside teacher training systems, the programme seeks to ensure that students in government schools gain equitable access to 21st-century skills. Officials noted that the ICT labs will support interactive teaching methods, improve student engagement, and prepare learners for a technology-enabled future.

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Durgesh K. Dubey

UTTAR PRADESH UNVEILS ₹9.12 LAKH CRORE BUDGET, BETTING BIG ON GROWTH, GOVERNANCE AND GROUND-LEVEL CHANGE

Uttar Pradesh has presented its largest-ever Budget, crossing ₹9.12 lakh crore for the financial year 2026–27, signalling a strong push toward infrastructure, health, education and industrial expansion. With an increase of nearly 13 per cent over the previous year, the Budget outlines an ambitious roadmap that combines capital investment with fiscal discipline, reflecting the state's growing economic confidence.

Nearly one-fifth of the total outlay 19.5 per cent has been earmarked for capital expenditure, underscoring a clear intent to accelerate infrastructure development. Significant allocations have been made for roads, bridges, energy, urban and rural infrastructure, and industrial corridors. Over ₹34,000 crore has been set aside for strengthening road connectivity, promising safer and faster travel for citizens. Industrial growth is another key priority, with fresh provisions to expand industrial areas and attract new investments, including incentives aimed at global companies and foreign direct investment.

The Budget also reinforces the state's aspiration to become a trillion-dollar economy in the coming years. Recent investor summits have already drawn massive commitments, and groundwork for thousands of projects is underway. The defence industrial corridor, where hundreds of industries have signed agreements, is expected to generate substantial employment and investment. Electronics manufacturing continues to flourish, with the state contributing a major share of the country's mobile phone production and exports.

Health and medical education receive substantial attention. Nearly ₹38,000 crore has been allocated for medical, health and family welfare services, marking a significant increase from the previous year. Medical education alone has been assigned almost ₹15,000 crore, with new colleges planned in underserved districts. The expansion of MBBS and postgraduate seats over recent years reflects the state's attempt to address the shortage of healthcare professionals. Dedicated funding for cancer treatment facilities, mental health programmes and support for vulnerable families under health insurance schemes points to a broader focus on accessible healthcare.

Education and youth empowerment remain central pillars. About 12.4 per cent of the total Budget has been allocated to education. Programmes that distribute tablets and smartphones to students aim to bridge the digital divide and enhance learning outcomes. Skill development centres, particularly those targeting young people and women, are expected to prepare the workforce for emerging industries and technology-driven sectors.

Agriculture, which sustains millions in the state, receives nine per cent of the total allocation. Investments in solar pump conversion, agricultural export hubs and farmer producer organisations aim to reduce input costs, promote clean energy and improve farmers' access to markets. The creation of a dedicated corpus to support farmer groups is expected to strengthen rural credit systems and encourage collective enterprise.

Law and order and public safety have also been prioritised. Funds

have been earmarked for police infrastructure, housing, fire services and support mechanisms for women officers. The state government has highlighted improvements in crime indicators over recent years, presenting the enhanced allocation as part of a broader effort to sustain security and social stability.

Fiscal prudence remains a defining feature of the Budget. The fiscal deficit has been capped at three per cent of Gross State Domestic Product, in line with national recommendations. The debt-to-GSDP ratio, which rose during the pandemic years, has been brought down steadily, with further reductions targeted in the medium term. This commitment to financial discipline aims to ensure that growth remains sustainable.

With the state's economy projected to grow robustly and per capita income nearly doubling over the past decade, the Budget seeks to convert economic momentum into tangible benefits for citizens. From healthcare access and farmer welfare to industrial expansion and youth employment, the new financial blueprint paints a picture of a state striving to balance ambition with accountability grounding grand economic targets in everyday improvements for its people.

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₹10,000-CRORE STARTUP FUND 2.0 CLEARED: A FRESH PUSH FOR DEEP TECH AND GRASSROOTS INNOVATION

₹ 10,000 CRORE STARTUP FUND 2.0
Boost for Deep Tech and Grassroots Innovation
startupindia
₹10,000 CRORE FUND 2.0
• Deep Tech & Manufacturing
• Early-Growth Startups
• Beyond Major Cities

In a move aimed at strengthening India's innovation ecosystem, the Union Cabinet has approved a ₹10,000-crore Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0, marking a renewed commitment to long-term capital support for emerging enterprises. The new fund is designed to mobilise venture capital for deep-tech, innovative manufacturing and early-growth stage startups, while also extending opportunities beyond traditional metro hubs.

The second phase builds on the foundation laid by the original Fund of Funds launched in 2016. That initiative helped catalyse domestic venture capital by committing ₹10,000 crore to over 140 Alternative Investment Funds, which collectively invested more than ₹25,000 crore in over 1,300 startups across diverse sectors such as artificial intelligence,

agriculture, clean energy, biotechnology, fintech, manufacturing and space technology. The success of the first tranche not only bridged critical funding gaps but also encouraged private investors to participate more actively in India's startup journey.

Startup India Fund 2.0 aims to deepen that momentum. Unlike a broad-based funding model, the new scheme adopts a targeted and segmented approach. It prioritises high-technology areas that require patient, long-term capital—fields where quick returns are rare but transformative impact is possible. Deep tech innovations, advanced manufacturing solutions, robotics, AI applications and next-generation infrastructure solutions are expected to be among the beneficiaries.

One of the key objectives of the new fund is to reduce early-stage startup failures that often stem from inadequate funding. Many promising ideas fade before reaching scale simply because they lack access to sustained financial support. By acting as a safety net for early-growth enterprises, the scheme seeks to convert innovation into durable business models rather than short-lived experiments.

Another important feature is its focus on geographic inclusion. The government has indicated that investments will not remain concentrated in major cities alone. Instead, the fund aims to encourage venture capital flow into smaller towns and non-metro regions, allowing innovation to flourish across the country. This broader outreach could help unlock entrepreneurial talent from tier-II and tier-III cities, where digital access and skill development have improved significantly in recent years.

The expanded scope of the second phase also reflects the evolving nature of India's startup ecosystem. From fewer than 500 recognised startups a decade ago, the country now has over two lakh officially registered ventures. The year 2025 alone recorded a record number of new registrations, underscoring the growing appetite for entrepreneurship. With around 100 unicorns startups valued at over a billion dollars—India has emerged as one of the world's leading startup destinations.

The fund is expected to strengthen India's domestic venture capital base, particularly smaller funds that often struggle to raise capital independently. By crowding in private investment and reducing high-risk capital gaps, the initiative aims to create a more resilient and self-sustaining funding environment.

Alongside the startup boost, the Cabinet has also approved major infrastructure projects, including metro expansion and railway multitracking initiatives, signalling a parallel push to strengthen physical connectivity. Together, these measures highlight a broader strategy: combining digital innovation with robust infrastructure to sustain economic growth.

Startup India Fund 2.0, therefore, is not merely a financial allocation. It represents a strategic step toward nurturing ideas that can shape the country's technological future supporting founders who dare to build not just apps, but solutions that redefine industries.

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Dr. (Mrs) Chandra Hariharan Iyer

EXPERT

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**FAQs ON
Learning and Development through
Ancient Indian Wisdom**

Mail your questions on
thehulahultimes@gmail.com
or
DM your questions on our instagram
handle **@thehulahultimes**

Q. Can Technical Excellence Compensate for Ethical Short-comings?

Ans. In today's fast-paced corporate and technological world, technical proficiency is highly prized. Organizations often measure candidates and employees by their skills, certifications, problem-solving abilities, and productivity. However, technical brilliance alone cannot guarantee the long-term success or ethical sustainability of an organization. While a technically skilled individual may solve immediate operational challenges, an absence of ethical grounding can lead to serious consequences—ranging from internal discord to legal violations and reputational damage. The ancient Indian wisdom captured in subhashitam emphasizes that skill and knowledge are meaningful only when anchored in dharma, or righteousness. The Subhashitam "धर्मेण हि मानवाः संज्ञन्ते, अन्यथा तु विनश्यन्ति" reminds us that human systems and social structures endure only when guided by ethical principles. Without ethics, even the most skilled individual can become a liability rather than an asset.

Technical excellence is often considered the primary criterion for hiring, promotion, or responsibility allocation. In IT companies, for example, the focus is frequently on verifying coding skills, certifications, or the ability to manage complex systems. While these competencies are necessary for operational efficiency, they cannot prevent misuse of authority, violation of organizational policies, or unethical decision-making. The Subhashitam "स्वभावो नोपदेशेन शक्यते कर्तुमन्यथा; सुतप्तमपि पानीयं पुनर्गच्छति शीतताम्" illustrates that human nature cannot be altered merely through instruction; even the most capable individuals have innate tendencies that will manifest under pressure unless properly guided by ethical awareness. Technical skills without a moral compass may result in shortcuts, manipulation, or exploitation of loopholes, ultimately harming the organization more than benefiting it.

Ethical shortcomings can also corrode trust within teams and organizations. The Subhashitam "कृतज्ञता एव साधूनां भूषणं हि परं स्मृतम्; अकृतज्ञः पुरुषः पापी लोकद्विष एव च" underscores the value of gratitude and recognition as markers of virtuous behavior. A technically brilliant individual who disregards ethical considerations—such as fairness, honesty, and collaboration may achieve short-term goals but erode interpersonal trust. When employees observe unethical behavior going unchallenged, it sets a precedent that technical skills outweigh moral responsibility, leading to a culture of fear, cynicism, or opportunism. Ethics, therefore, is not merely a personal virtue; it is a social glue that sustains teamwork, loyalty, and long-term organizational health.

The consequences of ignoring ethics in favor of technical excellence can be catastrophic. Historical examples from technology, finance, and corporate sectors reveal that lapses in judgment, fraudulent practices, and unethical exploitation often come from technically adept individuals acting without moral restraint. The Subhashitam "फलमूलाश्रिता नित्यं नापि मूलफला वनाः; संगमूलाश्रिता नित्यं नापि मोक्षफला नराः" teaches that attachment to outcomes without understanding principles leads to failure. Technical brilliance without ethical grounding may deliver results in the short term, but long-term outcomes—trust, credibility, and societal impact are compromised. Ethical awareness ensures that results are sustainable, responsible, and aligned with broader human values.

Leadership, in particular, magnifies the impact of ethics. A technically skilled leader who lacks ethical integrity can inadvertently promote corruption, favoritism, or recklessness. The Subhashitam "अन्येभ्यः परं कर्तव्यम्, स्वार्थं परित्यजेत् शीलवान्" emphasizes prioritizing duty over self-interest. Technical skills may enable a manager to optimize systems or enhance productivity, but ethical lapses can erode organizational stability and employee morale. Employees look to leaders not only for guidance in their work but also as examples of integrity. A technically excellent but ethically deficient leader may inspire skill-based respect while simultaneously breeding disillusionment and mistrust.

Ethics also functions as a safeguard against risk. The Subhashitam "क्षमा बलं अशक्तानां, शक्तानां भूषणं मतम्" highlights that patience, restraint, and ethical discretion are strengths. In technical fields, high-pressure decisions often arise—coding errors, security breaches, or financial miscalculations can have cascading effects. An individual who excels technically but lacks ethical judgment may take shortcuts or hide mistakes, exacerbating risks. Conversely, ethically grounded employees prioritize responsibility, transparency, and long-term welfare, ensuring that technical excellence translates into sustainable progress rather than temporary advantage.

The integration of ethics with skill enhances reputation and organizational resilience. The Subhashitam "शीलवान् पुरुषः सर्वत्र विजयी भवति, आसक्तिमुक्तः सदा सुखी" underscores that virtue combined with detachment and wisdom ensures lasting success. In professional contexts, this translates into employees and leaders whose technical competence is harmonized with ethical reasoning, social responsibility, and accountability. Organizations that cultivate such individuals experience not only operational efficiency but also enhanced credibility, stakeholder trust, and organizational culture. Technical brilliance magnifies impact only when guided by ethical principles; otherwise, it risks magnifying harm.

Education and recruitment processes must therefore prioritize ethics alongside technical skills. As Winn Schwartau points out, checking references should not only verify technical competence but also assess character, integrity, and decision-making frameworks. The Subhashitam "वृथा बुद्धिर्विनाऽभ्यासं वृथा अभ्यासो विनाऽधिना; यो हि संयोजयेदेतदुभयं स विजानती" emphasizes that knowledge without practice or action without understanding is futile. Evaluating candidates solely on technical metrics overlooks the deeper question of how they will apply their skills responsibly. Organizations must design assessments, interviews, and onboarding programs that integrate ethical scenarios, judgment-based questions, and character evaluation. This ensures that technical ability is coupled with a moral compass capable of navigating complex, real-world challenges.
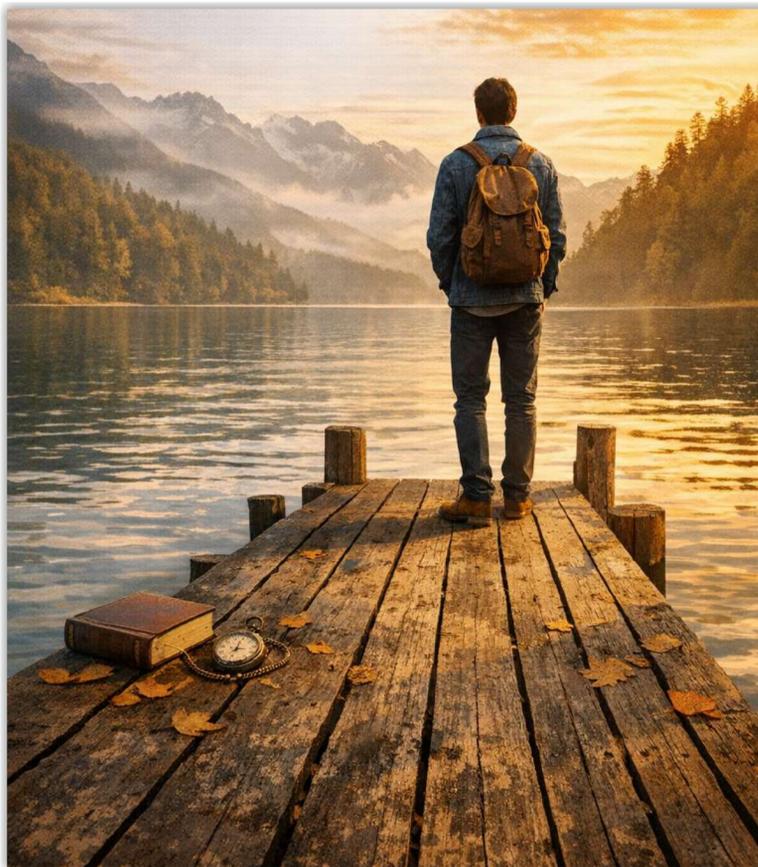
Furthermore, technical excellence without ethics risks legal and societal consequences. The Subhashitam "मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः; बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयम् स्मृतम्" teaches that the mind governs both bondage and liberation. Applied organizationally, this reflects the idea that decisions rooted in ethical awareness protect both individuals and institutions, while decisions devoid of moral consideration can result in litigation, financial loss, or public backlash. Ethical grounding enables technically skilled employees to make decisions that balance efficiency with compliance, innovation with responsibility, and ambition with fairness.

In conclusion, technical excellence cannot compensate for ethical shortcomings. subhashitam such as "धर्मेण हि मानवाः संज्ञन्ते, अन्यथा तु विनश्यन्ति," "फलमूलाश्रिता नित्यं नापि मूलफला वनाः," and "अन्येभ्यः परं कर्तव्यम्, स्वार्थं परित्यजेत् शीलवान्" highlight that skill without virtue is incomplete and potentially harmful. Technical brilliance can solve immediate problems, optimize performance, and enhance productivity, but without ethical grounding, it risks creating long-term damage to organizational culture, trust, and reputation. Organizations must therefore integrate ethics into recruitment, training, and leadership evaluation, ensuring that technical competence is consistently guided by moral reasoning, responsibility, and dharmic principles. When skills and ethics operate together, individuals and organizations achieve sustainable success, credibility, and resilience. The lesson from ancient wisdom is clear: excellence without virtue is hollow; true excellence arises when capability is harmonized with conscience. Be ethical, radiate your grace!

Ravi Singh

SOME ROLES ARE TEMPORARY, BUT THE LESSONS ARE PERMANENT

Life unfolds in chapters, and in every chapter, we are assigned different roles. Sometimes we are the friend who listens, sometimes the leader who guides, sometimes the learner who observes silently. Yet one truth remains the same, role is permanent. People enter our lives for a reason, a season, or a lesson. The maturity lies not in holding on to every connection, but in recognizing when it is time to stop, step away and grow.

Human relationships often feel permanent when we are completely involved in them. We build routines, emotional attachments, shared memories, and expectations. However, growth naturally changes circumstances. Career paths change, priorities alters, values evolve, and sometimes emotional distances widen without conflict. Not every separation is dramatic; many transitions are silent. The silence itself becomes the signal that the chapter is ending.

Temporary roles do not mean meaningless roles. On the contrary, some of the most powerful influences in our lives come from brief encounters. A teacher who mentored you for one semester, a colleague who guided you during a challenging project, a friend who supported you during a difficult year their presence may have been short-lived, but the lessons remain embedded in your character. The duration of a relationship does not determine its depth or its impact.

The difficulty arises when we try to hold onto roles that no longer fit. We resist change because familiarity feels safe. We fear that stepping away means failure, rejection, or loss. But clinging to a finished chapter often blocks new beginnings. Growth requires space. Sometimes that space is created only when we accept that our role in someone's story has been completed.

Knowing when to step away is an act of emotional intelligence. It demands self-awareness and dignity. It means understanding that your worth is not dependent on someone else's need for you. When appreciation fades, when communication becomes forced, or when your presence feels more like obligation than connection, it may be time to move forward. This is not about bitterness; it is about alignment. As people grow, their paths may diverge and that divergence is natural.

Stepping away gracefully also preserves self-respect. There is strength in exiting quietly rather than overstaying your relevance. Just as in professional life, roles are defined by phases. A student becomes a mentor, a trainee becomes a leader, a contributor becomes an independent thinker. Each stage prepares you for the next. Growth is not about staying in one place forever; it is about evolving with purpose.

The beauty of temporary roles is that they shape permanent wisdom. Every experience refines perspective, resilience, and emotional depth. When you look back, you may realize that certain people were not meant to stay they were meant to teach.

Ultimately, life continues to move forward. New chapters await, new roles emerge, and new lessons unfold. The key is to embrace transitions without regret. Appreciate the role you played, cherish the lesson you learned, and walk confidently toward the next stage of your journey. Because while roles may be temporary, growth is always permanent.

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DEGREE VS DIRECTION: WHAT ACTUALLY BUILDS A CAREER?

For generations, a degree has been considered the ultimate gateway to success. Families celebrate admissions, institutions showcase rank holders, and society often equates academic qualifications with capability. A degree undoubtedly opens doors. It signals foundational knowledge, discipline, and the ability to complete a structured academic journey. However, in today's rapidly evolving professional landscape, one crucial question emerges: Is a degree enough, or does direction matter more?

The modern career ecosystem is dynamic. Industries are transforming due to technology, automation, and digital disruption. Roles that existed five years ago may not exist today, and entirely new careers are emerging every year. In such an environment, merely holding a degree without clarity about one's goals can lead to stagnation. Many graduates find themselves employed yet unfulfilled, qualified yet uncertain.

Direction begins with self-awareness. It involves understanding one's strengths, interests, values, and long-term aspirations. A student pursuing commerce, engineering, or arts may share the same curriculum as hundreds of peers, but their direction differentiates them. One may aim to become a researcher, another an entrepreneur, and another a corporate leader. The degree remains common; the trajectory differs.

Moreover, employers today prioritize applied skills over theoretical knowledge alone. Critical thinking, communication, adaptability, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving abilities often influence career growth more than academic scores. A student with a clear direction actively seeks internships, certifications, networking opportunities, and real-world exposure aligned with their goals. In contrast, someone without direction may complete a degree passively, waiting for opportunities rather than creating them.
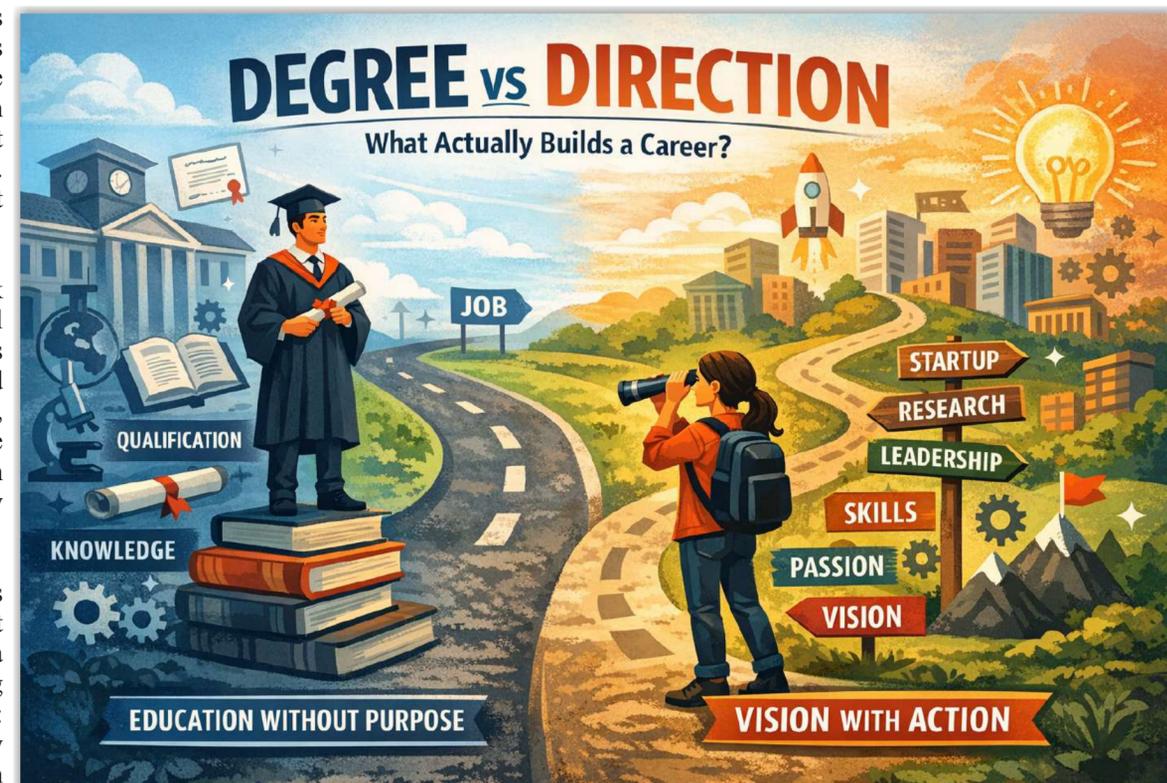
Direction also builds resilience. Career paths are rarely linear.

Rejections, failures, and unexpected shifts are inevitable. When individuals possess clarity of purpose, setbacks become learning experiences rather than permanent obstacles. They pivot strategically instead of drifting aimlessly. A degree may secure the first job, but direction sustains long-term progression.

This does not imply that degrees lack value. For education builds intellectual foundations and credibility. It fosters discipline and provides structured exposure to knowledge systems. However, the degree should serve as a tool, not the destination. When students view education as preparation rather than completion, they unlock greater potential.

In the contemporary world, careers are less predefined ladders more about evolving journeys. The traditional formula of "degree equals success" is being replaced with a more nuanced equation: knowledge plus clarity plus adaptability equals growth. Those who actively design their paths through continuous learning, skill enhancement, and intentional choices tend to experience more meaningful and sustainable success.

Ultimately, a degree can open doors, but direction determines which doors to enter. It shapes the questions we ask, the risks we take, and the opportunities we pursue. In an age of abundant options and intense
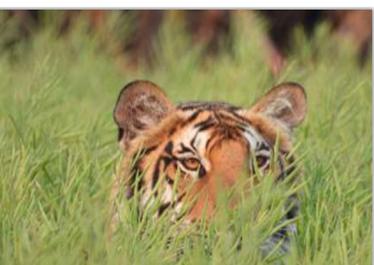

competition, clarity is a competitive advantage.

Therefore, the real challenge for students is not merely to earn a qualification, but to cultivate direction. When purpose aligns with preparation, careers are not just built they are designed.

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Afreen Mazgaonkar & Mohsina

FROM SAPLING TO TIGERS : UTTAR PRADESH GREEN TRANSFORMATION STORY

Uttar Pradesh, once criticized for pollution and deforestation, today emerging as a strong example of environmental revival. "From saplings to tigers" isn't just a slogan, it's a real journey showed how small efforts can yield massive results. In recent years, the UP government has launched large-scale plantation drives, planting crores of trees. This has not only increased greenery but also growth of employment in rural areas. Villagers are actively participating in turning this into a true public movement rather than just a government initiative. The most inspiring part is tiger conservations. Noticeable growth in tiger populations has been observed in areas like Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. This proves that with proper habitat protection and strict monitoring, wildlife can indeed be revived. The increasing forest cover is positively impacting on climate balance. Focus has also been placed on river cleaning projects and wetland conservation, improving biodiversity and stabilizing local ecosystems. Uttar Pradesh's model can serve as an example for other states, demonstrating that development and environmental protection can go hand in hand. Today, Uttar Pradesh is being recognized not just for its population or politics, but for its green transformation. This journey will shows that with strong intention and consistent execution, the path from saplings to tigers is truly possible.

INDIA STRENGTHEN ITS SPACE SURVEILLINE WITH ISS IMAGING BREAKTHROUGH

India has achieved another milestone in the field of space technology. Recent reports indicated that Azista company has successfully captured images of the International Space Station (ISS), giving India in-orbit "space watch" capability. This means India is now more capable of monitoring. This achievement is not just a technical success but also holds more importance. With space watch capability, India can keep an eye on satellites, space debris, and other orbiting objects. In today's time, when space activities are rapidly increasing, space surveillance has become very essential. It reduces collision risks and strengthens national security. Azista's capture of ISS images is proof that the Indian private space sector is also growing rapidly. However ISRO,

private companies are now contributing to advanced space missions. This is an example of "New Space India," where the government and private sector are working together to drive innovation forward. Experts believe that this development will be highly benefit in defense, communication, and scientific research in the future. At the same time, India's position in the global space race will become more stronger. This achievement shows that India is no longer limited to space exploration — it is now playing an important role in space monitoring and security as well.

HOW ANOUSHKA SHANKAR AND THE BANGASH BROTHERS JOINED GORILLAZ'S THE MOUNTAIN

The band Gorillaz established their collaboration practice through their current album The Mountain which features Indian classical musicians Anoushka Shankar and the Bangash brothers Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash as project contributors. The band known for its worldwide musical fusion recorded parts of the album in India which included Mumbai New Delhi Rajasthan and Varanasi as well as various studios located throughout Europe and the United States to create their international sound. Anoushka Shankar performs as a sitar master and composer who plays multiple tracks on the album to showcase her delicate playing abilities which contribute to the album's extensive musical range. The Bangash brothers who are recognized as master sarod musicians contribute their traditional Indian string sounds to The Mountain which combines multiple musical genres. The band established their authentic Indian sound through collaborative sessions when Gorillaz producers and musicians worked with Indian artists to create traditional Indian sounds that would fit their experimental soundscapes. Gorillaz selected these artists to demonstrate their goal of merging various musical traditions from different parts of the world with contemporary pop music to create an album that showcases diverse musical styles while maintaining authentic cross-cultural artistic collaboration.

INDIA CAN LEAD GLOBAL MARKET IN MEDICINAL PLANTS, SAYS AYUSH MINISTER

AYUSH Minister Manohar Agedewall said India will become a worldwide medicinal plants market leader because of its diverse biological resources and its extensive history of traditional medicine practices. India possesses unique advantages as a source of high-grade plant materials which support Ayurvedic Unani and Siddha medicinal and wellness product development worldwide. The minister identified natural plant-based healthcare products as the primary market opportunity which benefits Indian farmers and processing businesses and export companies. The Indian medicinal plants industry requires three essential developments which include better farming methods and processing improvements and new scientific research. The

government program provides farmers with training and certification and improved access to markets which helps them achieve higher agricultural output and financial success. Organizations are working to establish new quality standards for agricultural practices which will enhance their international market credibility. The Indian government wants to establish itself as a global authority in natural health products through its development of the global medicinal plants value chain which creates job opportunities in rural areas and boosts export revenues. India aims to gain a considerable portion of the expanding plant-based medicine market by combining its traditional knowledge with scientific research and its international marketing capabilities.

BHARATGEN TO LAUNCH 17 BILLION-PARAMETER MULTILINGUAL AI MODEL AT INDIA AI IMPACT SUMMIT

The BharatGen company will demonstrate its multilingual AI solution which uses 17 billion parameters at the India AI Impact Summit. The model delivers an essential advancement for India's national AI research framework which will enable multiple language applications throughout the country's different linguistic regions. The model with 17 billion parameters will demonstrate strong human language understanding and generation abilities which support tasks such as translation and summarization and content creation and conversational AI and additional activities. The system has multilingual functionality which enables users to communicate in multiple languages besides English and Hindi through its multilingual capabilities. The solution enables users to speak different languages which helps overcome digital language obstacles while making AI resources available to people who do not speak English. BharatGen has announced its plans to develop India's AI industry into a collaborative system where startups and research institutions and technology companies create large language models which fulfill local requirements. The BharatGen initiative is intended to create a National Artificial Intelligence (AI) system that aims to reduce dependency on global AI systems while fostering internal R&D. The India AI Impact Summit will help to demonstrate the capabilities of this National AI system to developers, businesses and policymakers by demonstrating how the technology has the potential to accelerate AI adoption in industries such as Education, Governance, Media and Healthcare. The actions being taken by BharatGen are in line with India's overall goal of becoming an international leader in AI innovation and enhancing technological self-sufficiency within the digital age.

INDIA--US TRADE DEAL: BALANCING RECIPROCITY IN THE MEDICAL DEVICE SECTOR

A new development has emerged in the ongoing trade deal between India and the US. The domestic medical devices industry has urged the government to ensure trade reciprocity (equal trade) with the US. The industry argues that if India is easing entry for US devices, the US should also provide fair and smooth market access for Indian medical devices. Reports indicate that India is considering simplifying some import norms and approval processes so that advanced US medical devices become available in India quickly. This will more

benefit for healthcare sector, as hospitals will get the latest technology. Patients have better treatment options. However, domestic manufacturers are concerned that if cheaper foreign devices flood the market, local MSME companies could suffer losses. The Indian medical device sector is currently growing under the "Make in India" initiative. Industry experts believe that the trade deal should be balanced — neither completely restricting imports nor ignoring local manufacturers. The government's challenge is to strike in the right balance between the healthcare affordability, technology access, and domestic industry protection. If this deal is implemented properly, India–US economic relations could grow stronger. At the same time, innovation and competition will increase in the Indian healthcare ecosystem. Now, all eyes are on the final agreement and the direction it takes.

Afreen Mazgaonkar & Mohsina

INDIA SECURE 29 RUNS VICTORY OVER USA IN THE T20 WORLD CUP 2026

India began their ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign with an explosive victory over the USA at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. Opting to bat first on a slightly slow pitch, India posted a competitive total of 132/8 in 20 overs. Scoring was not easy, but the Indian batsmen showed confidence and composure. The middle order played a crucial role, adding valuable runs, while a few important boundaries in the final overs helped push the total to a defendable score. The USA bowlers performed well, picking up timely wickets and maintaining steady pressure throughout the innings. However, when it was their turn to chase, the Indian bowlers took control of the game. Early breakthroughs during the powerplay created pressure on the USA batting line-up. The pacers attacked aggressively, and the spinners maintained tight lines, restricting the flow of runs. Sharp fielding, including key catches and a crucial run-out, shifted the momentum firmly in India's favor. Although the USA fought hard, the target proved challenging. India eventually secured a convincing 29-run win, earning valuable points and boosting team confidence for the matches ahead.

RAJA WINS 65 KG GOLD AT WEIGHTLIFTING NATIONALS

Indian weightlifter Raja won the gold medal in the 65 kg weight class at the National Weightlifting Championships through his strong performance which showcased both his physical power and his technical skills and his ability to compete. Raja defeated top competitors from across the country by performing both the snatch and clean & jerk lifts which helped him achieve a total weight that put him in front of all other competitors. Raja started the competition with self-assurance and accurate execution of his lifts which he performed with perfect technique and small amounts of deviation. The clean and jerk technique showed his special abilities when he succeeded in lifting heavier weights which he maintained during the lift. Coaches and supporters praised Raja because they saw his dedication to training which helped him gain confidence when competing at the national level. His victory not only adds a major accolade to his career but also strengthens his prospects for selection in future international competitions where Indian weightlifters aim to challenge regional and global rivals. Raja's gold medal victory, sends a clear message to young athletes in his home state that hard work and competing on an international level will enable them to achieve their dreams. His success will encourage new and young Indian weightlifters to strive for excellence, therefore increasing Indian weightlifting's worldwide recognition.

INDIA STUNS WORLD NO.6 NETHERLANDS IN HISTORIC DAVIS CUP VICTORY

In this thrilling Davis Cup encounter, India made big history by defeating World No. 6 Netherland. It wasn't just a win – it was a proud moment for Indian tennis. The star was Dakshineswar Suresh, who delivered an outstanding performance under pressure to gain the victory for the Indian team. In the starting, it was clear Netherlands was in strong side with their ranking edge in their favor. But the Indian players stepped into the court with real confidence. The first singles match had some early pressure on Indian team, but India gradually found their rhythm. Long rallies, powerful serves, and smart net play shifted the momentum on their way. Dakshineswar Suresh's fighting spirit was something to be hold. He battled for every point, never letting his opponent settle. When the match hit the deciding stages, he stayed calm at those crucial points. The fans support gave the Indians that extra confidence and support

too. This win is extra special because defeated a team like Netherlands isn't easy. This shows Indian tennis players have both talent and determination. For fans, the match was very emotional and inspiring – the underdogs challenged and create history in Indian tennis sports.

AMANPREET STRIKES GOLD IN 25M CENTRE-FIRE AT ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Amanpreet Singh achieved his first gold medal victory at the Asian Shooting Championships when he won the 25m Centre Fire Pistol competition. Amanpreet Singh

won the gold medal after competing against Asia's top shooters because he showed excellent shooting skills which he combined with fast movement and calmness throughout the match. The 25m Centre-Fire Pistol discipline requires shooters to demonstrate their shooting abilities by hitting targets while they face time limitations through two different shooting segments which include precision and rapid-fire segments. Amanpreet maintained his lead during the entire competition because he showed excellent shooting skills through both competition rounds which he used to maintain mental focus. India's international shooting success continues to grow through his victory which shows that India has developed many skilled shooters who compete at international level. Coaches and teammates praised Amanpreet for his discipline and dedication, noting that his rigorous training regimen and experience in previous international meets helped him deliver when it mattered most. The gold medal win increases India's championship total while it builds team confidence for their upcoming international competitions. The nation's pistol shooting success continues to demonstrate its strength through Amanpreet's achievement which inspires upcoming shooters to pursue their international shooting goals.

DRISHTEE GHOSH BAGS BENGALURU RURAL CHESS TITLE

Drishtee Ghosh has won the Bengaluru Rural Chess Championship after displaying exceptional abilities and tactical expertise during the entire competition. Drishtee faced district-wide opponents throughout the competition and achieved successful results through every match by demonstrating his ability to understand chess positions and perform precise calculations while executing his time management strategies. Drishtee maintained his concentration throughout the tournament while he faced challenges in middle-game situations and transformed his advantages into victories against skilled competitors. The championship tested participants across multiple rounds which required them to devise strategic game plans while Drishtee used his tactical skills to achieve victory in the competition. The family and coaches and fellow players of Drishtee celebrated his victory because they believed that the title represented a major accomplishment in district-level chess which would help him compete in future higher-level competitions. Drishtee's success demonstrates that young players in the region are developing a passion for chess while grassroots events serve as vital platforms for talent discovery. Drishtee Ghosh achieved this victory through his chess accomplishments which now provide him with a prestigious award that will attract future opportunities as he continues to compete at state and national tournaments. The victory provides motivation for Bengaluru Rural players who want to achieve their best performance in sports.

AKHIL MATHUR CLINICHES 50+MEN'S SINGLES TITLE IN THRILLING FINAL

The pickleball craze in India is increasing day by day, and we witnessed an electrifying clash in the 50+ men's singles final. In this ultimate showdown between Akhil Mathur and Virendra Kumar, experience, fitness, and strategy were all put to the test. From the start, both players displayed aggressive gameplay. Virendra Kumar built early pressure with his consistency and calm approach, winning initial points, but Akhil Mathur mounted a strong comeback. Their court movement and sharp shots clearly showed the hard work they'd put in. The audience cheered full of energy. As the match progressed, Mathur's confidence and control went on improving the match. He turned the game in his favor with smart shots and powerful returns. Virendra Kumar fought with hard till the end, but in the last stretch,

Akhil's experience and mental strength proved that too much.In the end, Akhil Mathur clinched the 50+ men's in singles title, putting his name in the spotlight once again. This win wasn't just a trophy, it was a result of dedication and passion of players. The match proved that age is just a number; true victory comes from hard work and confidence. The ending was a memorable moment for pickleball fans, one that will be remembered for a long period.

Dr. Smita Ravikumar Kuntay & Ajab Tinwala

SBI CIRCLE BASED OFFICER RECRUITMENT 2026

The State Bank of India (SBI) has released the Circle Based Officer (CBO) Recruitment 2026 notification for Junior Management Grade Scale-I posts. This is an excellent opportunity for experienced banking professionals to join India's largest public sector bank and build a stable career in the banking sector.

Organization: State Bank of India (SBI)
- Post Offered: Circle Based Officer (CBO)
- Total Vacancies: 2273 Posts
- Job Location: Across India

Eligibility Criteria
- Age Limit: 21 to 30 years (as on 31 December 2025)
- Age Relaxation:
- SC/ST: 5 years
- OBC: 3 years
- PwBD: As per Government rules

Educational Qualification
- Graduation in any discipline from a recognized university AND
- Minimum 2 years' experience as an Officer in a Scheduled Commercial Bank or Regional Rural Bank (RRB).

Selection Process:
- Online Examination
- Screening
- Personal Interview
- Local Language Test

Important Dates:
- Online Registration Starts: 29 January 2026
- Last Date to Apply & Pay Fee: 18 February 2026
- Last Date for Printing Application: 05 March 2026
- Online Examination / Interview: To be notified later

Application Fee:
- General / OBC / EWS: ₹750/-
- SC / ST / PwBD: Nil
- (Mode of Payment: Online only)

How to Apply:
- Candidates must apply online through the official SBI/IBPS portal. Complete registration, fill in personal and experience details, upload required documents (photograph, signature, thumb impression, declaration), pay the fee online (if applicable), and submit the application before the deadline.

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

SEBI YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM (YPP) 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 91 POSITIONS

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the regulator of India's securities and capital markets, invites online applications from talented and motivated young professionals for engagement under its prestigious Young Professional Program (YPP) 2026. Selected candidates will work on high-impact regulatory and market-development projects at SEBI Head Office, Mumbai, with a consolidated stipend of ₹70,000 per month.

Program Overview
- Post: Young Professional (Various Domains)
- Total Positions: 91
- Domains: Securities Market Operations (40), IT (29), Law (13), Rajbhasha (5), Research (4)
- Stipend: ₹70,000/- (all inclusive)
- Job Location: Mumbai
- Application Fee: Nil
- Last Date to Apply: 02 March 2026

Eligibility (Domain-wise)
- Securities Market Operations: MBA (Finance) / CA / CS / CMA / CFA + 1 yr experience
- Law: LLB (60%) + 1 yr experience in corporate/securities law
- Research: PG in Finance/Economics/Statistics etc. + 1 yr research experience (PhD exempt)

- Information Technology: B.E./B.Tech/IT/MCA/M.Tech/MBA (Systems/Analytics) + 1 yr experience
- Rajbhasha: Master's in Hindi/Translation + 1 yr experience & Hindi typing
- (Minimum 60% marks required in most domains)

Selection Process
- Application Screening
- Preliminary Interview
- Final Interview

Important Dates
- Notification: 08 February 2026
- Online Application: 10 February 2026
- Last Date: 02 March 2026
- How to Apply
- Apply online only through the SEBI website (Careers → Young Professional Program 2026).

Fill the form, upload documents, and submit before the deadline.

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

RRB LEVEL 1 RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 22,195 POSTS

The Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), under the Ministry of Railways, have released recruitment to various Level 1 posts under the 7th CPC Pay Matrix. This is a golden opportunity for 10th pass and ITI-qualified candidates to secure a government job in Indian Railways with attractive salary and benefits.

Organization: Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), Ministry of Railways
- Post Category: Various Posts in Level 1
- Total Vacancies: 22,195 Posts
- Job Location: Across India

Eligibility Criteria
- Age Limit: 18 to 33 years (as on 01 January 2026)
- Age Relaxation: As per Government of India rules for reserved categories.

Educational Qualification
- Candidates must have passed 10th OR ITI OR equivalent from a recognized board/institution.

Selection Process
- Computer Based Test (CBT)
- Physical Efficiency Test (PET)
- Document Verification (DV)
- Medical Examination

Important Dates:

- Online Registration Starts: 31 January 2026 (00:00 hrs)
- Last Date to Apply: 02 March 2026 (23:59 hrs)
- Last Date for Fee Payment: 04 March 2026
- Application Modification Window: 05 – 14 March 2026
- Scribe Details Submission: 15 – 19 March 2026

Application Fee:
- SC/ST/Ex Servicemen/ PwBD/ Female/ Transgender/Minorities/EBC: ₹250/- (Fully refundable after CBT)
- All Other Candidates: ₹500/- (₹400 refundable after CBT) (Mode of Payment: Online only)

How to Apply:
- Candidates must apply online through the official website www.rrbapply.gov.in�. Complete One Time Registration, select your preferred RRB/Region, fill in required details, upload documents, pay the fee online, and submit the application before the deadline.

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

Deepika Singh

QUIZ TIME

1. Which country signed a 2026 military cooperation plan with India and deployed a Liaison Officer to the IFC-IOR in Gurugram?

2. What is the fiscal deficit target for the financial year 2026-27 set in the Union Budget?

3. What is the name of the new life-saving scheme launched by PM Modi to provide ₹1.5 lakh cashless treatment for accident victims?

4. Which Indian state became the first to use AI-powered face-recognition technology for marking MLA attendance?

5. Which team defeated Kerala 1–0 to win their 8th Santosh Trophy title in February 2026?

6. At which international organic trade fair was India designated as the "Country of the Year" in February 2026?

7. What is the total corpus of the newly approved "Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0"?

8. Which Indian port became the first major port to achieve the IGBC Platinum Rating for sustainability?

9. Who is the 17-year-old student who became India's youngest "analog astronaut" during a lunar simulation in Dholavira?

10. Where are the 2026 Winter Olympic Games currently being held?

RIDDLES

BOLLYWOOD ACTORS

1. I am the "King of Romance" who lives in a house called Mannat. I am famous for spreading my arms wide and ruling the hearts of millions. Who am I?

2. I am known for doing only one film at a time and making it a masterpiece. Whether I'm a wrestler in Haryana or a student in an engineering college, I aim for 100% accuracy. Who am I?

3. I have an extra thumb on my right hand and I am widely considered the best dancer in the industry. I am also India's most famous superhero, Krrish. Who am I?

4. I wake up at 4 AM every day and do my own stunts. I've done more "Khiladi" movies than anyone else and I'm known for finishing films in record time. Who am I?

5. My voice is a deep baritone that everyone recognizes. I was the "Angry Young Man" of the 70s and I have been hosting India's biggest quiz show for decades. Who am I?

ANSWERS

I) QUIZ TIME

1. Greece
2. 4.3% of GDP
3. PM RAHAT Scheme
4. Andhra Pradesh
5. Services
6. BIOFACH 2026
7. ₹10,000 crore
8. V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority
9. Aditya Pandya
10. Milano Cortina, Italy

II) RIDDLES

1. Shah Rukh
2. KhanAamir Khan
3. Hrithik Roshan
4. Akshay Kumar
5. Amitabh Bachchan

KHANA KHAZANA

ASSAMESE BAMBOO SHOOT CURRY

This Week, We're Relishing Assamese Bamboo Shoot Curry (Vegetarian) – Earthy, Aromatic, and Comfortingly Traditional!

Bamboo Shoot Curry is a beloved Assamese delicacy known for its earthy aroma and mildly tangy flavour. Made with tender bamboo shoots gently cooked in mustard oil with simple spices and vegetables, this dish reflects the natural, minimalistic essence of Assamese cuisine. Lightly spiced and deeply aromatic, it pairs beautifully with steamed rice and celebrates the region's love for fresh, local ingredients.

Ingredients:

- Fresh bamboo shoots (finely chopped or sliced) – 1½ cups, Potato (cubed) – 1 medium, Mustard oil – 1½ tbsp, Turmeric powder – ½ tsp, Green chillies (slit) – 2, Cumin seeds – ½ tsp, Bay leaf – 1, Ginger (finely chopped) – 1 tsp, Salt – to taste, Warm water – as required, Fresh coriander , leaves – for garnish

Preparation

1. If using fresh bamboo shoots, rinse thoroughly and boil in water for 10–15 minutes to remove bitterness. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat mustard oil in a pan until it reaches smoking point, then reduce the flame slightly.
3. Add cumin seeds and bay leaf. Allow them to splutter and release aroma. Add hing (if using) and chopped ginger; sauté briefly.
4. Add the boiled bamboo shoots and cubed potatoes. Stir well to coat with oil.
5. Add turmeric powder, salt, and green chillies. Mix thoroughly.
6. Pour enough warm water to lightly cover the vegetables. Cover and cook on medium flame for 12–15 minutes until potatoes turn soft and flavours blend.
7. Sprinkle black pepper (optional) and simmer for another 2–3 minutes until the curry reaches a light gravy consistency.
8. Switch off the heat and garnish with freshly chopped coriander leaves.

Serving Tip:

Serve Assamese Bamboo Shoot Curry hot with plain steamed rice for an authentic experience. It also pairs well with dal and a simple sautéed green (xaak) on the side. This wholesome dish is perfect for light lunches, traditional festive spreads, or when you crave something rustic, nourishing, and rooted in regional flavours.