

A Weekly E-newspaper Initiative of the HULAHUL FOUNDATION

THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow



NURTURING NATURE, INSPIRING CHANGE: HULAHUL FOUNDATION’S 93-SAPLING GREEN INITIATIVE

HULAHUL Foundation organised a Tree Plantation Drive at Satsang Vihar, Badlapur, bringing together volunteers, community members and well-wishers in a collective effort to promote environmental conservation and contribute towards a greener and healthier future.

The initiative resulted in the plantation of 93 saplings, comprising 40 Mango, 30 Drumstick and 23 Jamun saplings. The plantation drive was undertaken with the objective of increasing green cover while creating greater awareness about the importance of trees, environmental responsibility and sustainable living.

The entire plantation activity received tremendous support from the Satsang Vihar Team, whose cooperation and active assistance played an important role in the smooth execution of the initiative. Their encouragement, participation and support reflected the spirit of community involvement and demonstrated how collective efforts can create meaningful environmental impact.

The event witnessed the presence of Dr. Kuldeep Sharma, Dr. Suraj Agarwala and Dr. Jyotsana Agarwala, whose participation and encouragement added value to the initiative. Their presence reflected the importance of bringing together individuals and institutions committed to social and environmental responsibility.

Representing HULAHUL Foundation, Mr. Ravi Singh, Chairman; Mr. Durgesh Kumar Dubey, Director; and Mr. Yogesh Gupta, President, were present during the plantation drive. The leadership of the Foundation actively participated in the initiative along with the volunteers, encouraging everyone to contribute towards the plantation and care of the newly planted saplings.

The volunteers formed the backbone of the entire activity. From preparing the plantation sites and digging the soil to planting the saplings and ensuring their proper placement, volunteers participated enthusiastically throughout the drive. Their teamwork and dedication transformed the plantation activity into a meaningful community engagement programme.

Speaking about the initiative, Mr. Ravi Singh, Chairman of HULAHUL Foundation, emphasised that environmental conservation requires consistent collective action. He highlighted that planting a tree is only the beginning; nurturing and protecting it is equally important. According to him, initiatives such as these encourage people to understand their responsibility towards nature and inspire communities to participate in building a sustainable future.

The plantation of 93 saplings also represents the Foundation's continued commitment to environmental and community welfare. Mango, Drumstick and Jamun were selected as part of the plantation, adding diversity to the green cover while creating a long-term ecological contribution to the area.

The participation of the Satsang Vihar community, volunteers and distinguished guests made the programme a meaningful example of community-led environmental action. The initiative demonstrated that when people come together with a shared purpose, even a single plantation drive can become a significant step towards a greener future.

HULAHUL Foundation believes that environmental conservation is not the responsibility of one individual or organisation alone. It requires the participation of citizens, communities, educational institutions, volunteers and social organisations.

Through such initiatives, the Foundation continues to encourage people to move beyond awareness and take direct action for the environment.

The Tree Plantation Drive concluded with a strong message of hope and responsibility: every sapling planted today has the potential to become a source of shade, oxygen, biodiversity and life for future generations.

With the plantation of 93 saplings at Satsang Vihar, Badlapur, HULAHUL Foundation has once again reaffirmed its commitment to its larger vision of creating impact, inspiring change and serving society.



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THE SAGE WHO FOUND GOD IN A PRISON CELL: A STORY OF SRI AUROBINDO

The year was 1908. In a cramped prison cell in Alipore, a man sat alone with his thoughts. The British Empire had arrested Aurobindo Ghose, the firebrand nationalist who had shaken the foundations of colonial rule with his fiery writings in **Bande Mataram**. They called him a terrorist, a conspirator, the mastermind behind bomb plots that threatened the Empire. But inside that cell, something extraordinary was unfolding.

Aurobindo had spent fourteen years in England as a young boy, sent there by his Anglophile father at the tender age of seven. He had studied classics at King's College, Cambridge, and even secured a rank in the Indian Civil Service exam. But when the time came for the final interview, the gateway to a life of privilege under British rule, he refused. He would not serve the Empire that had enslaved his motherland.

Returning to India in 1893, he worked for thirteen years in the Baroda service, teaching and learning Sanskrit while absorbing the spirit of Indian civilisation. But his heart burned for freedom. He joined the nationalist movement, became a leader of the radical faction alongside Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and demanded nothing less than complete autonomy 'Purna Swaraj' from British rule.

Yet it was in that prison cell that the revolutionary met his greatest adversary and his greatest friend: his own mind.

The Awakening: Solitary confinement can break a man. But for Aurobindo, it became a hermitage. He later wrote: "Though I have described it as 'imprisonment' for a year, it was, in effect, like a year's seclusion as in an Ashram or hermitage".

In the silence of his cell, he turned inward. He had made strenuous efforts for a direct vision of the Divine, but worldly desires and attachments had held him back. Now, stripped of everything his work, his freedom, his identity as a political leader he found what he had been seeking all along.

"The British Government's wrath had but one significant outcome," he would later reflect. "I found God".

He began writing a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. Mystical experiences flooded his consciousness. He later recounted that the spirit of Swami Vivekananda opened his eyes to

higher planes of consciousness. The prison walls dissolved. The bars became gates to infinity.

When he was acquitted and released on 6 May 1909, the man who walked out was not the same Aurobindo Ghose who had entered. "My return to the field of action would not be as the familiar Aurobindo Ghose of old," he wrote, "but as a transformed being with a transformed character, a transformed intellect, a transformed life and a transformed mind".

The Quest Continues: In April 1910, Aurobindo withdrew from active politics and set out for Pondicherry, then a French colony, on a spiritual quest. He would never return to the political arena.

In Pondicherry, he began an experiment that would redefine yoga itself. Traditional yoga sought liberation from the world escape from the cycle of birth and death. But Aurobindo envisioned something radically different. He called it 'Integral Yoga'.

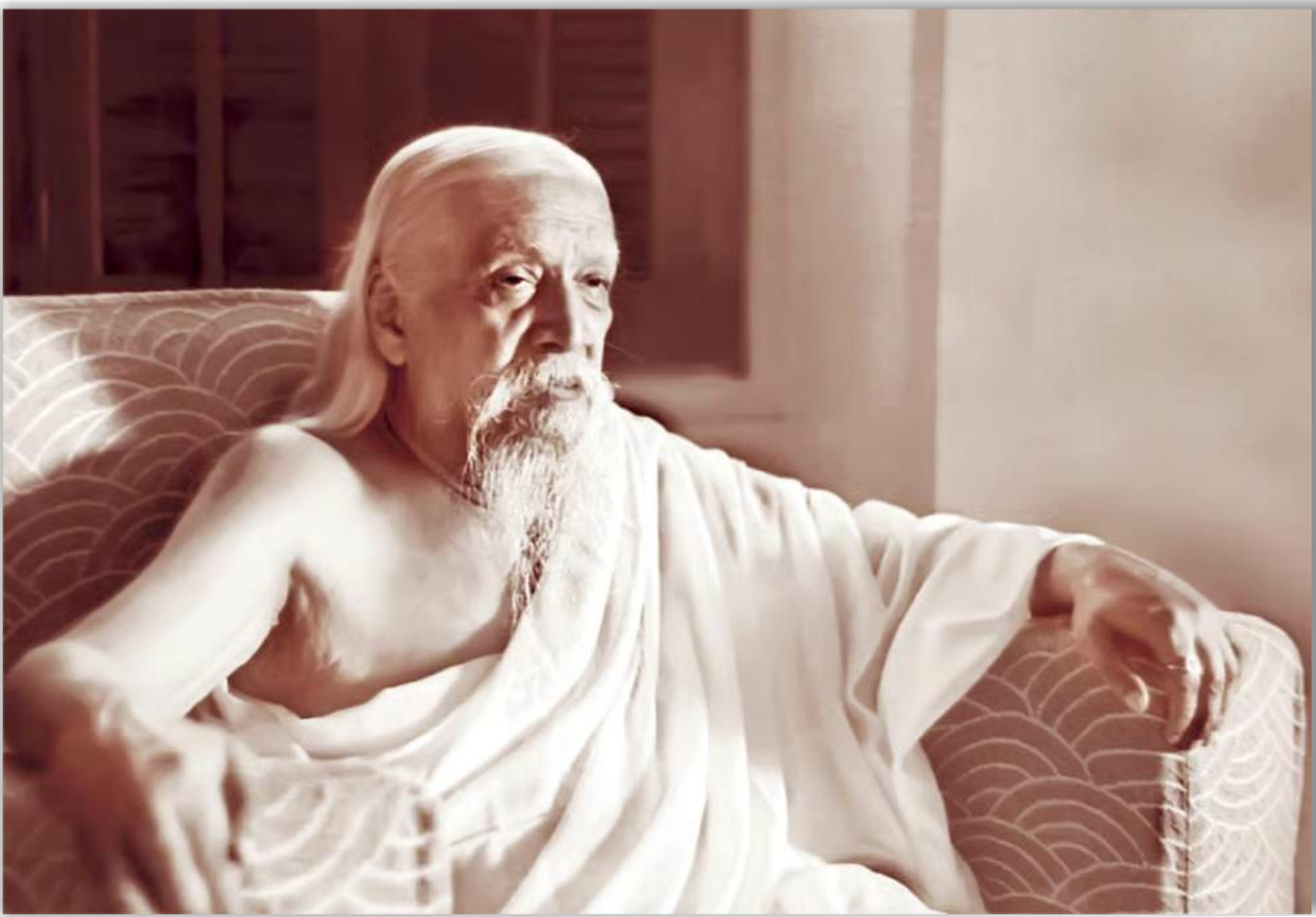
"The aim of the Integral Yoga is not only to enter into the divine consciousness," he taught, "but to bring it down on earth to transform mind and life and body". He did not seek to leave the world; he sought to transform it. His philosophy was a theory of spiritual evolution, the belief that human consciousness could evolve beyond its current limitations into what he called the "Supermind".

In 1914, he started a spiritual magazine called 'Arya'. Through its pages, he poured out his vision, a synthesis of Eastern wisdom and Western thought, a bridge between the ancient Vedas and the modern mind.

He wrote prolifically. His magnum opus, 'The Life Divine', presented a sweeping theory of

existence and evolution. 'The Synthesis of Yoga' laid out a comprehensive path of spiritual practice. And his epic poem 'Savitri', running to nearly 24,000 lines, transformed a simple tale from the Mahabharata into a symbol of the human soul's conquest of death and ignorance.

The Ashram and the Legacy: By 1926, a community had gathered around him. On 24 November 1926, Sri Aurobindo formally established the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry. He turned over its management to his spiritual collaborator, Mirra Alfassa known to followers simply as "The Mother"—and withdrew into seclusion.



Peace Prize in 1950. But awards meant little to him. His work was not for recognition; it was for transformation of the individual, of society, of humanity itself.

He left his body on 5 December 1950. But his work continues.

Sri Aurobindo's Contribution to the Indian Knowledge System: Sri Aurobindo stands as one of the greatest synthesizers in the Indian knowledge system. He did not merely interpret ancient wisdom; he made it speak to the modern world. His works: 'The Secret of the Veda', 'Hymns to the Mystic Fire', 'The Foundations of Indian Culture' unlocked the psychological and spiritual depths of the Vedas, Upanishads, and Gita.

He developed an original system of Vedanta called Integral Advaitism, integrating the spiritual insights of India's ancient sages with the evolutionary vision of modern science. He

argued that India's task was not to reject modern knowledge but to pour its own ancient spiritual knowledge into the world.

Perhaps most importantly, he demonstrated that spirituality is not an escape from life but its fullest expression. He showed that the great ideals of Indian civilization: 'dharma', 'yoga', 'moksha' are not relics of the past but blueprints for humanity's future.

Moral of the Story: Sri Aurobindo's life teaches us that transformation often comes through our darkest moments. It was in a prison cell, a place designed to break him that he found his truest freedom. His journey reminds us that our greatest obstacles can become our greatest opportunities, if only we have the courage to look inward.

His life also teaches us that true liberation is not about escaping the world but about transforming it. The goal is not to run away from life's challenges but to meet them with a higher consciousness to bring the divine down into the everyday, to make the material world a vessel for the spiritual.

Conclusion: Sri Aurobindo's journey from revolutionary to sage is one of the most remarkable transformations in modern history. Born into a family that embraced Western education, he became the first Indian to create a major literary corpus in English. A Cambridge scholar who refused to serve the British, a nationalist who found God in prison, a yogi who sought not escape but evolution, he embodied the synthesis that India has always represented.

His contribution to the Indian knowledge system is immeasurable. He did not merely preserve ancient wisdom; he reimagined it for a new age. He showed that the Vedas are not just ancient hymns but living guides to consciousness. He demonstrated that yoga is not just physical discipline but a path to human evolution. He proved that Indian philosophy is not a relic of the past but a vision for the future.

In the end, Sri Aurobindo's greatest teaching is this: the divine is not somewhere far away. It is within us, waiting to be discovered. And when we discover it, we do not lose ourselves, we become more fully ourselves, more fully human, more fully divine. The spirit shall look out through matter's gaze, he wrote, and matter shall reveal the spirit's face. This is the promise of his life and the possibility for all of us.

THE LAUGHING SAGE OF SAURASHTRA: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RATILAL MOHANLAL BORISAGAR

On a warm August day in 1938, in the small Saurashtra town of Savarkundla in Gujarat's Amreli district, a child was born who would go on to make an entire language laugh. Ratilal Mohanlal Borisagar's name is, today, inseparable from the very idea of Gujarati humour writing yet his journey there began not with jokes, but with quiet, earnest short stories.

Borisagar started writing around 1955, testing ideas of plot and character in the sober register most beginning Gujarati writers favoured. But somewhere along the way, his pen found its true rhythm not in tragedy, but in the lighter vein of everyday human folly. While building his craft, he was equally devoted to the classroom, teaching at the primary, secondary, and college levels in Savarkundla from 1957 to 1974 sixteen formative years shaping young minds even as he shaped his own voice. He complemented this with serious academic grounding, completing his BA, MA, BEd, and a PhD in 1989 on literary editing in Gujarati.

In 1974, Borisagar left Savarkundla to join the Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks in Gandhinagar as Academic Secretary, rising to Deputy Director (Academic) before retiring in 1998. It was during these years, in 1977, that his first book, Marak Marak, was published — and from then on, he committed himself almost entirely to writing in the lighter vein. The decades that followed brought a remarkable body of work: Anand Lok (1983), Sambhavami Yuge Yuge (1994), the acclaimed Enjoygraphy (1997), Tilak Karata Tresath Thaya (2002), Gyn-thi-k (2004), Bhaj Anandam (2007), and many more through to Ek Nahi Levayelo Interview (2022). Between 2012 and 2013, he undertook a project of quiet cultural significance re-editing all thirty-three of Hariprasad Vyas's classic Bakor Patel stories, nearly seventy years old, refreshing their language for new readers, the first such effort in Gujarati literature. He also wrote children's books, a biography of Ramanbhai Nilkanth (2017), literary criticism, and served as joint editor of the monthly Akhand Anand from 1999 to 2005.

Recognition followed steadily: the Jyotindra Dave Hasya Puraskar, multiple Gujarat Sahitya Akademi first prizes, the Ghanshyamdas Saraf Sarvottam Sahitya Award, the Dhanji Kanji Gandhi Gold Medal, and the Narmad Paritoshik. In 2019, his essay

collection Mojma Rehvu Re won the national Sahitya Akademi Award, and in 2026, the

Sheth Arogyamandir a completely free hospital in Savarkundla, where every



Notable Achievements at a Glance

- Padma Shri (2026) — for contribution to literature and education.
- Sahitya Akademi Award (2019) — for Mojma Rehvu Re, Gujarati literature's highest national honour.
- Jyotindra Dave Hasya Puraskar (1976–77) — for Marak Marak.
- Multiple Gujarat Sahitya Akademi First Prizes — for Anand Lok, Enjoygraphy, Tilak Karata Tresath Thaya, and Gyn-thi-k.
- Ghanshyamdas Saraf Sarvottam Sahitya Award (1997) and Dhanji Kanji Gandhi Gold Medal (2002).
- Kavi Dahyabhai Patel Sahitya Ratna Suvarn Chandrak and Sachchidanand Sanman (2011).
- Anantrai Raval Shikshak Award (2015) — honouring his contribution as an educator.
- Narmad Paritoshik (2017) — Maharashtra Rajya Gujarati Sahitya Akademi, Mumbai.
- First-of-its-kind editorial project — the 2012–13 revision of all 33 Bakor Patel stories.
- A hospital born of his teaching legacy — the free Shri Lallubhai Sheth Arogyamandir (2015), built by his former students.

Government of India conferred upon him the Padma Shri for his contribution to literature and education.

Perhaps the most touching testament to his influence lies in what his former students did for him. Thirty-six years after he left Savarkundla, in 2011, they established a foundation in his honour for literary and educational activities. In 2015, that foundation built the Shri Lallubhai

treatment, including operations and medicines, costs patients nothing. Even today, Borisagar continues to teach at Vishvakosh in Ahmedabad, guiding students in the correct use of Gujarati and the appreciation of short stories and poetry.

The Struggle Behind the Laughter

Borisagar's story reads today as one of

steady triumph, but it was never an effortless climb. His early years coincided with the demanding grind of a full-time teaching career in a small provincial town, far from Gujarat's literary centres. Writing had to be carved out in the margins of classrooms and, later, the administrative rigour of running academic operations for the state textbook board. For nearly two decades from his first short stories in 1955 to Marak Marak in 1977 he worked without a signature book to his name, quietly refining his craft while shouldering teaching duties and eventually relocating his entire life from Savarkundla to Gandhinagar.

The deeper struggle was one of literary legitimacy. Gujarati letters, like much of Indian literature, has long held poetry and serious fiction on a pedestal while treating humour writing as a lesser pursuit. Humourists were rarely considered "scholars" the way novelists and poets were, and Borisagar had to build his reputation in a genre the literary establishment did not always take seriously. He met this not with argument but with sheer consistency, publishing collection after collection over five decades and slowly proving that humour rooted in careful observation and clean language could carry real literary weight.

There was also the quiet labour of preservation rescuing the seventy-year-old language of Bakor Patel from becoming inaccessible to a new generation, a painstaking task with no precedent to follow. National recognition, when it finally arrived with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2019 more than four decades after his debut was validation long in the making, followed by the Padma Shri in 2026, a capstone to a career built patiently against the odds of genre, geography, and a working academic's demanding life.

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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.

India's economic transformation is no longer driven only by highways, factories, and financial institutions. It is increasingly powered by Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) an invisible yet powerful digital foundation. Platforms such as UPI, Aadhaar, and the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) are transforming the way businesses operate, consumers transact, and entrepreneurs build enterprises. What began as an initiative to promote financial inclusion has become one of India's greatest competitive advantages, enabling businesses of every size to thrive in the digital economy.

Today, a street vendor accepts digital payments as effortlessly as a multinational retailer, a small entrepreneur sells products across India through ONDC, and customer verification that once took days is completed within minutes using Aadhaar. The message is clear: India's digital foundation is not just transforming technology, it is redefining the future of business.

Understanding the Digital Foundation

DPI is a government-backed ecosystem that enables secure identity verification, instant payments, paperless documentation, and digital commerce. Rather than creating businesses, it provides the common digital rails on which banks, startups, fintech companies,

and enterprises build innovative products and services.

Its key building blocks include Aadhaar, UPI, ONDC, Digi Locker, the Account Aggregator Framework, and e-RUPI. Together, they are making commerce faster, more transparent, and more inclusive.

Why Businesses Are Embracing It

Every business seeks speed, convenience, trust, and cost efficiency and this digital ecosystem delivers all four.

UPI has revolutionised digital payments by enabling instant, low-cost money transfers. Today, it processes billions of transactions every month, making India one of the world's leading digital payment economies. Aadhaar has simplified customer verification, while ONDC is opening online markets by allowing sellers to connect with buyers across multiple platforms instead of depending on a single marketplace.

Example: A neighbourhood grocery store can accept UPI payments, complete digital verification when required, and receive online orders through ONDC, expanding its customer base without investing heavily in technology. The result is lower operating costs, faster transactions, and wider market access.

New Business Opportunities

This digital ecosystem has unlocked opportunities across FinTech, digital lending, merchant payment services, e-commerce, logistics, business analytics, digital identity, wealth management, InsurTech, and digital accounting.

Small retailers can now use their UPI transaction history to access digital loans, helping them expand inventory and improve cash flow without lengthy paperwork. Similarly, ONDC helps local businesses reach customers nationwide without depending on a single online marketplace. The impact is already visible in India's startup ecosystem. Companies such as PhonePe and Razorpay have built innovative payment and financial solutions by leveraging India's digital infrastructure, demonstrating how public digital platforms can fuel private innovation and business growth.

A New Era for Entrepreneurs

The greatest opportunities today lie not only in creating new products but also in helping others participate in the digital economy.

Entrepreneurs are tapping opportunities in digital payments, ONDC onboarding, fintech, e-commerce, digital bookkeeping, cybersecurity, financial literacy, digital marketing, and logistics.

Example: A startup that helps local retailers register on ONDC, create digital catalogues, integrate digital payments, and manage deliveries can build a scalable business without owning products or warehouses. In the new economy, enabling businesses is itself a thriving business opportunity.

Career Opportunities for Students

As commerce becomes increasingly digital, employers are looking for professionals who understand both business and technology.

Career opportunities are expanding rapidly in areas such as FinTech, digital banking, business analytics, product management, financial data analysis, risk and compliance, e-commerce operations, cybersecurity, digital marketing, and ONDC operations.

A commerce graduate with knowledge of Excel, Power BI, AI tools, digital payments, and business analytics can build a rewarding career without necessarily having a software engineering background.

The future belongs to professionals who combine business knowledge with digital skills.

The Bigger Shift



This transformation goes beyond technology. It is making commerce more inclusive by lowering entry barriers, improving access to finance, and allowing businesses of every size, from neighbourhood retailers to high-growth startups, to compete on a level playing field.

India is demonstrating that public digital infrastructure can create private innovation, strengthen entrepreneurship, and accelerate economic growth. The future of business will be built not only on physical infrastructure but also on trusted digital ecosystems.

The Take Away

Digital Public Infrastructure is simplifying payments, expanding financial access, and creating new opportunities for businesses, entrepreneurs, and professionals alike. It prepares students for tomorrow's careers while empowering businesses to innovate and scale.

India is no longer just building roads and bridges it is building digital highways on which the next generation of businesses will grow. Because in tomorrow's economy, success will belong not only to those who use digital technology but to those who create value on India's digital foundation.

EDITOR



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EDITORIAL NOTE

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

LITERARY CONCEPT
UNRELIABLE NARRATOR

An unreliable narrator is a storyteller whose version of events cannot be accepted completely as objective or truthful.

The narrator may:

- Misunderstand events,
- Deliberately conceal information,
- Exaggerate,
- Suffer from limited knowledge, or
- Interpret reality through personal bias.

Examples:

- The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger
- The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe
- Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn

Why is it important?

It makes the reader an active participant. We must decide what actually happened rather than simply accepting the narrator's account

DID YOU KNOW?

- One of the most famous extremely long novels is Marcel Proust's In Search of Lost Time.
- Originally published in seven volumes, the work explores memory, time, love, society and the experience of consciousness.
- Its opening volumes appeared in the early twentieth century, and the complete work is regarded as one of the landmarks of modernist literature.

GRAMMAR TIP

COMPARATIVE DEGREE

The comparative degree is used to compare two people, places, things, or ideas.

1. Short adjectives: add -er

- tall → taller
- bright → brighter
- fast → faster

Example: Mumbai is larger than Pune.

2. Adjectives ending in -y: change y to i and add -er

- happy → happier
- easy → easier
- busy → busier

Example: This book is easier to understand than the previous one.

3. Longer adjectives: use more

- beautiful → more beautiful
- important → more important
- interesting → more interesting

Example: Literature is more meaningful when we read it critically.

4. Irregular forms

Positive

- Comparative
- good
- better
- bad
- worse
- little
- less
- much/many
- more
- far
- farther/further

Example: This interpretation is better than the earlier one.

Remember

- Comparative degree + than
- A is + comparative adjective + than + B.

Example: Reading a novel is more engaging than reading a summary.

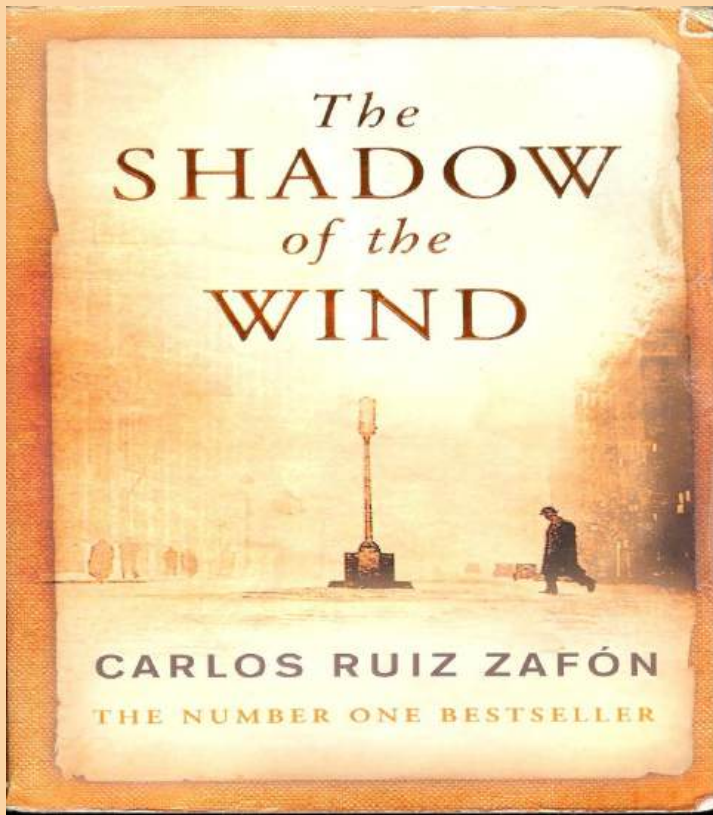
POET OF THE WEEK

Munshi Premchand (1880–1936)

Munshi Premchand was one of the most influential writers of modern Hindi and Urdu literature and is widely regarded as a pioneer of the Hindi short story and novel. Born as Dhanpat Rai Srivastava, he wrote with remarkable sensitivity about poverty, rural life, social inequality, caste, exploitation, women's lives and the struggles of ordinary people. His celebrated works include Godaan, Gaban, Nirmala, Sevasadan, Kafan and Shatranj ke Khiladi. Premchand's greatest strength lies in his realistic portrayal of society and his deep compassion for the marginalised. His literature transforms the lives of common people into powerful stories of human dignity, social justice and moral complexity, making his works enduringly relevant to readers across generations.

BOOK REVIEW

The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafón



Set in post-war Barcelona, The Shadow of the Wind follows a young boy who discovers a mysterious novel in a secret library known as the Cemetery of Forgotten Books. What begins as a search for the author's other works gradually becomes a journey through love, loss, political violence, secrets and the power of books.

Why read it? The novel celebrates reading itself, the idea that books can shape identities, preserve memories and connect strangers across generations.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“A word is dead when it is said, some say. I say it just begins to live that day.”

- Emily Dickinson

CREATIVE WRITING

THE GIFT OF INDIA

Is there aught you need that my hands withhold,
Rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold?
Lo! I have flung to the East and West
Priceless treasures torn from my breast,
And yielded the sons of my stricken womb
To the drum-beats of duty, the sabres of doom.
Gathered like pearls in their alien graves
Silent they sleep by the Persian waves,
Scattered like shells on Egyptian sands,
They lie with pale brows and brave, broken hands,
They are strewn like blossoms mown down by chance
On the blood-brown meadows of Flanders and France.
Can ye measure the grief of the tears I weep
Or compass the woe of the watch I keep?
Or the pride that thrills thro' my heart's despair
And the hope that comforts the anguish of prayer?
And the far sad glorious vision I see
Of the torn red banners of Victory?
When the terror and tumult of hate shall cease
And life be refashioned on anvils of peace,
And your love shall offer memorial thanks
To the comrades who fought in your dauntless ranks,
And you honour the deeds of the deathless ones
Remember the blood of thy martyred sons!

Poetry by
Sarojini Naidu

WORD OF THE WEEK

Serendipity

Meaning: The occurrence of a fortunate discovery by chance.
Example: Finding an old collection of letters in the library was a moment of pure serendipity.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

“Read Between the Lines”

Meaning: To understand a hidden or implied meaning rather than only the obvious meaning.
Example: If you read between the lines, the poem expresses a deep sense of loneliness.

MAHARASHTRA'S SEMI-ARID DISTRICTS MOST VULNERABLE TO FLASH DROUGHTS: 44-YEAR STUDY



A comprehensive 44-year study has revealed that Maharashtra's semi-arid districts face the highest risk of flash droughts, a rapidly developing form of drought that can emerge within weeks instead of months. Unlike conventional droughts, flash droughts are triggered by a combination of low rainfall, rising temperatures, and high evaporation rates, leaving farmers and authorities with little time to prepare.

The research highlights that regions such as Marathwada, Vidarbha, and parts of western Maharashtra are particularly vulnerable due to erratic monsoon patterns and increasing climate variability. Agriculture, which remains the primary source of

livelihood in these areas, is expected to bear the brunt of the impact through reduced crop yields, water shortages, and financial losses for farmers.

Experts warn that climate change is accelerating the frequency and intensity of flash droughts, making early warning systems, efficient water management, and climate-resilient farming practices more critical than ever. The findings underscore the need for policymakers to strengthen drought preparedness, improve weather forecasting, and promote sustainable agricultural practices to safeguard livelihoods and ensure long-term food security across Maharashtra's drought-prone regions.

WHY SNAKES ARE FARMERS' GREATEST ALLIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CROP LOSS

Snakes are often misunderstood and feared, but experts say they are among the most valuable allies of Indian farmers. A recent study highlights that these reptiles play a crucial role in controlling rodent populations, which are responsible for significant crop losses across the country.



Rodents damage standing crops, destroy stored grains, and spread diseases, causing heavy economic losses to farmers every year. Snakes naturally prey on rats and mice, acting as efficient biological pest controllers. Their presence reduces the need for chemical rodenticides, making farming more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

However, fear and misconceptions often lead to the indiscriminate killing of snakes. Wildlife experts warn that declining snake populations can result in a surge in rodents, increasing crop damage and disrupting the ecological balance. Most snake species found in

agricultural fields are non-venomous and avoid human contact, making them far less dangerous than commonly believed.

Conservationists are urging greater awareness about the ecological importance of snakes. They recommend protecting snake habitats and contacting trained rescuers instead of killing snakes found near homes or farms. Recognising snakes as natural protectors of crops can help improve agricultural productivity, conserve biodiversity, and strengthen India's food security while promoting harmony between humans and wildlife.

BREAKTHROUGH IN BIO-AGRI: INDIAN FARMERS SET TO CULTIVATE THE WORLD'S FIRST GENE-EDITED RICE THIS WINTER

India is poised to achieve a historic milestone in agriculture as farmers prepare to cultivate the world's first commercially available gene-edited rice varieties during the upcoming winter season. Developed by scientists at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), these innovative varieties represent a significant advancement in biotechnology, climate resilience, and sustainable food security.



emissions.

The two varieties, DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) and Pusa DST Rice 1, have been developed using CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technology. Unlike genetically modified (GM) crops, these rice varieties contain no foreign DNA, as scientists have precisely edited native genes to improve productivity and stress tolerance.

Pusa DST Rice 1 offers 10–30% higher yields under drought and saline conditions, while DRR Dhan 100 delivers nearly 19% higher productivity, matures 20 days earlier, requires less nitrogen, and helps reduce water consumption and methane

emissions. Approved under India's simplified SDN-1 and SDN-2 gene-editing guidelines, these climate-smart varieties are expected to lower cultivation costs, enhance resource efficiency, and strengthen farmers' resilience against changing climatic conditions. This landmark innovation reinforces India's commitment to sustainable agriculture while setting a global benchmark for the responsible use of gene-editing technology in crop development.

DAIRY GIANT HATSUN AGRO UNVEILS ₹1,000-CRORE CAPEX PLAN FOR FY27

Hatsun Agro Product Ltd (HAP), India's largest private-sector dairy company, has announced a ₹1,000-crore capital expenditure plan for FY27. The aggressive expansion aims to strengthen milk procurement, upgrade processing infrastructure, and expand retail distribution across domestic markets.

In an interview with 'BusinessLine', HAP Chairman R.G. Chandramogan stated that the planned investment will support the company's ambitious target to scale daily product sales from 1.84 crore packs to 2.4 crore packs over the next two years. Additionally, Hatsun plans to expand its retail footprint to over 5,000 outlets by the end of FY27, up from its existing 4,100 HAP Daily stores and 220 Ibaco parlors.

The capex strategy follows strong financial performance. HAP reported a revenue of ₹9,959 crore in FY26, a 14.5% year-on-year growth, and posted a 19% growth in Q1 FY27. Management projects full-year



revenues could approach ₹12,000 crore if momentum continues.

Alongside physical infrastructure, the dairy major plans to diversify its product portfolio by launching protein-rich beverages, premium chocolates, and new ice cream variants in the coming months, capitalizing on surging consumer demand for value-added branded dairy products.

TAMIL NADU PREPARES AGRICULTURE SECTOR FOR SUPER EL NIÑO CHALLENGES



The Tamil Nadu government has unveiled a series of contingency measures to protect farmers and agricultural production from the possible effects of a Super El Niño. Presenting the State Agriculture Budget, Agriculture Minister R. Vinoth announced that district-specific action plans have been prepared for the most vulnerable regions to minimise the impact of erratic weather conditions.

The preparedness strategy includes promoting climate-resilient crop varieties, efficient water management practices, timely weather advisories, and scientific farming techniques. Farmers will also receive technical guidance and necessary support to reduce crop losses and maintain productivity during adverse climatic conditions.

Apart from disaster preparedness, the budget focuses on strengthening irrigation infrastructure, improving water conservation, and increasing foodgrain production across the state. These initiatives aim to enhance the resilience of Tamil Nadu's agriculture sector while ensuring food security and sustainable farming.

With climate change making weather patterns increasingly unpredictable, the government's proactive approach reflects the growing importance of advance planning in agriculture. By combining scientific research with policy support, Tamil Nadu seeks to safeguard farmers' livelihoods and build a more climate-resilient farming system capable of withstanding future environmental challenges.

The measures are expected to help farmers adapt to changing climatic conditions while ensuring stable agricultural growth and long-term sustainability for the state's rural economy.

WEST BENGAL JOINS PM SHRI SCHOOL SCHEME



West Bengal has decided to join the PM SHRI (Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India) scheme, a flagship initiative of the Government of India aimed at improving the quality of school education. The decision is expected to strengthen educational infrastructure and provide students with better learning opportunities across the state.

Launched in 2022, the PM SHRI scheme seeks to develop more than 14,500 existing government schools into model institutions that offer modern infrastructure, a safe and inclusive learning environment, and education aligned with the principles of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

With West Bengal joining the scheme, selected government schools

will become eligible for infrastructure upgrades, including smart classrooms, science and computer laboratories, libraries, sports facilities, digital learning resources, and improved teaching practices. The initiative also emphasises skill development, environmental awareness, experiential learning, and the holistic development of students. Education experts believe that improved infrastructure and innovative teaching methods can significantly enhance learning outcomes, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. PM SHRI schools are expected to serve as model institutions by demonstrating best educational practices that can be replicated by other schools.

West Bengal's participation marks an important step towards strengthening the state's public education system. If implemented effectively, the scheme will provide students with modern learning facilities, improved educational experiences, and greater opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for success in the 21st century.

ANDHRA PRADESH, AUSTRALIA SIGN EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Andhra Pradesh government and the Australian government have signed four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to strengthen cooperation in education, student mental health, skill development, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing. The agreements were signed in Amaravati in the presence of Nara Lokesh and Julian Hill.

The MoUs aim to enhance collaboration between educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh and Australia by promoting education, research, innovation, and skill development. The partnership is expected to create greater opportunities for students, researchers, and professionals to gain international exposure and industry-relevant knowledge.

A key highlight is the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Solar Manufacturing at Indian Institute of Technology Tirupati through collaboration between the Andhra Pradesh government's Centre of Excellence for Energy Transition

(CoEET) and the University of New South Wales. The centre will focus on research, training, innovation, and practical learning in renewable energy technologies.

The agreements also emphasise student mental health, inclusive education, and workforce development to create supportive learning environments and prepare students for emerging career opportunities.

According to Minister Nara Lokesh, the MoUs are the outcome of the Andhra Pradesh delegation's recent visit to Australia and will strengthen cooperation in education, research, innovation, and employment. The partnership is expected to create valuable opportunities for students, teachers, researchers, and skilled professionals while deepening academic and technological ties between Andhra Pradesh and Australia.

CENTRE PROPOSES DRUG-FREE CAMPUSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The Centre has proposed a series of measures to make higher education institutions drug-free and create a safer and healthier environment for students. The proposed initiative gives importance to prevention, awareness, counselling and timely support for students dealing with substance abuse.

As part of the plan, colleges and universities may conduct regular awareness and preventive education programmes to educate students about the harmful effects of drugs and other addictive substances. Workshops, seminars, campaigns and interactive sessions could be organised to encourage students to make informed and healthy choices.

Another key focus of the proposal is counselling and support services. Students struggling with substance-related issues would be encouraged to seek professional assistance at an early stage. Strengthening counselling facilities within educational institutions could help students overcome such problems while ensuring that they receive support without facing unnecessary stigma.

The initiative also highlights the importance of cooperation among students, teachers, parents and educational authorities. A supportive campus environment, combined with proper guidance and regular awareness activities, can play an important role in preventing substance abuse among young people.

The Centre's proposal comes at a time when concerns over drug and substance abuse among youth are receiving increasing attention. A preventive approach can help address the problem before it becomes more serious.

If implemented effectively, the proposed measures could help colleges and universities provide safer learning spaces while promoting the physical, mental and social well-being of students. The initiative aims to ensure that campuses remain focused on education, personal development and building a positive future.

IIT DELHI, CISCO PARTNER FOR AI RESEARCH

The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) and Cisco have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen research, innovation, and skill development in artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and emerging technologies. The partnership aims to prepare students and professionals for the growing demand for advanced technology skills.

Under the agreement, IIT Delhi and Cisco will collaborate on research projects, innovation initiatives, and training programmes. The partnership will focus on AI, cybersecurity, networking, and other cutting-edge technologies that are transforming industries worldwide.

The collaboration is also expected to support workforce development by providing students and researchers with opportunities to work on industry-oriented projects and gain practical experience. Cisco's expertise in networking and cybersecurity will help bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world technology

challenges. The MoU will further encourage joint research and innovation by combining IIT Delhi's academic excellence with Cisco's industry expertise to develop solutions for current and future technological needs.

As AI and cybersecurity become increasingly critical across businesses, governments, and institutions, the initiative will help students acquire industry-relevant knowledge and improve their career prospects. It will also create a platform for students, researchers, and industry experts to collaborate on innovative ideas and technology solutions.

Education experts believe the partnership reflects the growing importance of academia-industry collaboration in promoting research, practical learning, innovation, and building a future-ready digital workforce.

MAHARASHTRA TO INTRODUCE ANTI-DRUG LESSONS IN SCHOOLS



In a significant step towards promoting student well-being and preventing substance abuse, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has directed the inclusion of anti-drug awareness lessons in school curricula across the state. The initiative will cover schools affiliated with the State Board, CBSE, and ICSE.

The proposed curriculum aims to educate students about the harmful effects of drug abuse, addiction, and substance misuse from an early age. It will also focus on preventive education, healthy lifestyle choices, and the importance of making informed decisions to protect physical and mental well-being.

Officials said the initiative is part of the state's broader campaign to build drug-free educational institutions and strengthen awareness among children and adolescents. Schools will be encouraged to conduct awareness programmes, counselling sessions, and interactive activities to help students understand the dangers associated with narcotic substances.

The government also plans to involve teachers, parents, and school communities in creating a supportive environment that enables early identification of risky behaviour and timely intervention. Experts believe that preventive education at the school level can play a crucial role in reducing substance abuse among young people.

Education and health professionals have welcomed the move, describing it as a proactive measure to safeguard students and promote responsible behaviour. By integrating anti-drug education into the curriculum, Maharashtra aims to equip young learners with the knowledge, values, and life skills needed to resist substance abuse and lead healthy, productive lives.

UPI STAYS FREE FOR USERS, BUT A NEW PAYMENT-FEE DEBATE OPENS UP

For millions of Indians, paying through a mobile phone has become as routine as carrying a wallet once was. A QR code at a tea stall, a grocery shop or a taxi counter is now enough to complete a payment within seconds. Amid growing concerns that this convenience could soon come with a price, the government has clarified that consumers will not be charged for using UPI. Person-to-person transfers will continue to remain completely free, while any future Merchant Discount Rate, or MDR, would be considered only for a limited category of merchant transactions.

The clarification follows Parliament's consideration of changes to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. The proposed amendment does not itself impose a UPI fee. Instead, it creates an enabling framework under which an MDR could potentially be introduced in the future. The final decision on whether such a charge should exist, and how it should be structured, would come only after the legislative process is completed and the designated UPI and Services Steering Committee, chaired by the National Payments Corporation of India, considers the matter.

The distinction between users and merchants is therefore crucial. The government has made it clear that ordinary people sending money to family members, friends or other individuals will not face a transaction charge. The overwhelming majority of merchant payments are also expected to remain free. Reports currently under discussion suggest that, if introduced, MDR could be restricted to higher-value business transactions above a specified threshold, with a possible rate of around 0.25 to 0.4 percent. However, this is not a final notified charge and should not be interpreted as a new fee that consumers have to pay today.

This means the everyday UPI experience is unlikely to change for most people. Payments for milk, vegetables, groceries, local transport and other routine purchases are not expected to suddenly become chargeable merely because the legal framework is being reconsidered. The proposed approach is essentially an attempt to distinguish between small, everyday digital payments and selected larger commercial transactions.

Behind the debate lies a larger economic question. UPI has grown at extraordinary speed, and maintaining such a vast payment network is not cost-free. Cybersecurity, fraud detection, data infrastructure, system capacity and technological upgrades require continuous investment. As digital payments expand further into rural and semi-urban India, policymakers are increasingly looking at how the ecosystem can become financially sustainable without damaging the affordability that made UPI so successful.

The scale of India's digital-payment revolution explains why the issue has attracted so much attention. In July 2026 alone, UPI processed around 2,366 crore transactions worth ₹29.9 lakh crore. The platform is also operational in 11 countries, underlining how an Indian payment system has evolved into a globally recognised digital infrastructure.

The debate, therefore, is not simply about whether a small fee should be charged. It is about who should ultimately bear the cost of maintaining one of the world's largest real-time payment networks. A sustainable funding model may be necessary, but policymakers face the delicate task of ensuring that new charges do not discourage small merchants, weaken digital inclusion or push consumers back towards cash.



For ordinary users, the message as of August 8 is reassuring: UPI remains free for consumers and person-to-person payments. The possible MDR framework is still a matter for future consideration and would, if introduced, be targeted rather than universal. India's digital-payment success was built on convenience and trust; preserving both will be the real test as UPI enters its next phase of growth.

INDIA CROSSES 300 GW CLEAN POWER MILESTONE, STRENGTHENING ITS RACE TOWARDS A GREENER ENERGY FUTURE



India has crossed a significant milestone in its energy transition, taking its installed non-fossil fuel-based power generation capacity beyond 300 GW by the end of July 2026. The achievement marks an important shift in the country's electricity landscape, as India seeks to meet rising energy demand while gradually reducing its dependence on conventional fossil fuels. More importantly, it places the country firmly on the path towards its ambitious target of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.

The scale of the transformation becomes clearer when viewed over a longer period. India's renewable energy capacity has expanded by around 400 per cent in the past 12 years, reflecting the rapid development of solar, wind, hydro and other clean-energy sources. India has now emerged as one of the world's largest renewable energy markets, with solar power at the centre of this expansion. The country has already crossed 213 GW of solar module manufacturing capacity, while installed solar-cell manufacturing capacity has reached about 32 GW, highlighting the growing importance of domestic clean-energy production.

The next challenge, however, is not simply to generate more

renewable electricity but to build an entire ecosystem around it. India still depends significantly on imported components for parts of the solar manufacturing chain, particularly at the upstream level. To address this gap, the government is considering an incentive mechanism to encourage domestic production of polysilicon, an essential raw material for solar cells and modules. The broader objective is to reduce external dependence and build a more resilient Indian supply chain, particularly in areas where global manufacturing remains concentrated.

The clean-energy transition is also beginning to change the economics of electricity. Renewable power is increasingly moving beyond the image of an intermittent energy source that works only when the sun shines or the wind blows. Recent round-the-clock renewable energy bids have sought to guarantee power availability for most time blocks, combining solar, wind and storage technologies. A recently discovered tariff of around ₹5.25 per unit for such renewable power indicates how developers are becoming more confident about delivering reliable clean electricity over long-term contracts.

This development could have important implications for ordinary consumers and businesses. As renewable capacity expands and round-the-clock supply becomes more practical, the average procurement cost for electricity distribution companies could potentially decline. Lower power costs, in turn, can support manufacturing, infrastructure and household consumption, while reducing exposure to international fuel-price fluctuations. Greater use of domestic renewable resources can also strengthen India's energy security by reducing the need for imported fossil fuels.

Another major opportunity lies in employment and industrial development. A larger renewable-energy sector requires engineers, technicians, manufacturers, project managers, construction workers and specialists in energy storage, digital systems and grid management. The expansion of domestic manufacturing could create another layer of economic activity around solar equipment, batteries, power electronics and related technologies.

India is also looking beyond its own borders. Cross-border electricity trade and regional renewable-energy cooperation could eventually allow countries to share power across different time zones and balance fluctuations in renewable generation. The idea of connecting energy systems across regions could give greater practical meaning to the vision of a global clean-energy grid.

Crossing 300 GW is therefore more than a symbolic achievement. It shows that India's energy transition is gaining scale, but it also highlights the work still ahead. Expanding transmission networks, developing storage, ensuring affordable financing, strengthening domestic manufacturing and maintaining reliable electricity supply will determine how quickly the country reaches 500 GW. If these challenges are managed effectively, India's clean-energy journey could become not only an environmental success story but also a major driver of investment, jobs, technological innovation and long-term energy security.

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Q. Evaluate the Contemporary
Relevance of Indian Knowledge
Systems in Addressing the Global
Rise of Depression

Ans. Depression has become a major public health concern due to urbanization, technological dependence, social isolation, academic and workplace stress, economic uncertainty, and fast-paced lifestyles. While modern psychiatry and psychology offer effective treatments, mental well-being increasingly requires a holistic approach addressing physical, emotional, social, ethical, and spiritual dimensions. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), rooted in the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Yoga, Ayurveda, and Buddhist and Jain traditions, provide timeless insights. IKS views well-being as harmony among body, mind, intellect, emotions, and spirit, offering a comprehensive perspective for addressing depression and promoting balanced mental health.

1) One of the greatest contributions of IKS is its emphasis on self-awareness. Modern life constantly distracts individuals with social media, digital entertainment, and endless competition, leaving little time for introspection. Many people become disconnected from their emotions, values, and purpose. Indian philosophy encourages individuals to understand their inner nature through self-reflection, meditation, and mindful living. Self-awareness enables individuals to recognize negative thought patterns before they become overwhelming and helps them develop healthier emotional responses. Understanding oneself reduces confusion, strengthens emotional resilience, and promotes psychological stability.

2) The practice of Yoga is perhaps the most globally recognized contribution of Indian Knowledge Systems to mental health. Yoga extends far beyond physical exercise; it is a disciplined way of living that integrates physical postures (Asanas), breathing techniques (Pranayama), meditation (Dhyana), and ethical principles. Scientific research conducted across many countries has demonstrated that regular yoga practice reduces stress hormones, improves sleep quality, enhances mood, increases flexibility, and decreases symptoms of anxiety and depression. Controlled breathing calms the nervous system, while meditation improves concentration and emotional regulation. As a low-cost and accessible intervention, yoga has become an important complementary approach in schools, universities, workplaces, hospitals, and community health programs around the world.

3) Meditation, another cornerstone of IKS, has gained widespread acceptance within modern mental healthcare. Depression often involves persistent negative thinking, excessive worry, and emotional distress. Meditation trains individuals to observe their thoughts without becoming overwhelmed by them. Instead of reacting impulsively to every negative emotion, practitioners learn to develop awareness, acceptance, and inner calm. Regular meditation has been shown to reduce stress, improve emotional resilience, enhance cognitive functioning, and lower the risk of relapse among individuals recovering from depression. Many modern therapeutic approaches, including mindfulness-based interventions, draw inspiration from ancient Indian meditative traditions.

4) Indian Knowledge Systems also emphasize the importance of Dharma, or righteous living according to one's duties, values, and purpose. One of the major psychological challenges faced by modern society is the loss of meaning. Many individuals experience depression because they feel directionless or disconnected from any higher purpose. The concept of Dharma provides individuals with a sense of responsibility, identity,

and contribution. When people understand their role within their family, workplace, and society, they experience greater satisfaction and self-worth. Living according to Dharma encourages ethical behavior, self-discipline, honesty, and responsibility, all of which strengthen mental resilience and reduce feelings of emptiness.

5) Closely related to Dharma is the principle of Karma Yoga, as explained in the Bhagavad Gita. Karma Yoga teaches individuals to focus on sincere effort rather than becoming excessively attached to success or failure. In today's highly competitive environment, people often measure their self-worth solely through academic results, career achievements, financial status, or social approval. This constant attachment to outcomes creates anxiety, disappointment, and emotional exhaustion. Karma Yoga encourages individuals to perform their duties wholeheartedly while accepting that outcomes are influenced by many factors beyond personal control. This attitude reduces performance pressure, cultivates resilience, and promotes emotional balance. Individuals become more engaged in meaningful action rather than being trapped by fear of failure or excessive expectations.

6) Another significant contribution of IKS is the concept of the three Gunas Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas which describe different qualities of the human mind. Sattva represents clarity, wisdom, balance, and peace; Rajas signifies restlessness, ambition, and excessive activity; while Tamas reflects inertia, ignorance, and hopelessness. Depression often resembles an imbalance dominated by Tamas, characterized by low energy, withdrawal, and pessimism. Indian philosophy recommends increasing Sattva through healthy food, disciplined routines, meditation, positive thinking, ethical conduct, and association with uplifting people. Rather than viewing depression only as a medical condition, the Guna framework offers practical lifestyle strategies for restoring psychological balance.

7) Ayurveda, the traditional Indian system of medicine, also contributes significantly to mental well-being. Ayurveda emphasizes preventive healthcare by maintaining harmony between body, mind, and environment. It encourages balanced nutrition, adequate sleep, regular physical activity, proper daily routines, seasonal adjustments, and stress management. Many lifestyle factors associated with depression, including poor diet, sleep disturbances, lack of exercise, and chronic stress, are directly addressed through Ayurvedic principles. Although severe depression requires professional medical care, Ayurvedic lifestyle practices support overall mental health and reduce vulnerability to emotional disorders.

8) Indian Knowledge Systems place considerable

emphasis on spirituality as a source of inner strength. Spirituality does not necessarily require adherence to a particular religion; rather, it involves developing a deeper understanding of life, cultivating hope, gratitude, compassion, and inner peace. Spiritual practices such as prayer, chanting, self-reflection, gratitude, and devotion provide emotional comfort during times of suffering. They encourage individuals to look beyond temporary setbacks and maintain hope even in difficult circumstances. Numerous studies have shown that individuals with healthy spiritual practices often demonstrate greater resilience, optimism, and emotional well-being.

9) The importance of social support is another enduring principle within Indian traditions. Ancient Indian society emphasized strong family relationships, community participation, festivals, collective worship, and mutual responsibility. Modern depression is frequently associated with loneliness and social isolation despite increased digital connectivity. Indian values such as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family), Seva (selfless service), and compassion encourage meaningful relationships and community engagement. Serving others creates a sense of belonging, purpose, and emotional fulfillment while reducing feelings of isolation. Social connectedness remains one of the strongest protective factors against depression.

10) Indian Knowledge Systems also promote ethical living through values such as truthfulness (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), compassion (Karuna), self-control, humility, gratitude, and contentment (Santosha). Modern consumer culture often encourages comparison, materialism, and endless competition, leading to dissatisfaction and emotional distress. Practicing contentment teaches individuals to appreciate what they already possess rather than constantly comparing themselves with others. Gratitude shifts attention from scarcity to abundance, improving emotional well-being. Compassion strengthens relationships and reduces interpersonal conflict, contributing to healthier mental states.

However, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) should complement, not replace, professional psychiatric care, especially in severe depression. Practices such as yoga, meditation, mindfulness, ethical living, gratitude, selfless service, and compassion can support emotional well-being, resilience, and balance when integrated with evidence-based healthcare.

WHY LONELINESS IS OFTEN THE BEGINNING OF BECOMING WHO YOU'RE MEANT TO BE



There comes a point in everyone's life when the world no longer feels as simple as it once did. As children, we are taught to be kind, respectful, and polite. We laugh freely, make friends effortlessly, and believe that goodness alone is enough to navigate life. During those years, acceptance comes naturally because we rarely question the world around us.

But with time comes maturity. We begin to understand the

difference between right and wrong, truth and convenience, values and validation. We stop agreeing with everything simply to fit in and start making choices that reflect our own conscience. Sometimes, we speak up against what feels unfair. Sometimes, we refuse to compromise our principles even when remaining silent would be easier.

That is often the moment when life begins to feel lonely.

The people who once stood beside us may slowly drift away. Some dislike honesty because it exposes uncomfortable truths. Others simply cannot walk the same path we have chosen. What once felt like a close circle starts becoming smaller, and suddenly, we find ourselves wondering if standing by our values was worth the loneliness.

The silence can be painful. It can make you question yourself. You may begin to think that you have lost everyone, that perhaps you should have stayed quiet or ignored your beliefs just to belong. Loneliness has a way of convincing us that we are moving in the wrong direction.

But what if that loneliness isn't a sign that you're lost?

What if it is simply a sign that you're growing?

Growth has a quiet way of changing our lives. It asks us to leave behind places, habits, and even people who no longer align with the person we are becoming. Not everyone is meant to walk every chapter of our

journey. Some people belong to our past, while others are waiting to meet the version of us that is still being shaped. If you are in that lonely phase today, don't mistake it for failure.

It is okay to be alone. Being alone does not mean you are unloved, unwanted, or on the wrong path. It simply means that life is creating space for the people who will understand your values instead of asking you to sacrifice them.

Do not let loneliness convince you to settle for the wrong company. Do not allow temporary silence to make you doubt your worth. The hardest seasons often prepare us for the strongest versions of ourselves. Remember, every season has an end.

The loneliness you feel today is not your destination, it is a passage. One day, you will look back and realize that this quiet phase was teaching you resilience, self-respect, and independence. It was preparing you for relationships built on trust rather than convenience, and for a life where you no longer need to shrink yourself to be accepted.

So, if today you find yourself walking alone, keep walking.

This is a season, not a lifetime. The road may feel empty now, but it won't remain that way forever. Better days will come. Better people will come. And when they do, you'll be grateful that you never abandoned yourself just to avoid being alone.

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING LEFT TO LEARN

You don't have to know everything. Sometimes, the smartest thing you can do is admit that you don't.

There is a quiet strength in being willing to learn. We often grow up believing that knowing everything makes us intelligent, capable and confident. We hesitate to ask questions because we are afraid that people might judge us for not knowing something. But the truth is simple: not knowing is not a weakness. Refusing to learn is.

Always carry a mindset of learning with you. Even when you think you know exactly what to do, pause and give someone else the opportunity to teach you. Listen to different perspectives. Ask questions. Observe how others approach a situation. You may already know one way of doing something, but someone else might show you a better way.

Learning does not always mean sitting in a classroom with a book in front of you. Sometimes, learning happens through conversations, mistakes, experiences and even people who know less than you in certain areas. Every person has something to teach us if we are humble enough to listen.

There is also a difference between being confident and pretending to know everything. Confidence allows you to say, "I know this, but I am willing to learn more." Ego says, "I already know everything; I don't need anyone's help."

The first attitude helps you grow. The second keeps you stuck.

Sometimes, when we know how to do a task, we take complete responsibility for it. We think it will be faster if we do everything ourselves. We may even become frustrated when others do not understand what we already know. But instead of carrying all the work alone, try

teaching them.

When you allow another person to learn, you are not making yourself less important. You are empowering them. You are helping them become independent, confident and capable. And surprisingly, while teaching someone else, you may learn something yourself.

Growth becomes meaningful when it is shared.

We should also remember that learning is not supposed to end after school or college. The world keeps changing, and so should we. New ideas, technologies, people and experiences constantly challenge what we already believe. Staying curious keeps our minds open and prevents us from becoming comfortable with limited knowledge.

So, never feel embarrassed about asking questions. Never feel ashamed of saying, "I don't know." Those three words can be the beginning of something valuable.

Question what you are being taught. Understand the reason behind it. Listen to different answers. Keep asking until you are satisfied, not because you want to prove someone wrong, but because you genuinely want to understand.

At the end of the day, learning is not about proving that you are the smartest person in the room. It is about becoming a little wiser than you were yesterday.

Keep learning. Keep questioning. Keep listening. And most



importantly, remain humble enough to let others teach you.

Because the moment we believe we have nothing left to learn is often the moment we stop growing.

INDIA HOSTS 2ND BRICS ANTI-CORRUPTION MEETING IN HYDERABAD

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) hosted the 2nd BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) Meeting and the 2nd Meeting of the BRICS Expert Network on Asset Recovery in Hyderabad on August 4–5 under India's BRICS Presidency. The Meeting was built upon the outcomes of the 1st ACWG meeting, which was held virtually on June 2–3, 2026. Aligned with the presidency theme, “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability” the summit focused on tracing fugitive economic offenders, facilitating extradition proceedings, and recovering illicit assets. Inaugurating the event, DoPT Secretary Rachna Shah emphasized that no jurisdiction should become a sanctuary for financial criminals and urged member nations to translate shared mandates into practical law-enforcement cooperation, citing the misuse of emerging financial technologies as an evolving challenge. She also mentioned continuous anti-corruption efforts noting that evolving corrupt practices require leverage of technology and stronger international cooperation to tackle key issues such as asset recovery and fugitive offenders. A dedicated side event titled "Ethical Governance through Innovation and Tech-Driven Systems" was held where delegates exchanged best practices in technology enabled administration including digital public procurement, transparent service delivery, citizen participation and preventive oversight systems to improve integrity in public institutions.



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI LAUNCHES NASHA
MUKT YUVA ABHIYAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the "Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan" on August 2 addressing over one crore citizens across 28,000 locations through video conferencing. The initiative aims to build a drug-free, physically and mentally robust youth population aligning with the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. Guided by this vision, the Government established MY Bharat as a one stop solution to provide young people with opportunities for volunteering, leadership, mentorship, and national service. The initiative is supported by more than 125 spiritual organizations and numerous NGOs under the Kashi Declaration. Union Minister of State of Youth Affairs and Sports, Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse, 26 Governors and 11 Chief Ministers also joined the nationwide movement which incorporates sports, cultural and meditation events organized every Sunday for 100 weeks. University professors will also incorporate anti-drug discussions into their regular curricula and launch dedicated campus movements. Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports highlighted that this initiative marks a significant milestone in national progress. Rejecting the social stigma, the Prime Minister said that recovering individuals deserve respect and a second chance, praising them as real warriors whose incredible courage serves as their true identity.



'SPIDER-MAN: BRAND NEW DAY' SHATTERS BOX OFFICE RECORDS
WORLDWIDE

'Spider-Man: Brand New Day' has become a massive box office hit in cinemas, marking the second highest global opening weekend collection of all time. Picking up after the events of 'Spider-Man: No Way Home,' the film is directed by Destin Daniel Cretton and written by Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers with Tom Holland returning as Peter Parker/Spider-Man. In this installment, Peter continues to fight street level crime in New York City while facing a mysterious new entity that threatens the city. The film features returning cast members Zendaya, Jacob Batalon, Jon Bernthal, Michael Mando, and Mark Ruffalo, along with fresh actors and actresses Sadie Sink, Tramell Tillman, Liza Colón-Zayas, and Marvin Jones III. Produced by Sony Pictures in association with Marvel Studios, the film earned \$360.1 million domestically in its opening weekend and launched to an extraordinary \$932 million globally. Notably it has marked success before 'Avengers: Doomsday.' Captivating audiences worldwide, the film crossed the ₹300 crore mark in India over its opening weekend, a feat previously set by 'Avengers: Endgame.' Following its exceptional performance. IMAX further revised its exhibition schedules to split screen time between 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day' and Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey.'



YAMUNA FAECAL POLLUTION LEVEL SHOWS SLIGHT DECLINE

Faecal coliform levels in the Yamuna showed a slight improvement at several monitoring locations in July compared with June, indicating a marginal reduction in untreated sewage entering the river. However, pollution levels remain far above permissible limits, while Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) readings continue to paint a grim picture of the river's health, according to the latest Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) report. The DPCC monitors the river's water quality every month by collecting samples from seven locations in Delhi—Palla, Wazirabad, ISBT, ITO, Nizamuddin Bridge, Okhla Barrage and Asgarpur in Haryana. The samples are tested for parameters including BOD, dissolved oxygen, chemical oxygen demand, pH and faecal coliform to assess pollution levels. The July report showed improvement in faecal coliform levels at four locations. At Palla, the count declined from 2,800 MPN/100 ml in June to 2,100 MPN/100 ml in July. Wazirabad recorded a drop from 4,300 to 3,MPN/100 ml, while ITO Bridge improved from 1,000 to 120,000 MP/10ml. Asgarpur also registered an improvement, with levels declining from 390,000 to 320,000 MPN/100 ml. Faecal coliform levels remained unchanged at IBridge(,000 M/100 ml) and Okhla Barrage (110,000 MPN/10ml). However, Nizamuddin Bridge recorded a slight deterioration, with the level rising from 120,000 to 130,000MPN/100 ml.



INDIA'S FIRST PRIVATELY-BUILT 800 KN FFSC ENGINE UNVEILED

Weeks after India's private space sector achieved a major milestone by launching Vikram-1, the country's first privately developed orbital rocket, a Bengaluru based space company unveiled India's first privately built 800 kN Full-Flow Staged Combustion (FFSC) LOX-Methane rocket engine. Neeraj Khandelwal the co-founder and CEO of Astrobase Space Technologies said that the engine, named EVEREST, has been developed by Astrobase making it only the fourth commercial company to successfully develop a high thrust flow FFSC engine globally. The company said that with this, India has become the fourth nation to have FFSC engine technology after Russia, the U.S., and China. Astrobase Space Technologies said that the unveiling of EVEREST marks a significant milestone in the company's efforts to strengthen India's indigenous launch infrastructure and advance reusable launch capabilities. It added that it is also building the complete industrial chain required for launch, from engine manufacturing and high-flow testing to stage integration, vehicle qualification and launch operations. It said that all critical propulsion design authority, system engineering, manufacturing knowledge, software, test data and mission configuration will remain under Indian control. The next major milestone for the programme will be the full-engine hot-fire test, followed by vehicle integration and orbital launch development.



INDIA TESTS-FIRES BALLISTIC MISSILE AGNI-4

India successfully conducted the test-firing of its medium-range ballistic missile, Agni-4, from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandpur, Odisha, on August 6. The test was carried out under the supervision of the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), the organization responsible for managing and operating India's strategic nuclear forces. According to the Ministry of Defence, the launch successfully validated all the missile's operational and technical parameters, demonstrating its reliability, accuracy, and readiness for deployment. The Agni-4 is an advanced, indigenously developed surface-to-surface ballistic missile capable of carrying conventional or strategic payloads over a range of approximately 4,000 kilometres. Equipped with advanced navigation, guidance, and avionics systems, the missile significantly strengthens India's strategic deterrence capabilities. The successful test highlights India's continued progress in strengthening its indigenous defence technology under the "Make in India" initiative. It also reinforces the country's commitment to maintaining a credible minimum deterrence and ensuring national security in a rapidly evolving regional security environment. Regular testing of strategic missile systems like Agni-4 is essential to verify their operational effectiveness and maintain the readiness of India's defence forces. The successful launch further demonstrates the nation's growing technological expertise in missile development and enhances confidence in the capabilities of India's strategic defence infrastructure.



INDIA'S SURAJ KUMAR CHANDCLAIMS THE MEN'S SINGLES GOLD AT FISU WORLD SQUASH

India's Suraj Kumar Chand clinched the men's singles title at the 2026 FISU World University Championship Squash after defeating Hungary's Benedek Takacs in a thrilling five-game final, while Spain's Marta Dominguez Fernandez won the women's singles crown in Mumbai on Thursday. Representing both India and Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Suraj overcame Takacs 3-2 in a hard-fought contest. After the two finalists were locked at two games apiece, the Indian produced a dominant display in the decider, winning it 11-4 to secure the gold medal in front of a jubilant home crowd, according to a release. Suraj Kumar held his nerve in a gripping five-game final to clinch the men's singles gold medal on home soil, while Marta Dominguez Fernandez showcased exceptional composure and attacking brilliance to secure Spain's women's singles title. The men's final delivered everything a championship match promised. With the home crowd firmly behind him, Suraj produced his best squash of the match in the decider, racing to an 11-4 victory to seal a 3-2 triumph, sparking jubilant celebrations across the venue. The victory marked a major achievement for Indian university squash, with Suraj becoming the men's singles champion on home soil. Takacs settled for the silver medal, earning Hungary its first international squash medal in two decades.



YAMINI MAURYA SECURES 57KG SILVER IN HISTORIC COMMONWEALTH JUDO CAMPAIGN

Yamini Maurya kinda added yet another medal for India at the 2026 Commonwealth Games, grabbing the silver medal in the women's 57kg judo category. That podium moment was a big milestone again for Indian judo, because Yamini Maurya helped India collect its third judo medal at the Commonwealth Games. Before that, Asmita Dey and Harsh Singh wrote history of their own, by taking India's first ever Commonwealth Games gold medals in judo. Training at the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS), Yamini Maurya has steadily progressed through the ranks of Indian judo, with the Commonwealth Games silver marking the latest milestone in her career. The medal further underlines the growing strength of Indian judo on the international stage and caps off a memorable campaign for the Indian contingent. Ahead of the Commonwealth Games, Yamini had spoken to IIS TV about the journey that brought her to one of the biggest stages in international sport. Looking back after her silver medal-winning campaign, her words reflected just how far she had come, the release said. Her journey to the Commonwealth Games podium was not without setbacks. After undergoing surgery in 2024, Yamini spent nearly a year away from the mat before returning to competition.



ASHMITA CHALIHA SCRIPTS HISTORY, CLINCHES KOREA MASTERS TITLE

Following Tanvi Sharma's breakthrough victory at the Taipei Open, Indian shuttler Ashmita Chaliha defeated fourth seeded Han Qianxi in the women's singles final of the Korea Masters. Held from August 4 to August 9, 2026, at the Yi Sun-sin Gymnasium in Asan, South Korea. The tournament saw the 26 year old bounce back from a game down to defeat her Chinese opponent 14-21, 21-14, 21-14 in 53 minutes. Notably, Chaliha became the first Indian woman to win the Korea Masters, a BWF Super 300 tournament. Chaliha started the final strongly by opening up an early 9-5 lead in the first set, though Han surged back with five consecutive points to gain momentum and take the opening game. However, the Indian shuttler raised her game in the following two sets to secure the title, joining an elite group of Indian women's singles players including Saina Nehwal, PV Sindhu, Devika Sihag, and Tanvi Sharma who have won a BWF World Tour title. Following her victory, Chaliha expressed that she felt great and found the achievement unbelievable, adding that she was trying to process the moment and remained hungry for more success.



INDIAN BOXERS DOMINATE AT COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2026

Indian boxers delivered an exceptional performance on the global stage at the CWG held in Glasgow. In the women's 54kg final, Preeti set the tone by claiming gold with a dominant 5-0 victory over Canada's Scarlett Delgado. Reigning world champion Jaismine duplicated that scoreline in the women's 57kg, dethroning defending champion Michaela Walsh of Northern Ireland after landing decisive blows to win the second round unanimously. India's dominance continued across divisions. Arundhati Choudhary outclassed England's Chantelle Reid 5-0 in the women's 70kg final, while Sakshi swept past England's Ruby White 5-0 to take the women's 51kg title. In a tougher contest, Priya clinched the women's 60kg gold with a hard fought 4-1 split decision over Canada's Marie-Bathoul Al-Ahmadih. In the men's events, Ankush Panghal secured India's seventh boxing gold with a 4-1 split decision over England's Dimeji Shittu in the 80kg final. Meanwhile, Sachin Siwach defeated Namibia's Tryagain Morning Ndevelo to capture top honors in the men's 60kg category. The only setback came in the men's division, where Jadumani lost 0-5 to Australia's taller fighter Jye Dixon. Despite taking the opening round 3-2, Jadumani was outmaneuvered as Dixon mounted a brilliant comeback in the final two rounds to claim gold.



BHATTACHARJEE AND GHORPADE CREATE HISTORY AT CWG'26

Indian table tennis players scripted history at the Commonwealth Championships in Glasgow, as Ankur Bhattacharjee and Yashaswini Ghorpade clinched the Men's and Women's Singles titles respectively completing a dominant sweep for the nation. In the Men's Singles final, Bhattacharjee emerged as a deserving 4-3 winner over Payas Jain (11-8, 9-11, 7-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-4, 11-9). Payas looked set for victory after opening a 7-4 lead in the deciding game. However, a strategic timeout called by Bhattacharjee disrupted his opponent's rhythm allowing him to fight back and level the score at 8-8. He then edged ahead to 10-9 before sealing the championship 11-9 when Payas return drifted long. Meanwhile, the Women's Singles final saw Yashaswini Ghorpade deliver a commanding performance to defeat Sreeja Akula (11-6, 11-1, 8-11, 11-7, 13-11). Ghorpade demonstrated early dominance by winning the first two games. Although Sreeja responded, admirably, by grabbing game three 11-8 to keep her hopes alive, Ghorpade quickly got back control, to claim that fourth one 11-7. The fifth game produced the most entertaining contest of the match, with both players matching each other point-for-point in a tense climax. However Ghorpade with her brilliant performance closed out the match 13-11 and claimed the title.



INDIAN ATHLETICS SHINES AT CWG 2026 AND WORLD U20 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Gulveer Singh became the first Indian to win a 5000 metres medal at the Commonwealth Games with a bronze to complete a historic double in Glasgow on Saturday. The reigning Asian champion, who won a silver in the 10,000 metres on Ju finished third in the 5000m with a time of 13 minute 24.95 seconds on the concluding day of the athletics competition. Mathew Kipchumba Kipsang of Kenya took the gold with a time of 13:23.61s, while Australia's Ky Robinson, who earlier won the gold in the 10,000m, clinched the silver, clocking 13:24.70s. Mohammed Ashfaq broke the U20 national record to qualify for the men's 400m semifinals at the World Athletics U20 Championships, bettering his own previous mark of 46.05 seconds, set earlier this season in April. The 19-year-old Ashfaq clocked 45.81 seconds to finish second behind USA's Jayden DeLeon (45.63s) in the first round heat 5 and fourth overall to make it to the semifinals. Indian triple jumpers Praveen Chitravel and Selva Prabhu Thirumaran won silver and bronze medals respectively at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on Saturday, adding two more podium finishes to India's athletics campaign. Asian Games bronze medallist Chitravel bettered the effort in Glasgow with a silver, which he fetched covering a distance of 16.58m.



SBI SPECIALIST CADRE OFFICER RECRUITMENT



State Bank of India (SBI) has invited online applications for the recruitment of 38 Specialist Cadre Officer (SCO) posts on a regular basis. The recruitment offers excellent career opportunities for experienced professionals in specialised banking and technology-related roles. Eligible candidates can apply online through the SBI Careers Portal.

- Recruitment Highlights**
- Organization: State Bank of India (SBI)
 - Post: Specialist Cadre Officer (SCO)
 - Total Vacancies: 38
 - Job Type: Regular
 - Application Mode: Online
 - Job Location: Across India

- Eligibility Criteria**
- Qualification: Graduation/Post Graduation/Professional or Technical qualification as prescribed for the respective post.
 - Experience: Relevant post-wise professional experience is mandatory.
 - Age Limit: Varies according to the post.
 - Relaxation: Applicable for reserved categories as per Government of India and SBI norms.

- Salary**
- Selected candidates will receive the applicable SBI Specialist Cadre Officer pay scale, along with Dearness Allowance, HRA, and other admissible benefits as per Bank rules.
 - Selection Process
 - Shortlisting of Applications
 - Personal Interview
 - Document Verification
- There is no written examination for this recruitment. Candidates will be shortlisted based on qualifications, experience and suitability.*

- Important Dates**
- Online Application Starts: 07 August 2026
 - Last Date to Apply: 27 August 2026

- How to Apply**
- Visit the SBI Careers Portal, register online, select the Specialist Cadre Officer Recruitment 2026, complete the application form, upload the required documents, verify the details, and submit the application before the closing date.

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

ITAT PRIVATE SECRETARY RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE

The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) has released the official notification for the recruitment of Private Secretary posts. This recruitment offers a valuable opportunity for graduates with shorthand and typing proficiency to work under the Ministry of Law and Justice in one of India's premier judicial institutions.

Key Highlights

- Organization:** Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)
Post Name: Private Secretary
Total Vacancies: 42
Category: Central Government Recruitment

- Educational Qualification**
- Bachelor's Degree from a recognized University with proficiency in English shorthand and typing. Relevant experience may be required as specified in the notification.

- Important Dates**
- Application Start Date: 18 July 2026
 - Last Date to Apply: 16 August 2026
 - Examination Date: To be notified.

- Age Limit**
- Maximum Age: 35 Years
 - Age relaxation is applicable for reserved categories as per Central Government rules.
- Salary**
- Pay Scale: ₹44,900 – ₹1,42,400 per month (Pay Level-7) along with Dearness Allowance, House Rent Allowance, Transport Allowance, and other admissible benefits.
- Selection Process**
- Skill Test (Shorthand & Typing)
 - Written Test/Interview (if applicable)
 - Document Verification



- How to Apply**
- Visit the official ITAT recruitment portal. Register online, complete the application form, upload the required documents, and submit the application within the prescribed schedule mentioned in the official notification.
- For more details, candidates can refer to the official notification.

BANK OF BARODA PROFESSIONALS RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 206 SO POSTS



Bank of Baroda (BOB) has invited online applications for 206 Specialist Officer (SO) posts on a regular basis across various departments. This recruitment offers excellent career opportunities for experienced professionals in Digital Banking, Facility Management, Information Security, Security, Enterprise Data Management Office (EDMO), and Corporate Accounts & Taxation Planning. Eligible candidates can submit their applications online from 06 August to 26 August 2026 through the official

- Bank of Baroda website.
- Recruitment Highlights**
- Organization: Bank of Baroda (BOB)
 - Post: Specialist Officer (SO)
 - Total Vacancies: 206
 - Job Type: Regular
 - Job Location: Across India
- Department-wise Vacancies**
- Digital Banking – 19
 - Facility Management (Civil & Electrical) – 88
 - Information Security – 16
 - Security – 54
 - EDMO & Corporate Accounts/Taxation – Remaining Posts
- Eligibility Criteria**
- Qualification: Graduation /B.E. /B.Tech /BCA/ MCA/M.Sc./CA/ICWA or equivalent (post-wise).
 - Experience: Relevant professional experience as prescribed.
 - Age Limit: 23–43 years (as on 01 August 2026).
- Pay Scale**
- JMG/S-I: ₹48,480–₹85,920
 - MMG/S-II: ₹64,820–₹93,960
 - MMG/S-III: ₹85,920–₹1,05,280
 - SMG/S-IV: ₹1,02,300–₹1,20,940
- Application Fee**
- General/OBC/EWS: ₹850 + charges
 - SC/ST/PwD/ESM/DESM/Women: ₹175 + charges
- Selection Process**
- Shortlisting → Online Test → Psychometric Test (if applicable) → Group Discussion (if applicable) → Interview → Document Verification.
- Important Dates**
- Applications Open: 06 August 2026
 - Last Date to Apply: 26 August 2026
- How to Apply**
- Visit the Bank of Baroda Careers Portal, register, complete the online application, upload the required documents, pay the fee online, submit the form, and keep a printout for future reference.
- For more details candidates are asked to visit the official website

Deepika Singh



1. Which national exercise began digital self-enumeration on August 2?
2. Which Himachal Pradesh pass reopened India-China border trade?
3. Which scheme crossed 72 lakh first-time formal workforce enrolments?
4. Which day was observed on August 7 to promote Indian handlooms?
5. Which organisation is conducting the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls?
6. Which city hosted the BRICS Heads of National Statistical Offices meeting?
7. Which movement is commemorated by National Handloom Day?
8. Which bill was passed to create a national birth-and-death database?
9. Which state faced protests over the proposed Kuls River project?
10. Which ministry is responsible for the GOBARDhan initiative?



1. I am a clever boy from Furfuri Nagar, always getting into funny adventures. Who am I?
2. I am a young prince with magical powers and a love for laddoos. Who am I?
3. I am a brave girl who lives in a kingdom called Dholakpur. Who am I?
4. I am a mischievous boy who loves cricket and lives in a small town. Who am I?
5. I am a superhero dog who helps children and fights villains. Who am I?
6. I am a young boy who uses his intelligence and gadgets to solve mysteries. Who am I?
7. I am a blue-haired character known for my magical adventures and friendship. Who am I?

1. Chhota Bheem
2. Bheem
3. Chutki
4. Motu
5. Rudra
6. Gattu
7. Mighty Raju

II) RIDDLES

10. Jalshakti
9. Assam
8. Registration
7. Swadesh
6. Lucknow
5. ECI
4. Handloom
3. PM-VBRY
2. Shipki
1. Census

II) QUIZ TIME

ANSWERS



FASTING
FAVOURITE:
KUTTU PIZZA
BITES

This Week, We're Relishing Crispy Kuttu Pizza Bites!

Kuttu Pizza Bites are a delicious vrat-friendly twist on everyone's favourite pizza. Made with a crisp kuttu flour base and topped with paneer, potatoes, tomatoes, and cheese, these bite-sized treats are flavorful, satisfying, and perfect for Shravan fasting or festive vrat meals.

Ingredients:

1 cup kuttu (buckwheat) flour, 1 medium boiled potato (mashed), ½ teaspoon rock salt (sendha namak), ½ teaspoon black pepper powder, ½ teaspoon cumin powder, 2 tablespoons yogurt, 2–3 tablespoons water (as needed), ½ cup grated paneer, ½ cup grated cheese, 1 small tomato (finely chopped), 1 small capsicum (finely chopped, optional if permitted), 1 green chilli (finely chopped), 1 tablespoon chopped coriander, 1 teaspoon ghee or oil, ½ teaspoon oregano or vrat-friendly herbs, and 1 tablespoon tomato chutney or vrat-friendly sauce.

Preparation

- In a mixing bowl, combine kuttu flour, mashed potato, rock salt, black pepper, cumin powder, and yogurt. Add water gradually and knead into a soft, firm dough.
- Divide the dough into small portions and shape each portion into a small round pizza base using your fingers. Keep the bases slightly thick so they remain crisp outside and soft inside.
- Heat a tawa and lightly grease it with ghee. Place the mini bases on the tawa and cook on low heat for 2–3 minutes on each side until lightly golden and crisp.
- Spread a thin layer of vrat-friendly tomato chutney or sauce over each base. Add chopped tomatoes, capsicum, green chilli, grated paneer, and cheese.
- Sprinkle black pepper, cumin powder, and vrat-friendly herbs over the toppings.
- Cover the tawa and cook on low heat for 3–4 minutes, or until the cheese melts and the base becomes crisp.
- Garnish with freshly chopped coriander and serve hot.



Serving Tip:

Serve these crispy Kuttu Pizza Bites hot with a bowl of chilled yogurt or vrat-friendly mint-coriander chutney. They make a fun and filling snack for Shravan, Navratri, or other fasting occasions.

Introducing Our New Column

ARTWORK OF THE WEEK

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

CRITERIA

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

SUBMISSION DETAILS

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

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