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THE HULAHUL TIMES

Evolving Today For A Better Tomorrow



WORLD ALZHEIMER'S DAY: AWARENESS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST STIGMA



Every year on September 21, the world observes World Alzheimer's Day, a date dedicated to raising awareness about Alzheimer's disease and the broader spectrum of dementia. First introduced in 1994 by Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) to mark the organization's tenth anniversary, the day has since grown into something larger: World Alzheimer's Month, a full month of campaigns, conversations, and community events aimed at breaking the silence that still surrounds this condition.

Alzheimer's disease is not simply a matter of forgetfulness. It is a progressive, degenerative brain disorder that slowly erodes memory, reasoning, language, and the ability to carry out even the simplest daily tasks. It remains the most common cause of dementia worldwide, accounting for roughly 60 to 70 percent of all cases. According to global health estimates, close to 57 million people were living with dementia in 2021, with nearly 10 million new cases diagnosed every single year. Left unchecked, that number is projected to climb sharply in the coming decades, placing an enormous burden on families, caregivers, and healthcare systems everywhere.

One of the most important messages World Alzheimer's Day tries to convey is this: dementia is not an inevitable part of growing old. While age remains the single biggest risk factor, and the condition becomes more common after 65, Alzheimer's is a disease, not a natural consequence of aging. This distinction matters because it shapes how society responds. When dementia is treated as an unavoidable fate, people stop looking for early symptoms, stop seeking diagnosis, and stop pushing for better treatment and research. When it's understood as a medical condition, the entire conversation changes.

That shift in conversation is exactly what ADI has tried to drive through its yearly campaign themes. In 2019 and 2020, the focus was simply "Let's Talk About Dementia," an effort to pull the subject out of hushed, private conversations and into open, public ones. In 2021 and 2022, the theme "Know Dementia, Know Alzheimer's" pushed for greater public understanding of early symptoms and post-diagnosis support. By 2024, the message had sharpened further with "Time to Act on Dementia, Time to Act on Alzheimer's," a direct call for governments, healthcare systems, and communities to move from awareness into concrete action.

This year's observance continues along that same trajectory, built around several core objectives: helping people recognize the early cognitive changes that warrant medical attention, promoting timely diagnosis so patients can access treatment and support sooner, and most importantly, chipping away at the stigma that still causes families to hide a diagnosis rather than seek help. Dementia is currently the seventh leading cause of death globally and one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older adults, yet public understanding of it remains inconsistent even in many developed nations.

Behind every statistic is a deeply human story. Alzheimer's does not just affect the person diagnosed with it; it reshapes entire families. Caregivers, often spouses or adult children, take on years of physical, emotional, and financial strain, frequently with little institutional support. Awareness days like this one exist partly to remind society that caregivers, too, need to be seen and supported, not left to manage silently.

Marking World Alzheimer's Day doesn't require grand gestures. It can mean something as simple as learning to recognize early warning signs like memory lapses that disrupt daily life, difficulty with familiar tasks, or confusion about time and place. It can mean encouraging an aging parent or relative to get a proper medical evaluation instead of dismissing forgetfulness as "just old age." It can mean supporting local Alzheimer's associations, sharing accurate information instead of myths, or simply sitting with a caregiver and listening to what their days actually look like.

As the global population continues to age, the urgency behind this day will only grow. Alzheimer's and related dementias are projected to affect well over 100 million people by mid-century if current trends continue. World Alzheimer's Day is, at its heart, a reminder that behind that number are individual minds slowly losing their grip on memory, and individual families holding on for both of them.

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FROM THE LABORATORY TO THE SKIES: THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF DR. SHUBHA VENKATESHA IYENGAR

It was a cloudy morning in an Indian airport, as a pilot prepared to land the plane, even a slight uncertainty of the vision, could prove disastrous. In such scenarios, a good scientific system could make an immense difference. Behind one such Indian technological innovation stood a scientist, who toiled in the laboratories for almost five decades, she was Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar, and her journey was one of inquisitiveness, perseverance and self-belief that India could stand on its feet in developing core technologies.

Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar (born 14 May 1954) was a student of Physics at Bangalore University where she stood first in her B.Sc. Honours and M.Sc. examinations and received gold medals and a Government of India Merit Scholarship. In 1974, she joined the National Aerospace Laboratories in Bengaluru as a Junior Research Fellow. She was ready to take on the challenges that came with an inquisitive mind in the scientific world and embarked on a journey that would last almost 5 decades.

Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar started her journey in Materials Science. At the time, India did not have many facilities in place to carry out the necessary studies on materials under high pressure and temperatures, and Indian scientists had to mostly rely on imported facilities. A young Shubha, however, saw a challenge that attracted her, and in 1976, she helped evolve cost-effective thermo-physical instruments to establish the phase diagrams of materials under pressures of up to 50,000 bar and temperatures of around 1,000°C. The work led to an indigenous facility that was not available in India and reduced reliance on such foreign facilities. It was the first step for the young scientist, who realized that if a facility for research was not available, then perhaps it needed to be invented!

Shubha pursued her PhD from the University of Mysore and graduated in 1981. Her work started drawing attention beyond Indian shores as researchers from renowned institutes like Bell Laboratories started reaching out to her. Her work also ventured into infrared detector sensors and piezoelectric sensors. Her work gained further recognition when NASA published three of her research papers as official reports in 1986. Such accomplishments, however, came with a lesson for her, for India was evolving, and Indian research was capable of being original and competitive.

As Dr. Iyengar's journey progressed, she

became more invested in research areas that had a direct bearing on societal interests. One such area was aviation safety. Imagine a pilot landing a plane in thick fog or the like conditions. The pilot must have reliable information on the visibility on the runway in order to make a safe landing. India needed dependable systems that could provide such information, without total



reliance on foreign technology. Dr. Iyengar, at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL), was part of the team that worked on Drishti, an indigenous system to measure the visibility of runways. They also developed an Aviation Weather Observation System that proved to be a vital tool in Indian aviation. As per the Government of India's Padma Awards citation, these systems became mandatory equipment at Indian international airports, and they also proved beneficial to the Indian Air Force.

Such developments, however, needed rigorous testing of the instruments, measurements, troubleshooting and re-testing. Sometimes, an experiment that seemed promising could fail, or a successful experiment could raise more technical questions. Dr. Iyengar

persevered with this process and her journey was one of Karma Yoga - doing one's duty with sincerity and without the distraction of seeking or expecting rewards. Her journey reflected the core Indian Knowledge System value of serving the nation by addressing some of the country's most pressing problems through science.

Dr. Iyengar's work extended to defence and aerospace technologies as well. She worked in various areas that involved missiles, and her work helped solve a critical targeting problem for the Agni missile. She also worked on ultra-high-temperature components that could withstand temperatures of the order of 3000 K and speeds of Mach 5. A component that originated from such research also aided India's space-launch programme. Such projects required a combination of scientific knowledge, precision engineering, and a willingness to work on projects where the margins for error were minimal.

Dr. Iyengar spent nearly five decades in CSIR-NAL. From her recruitments in 1974 to her retirement in 2020, she made lasting contributions to Indian research, and eventually became the Distinguished Scientist of CSIR. Her

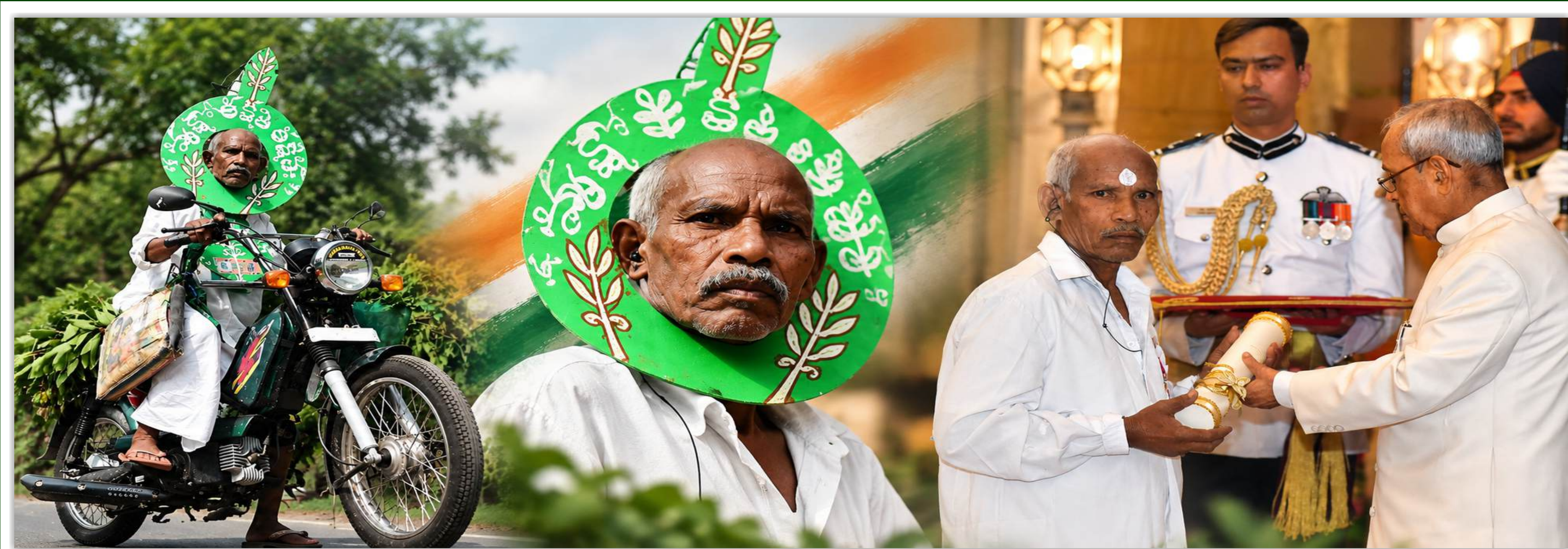
journey encompassed a vast range of fields that included materials science, sensors, aviation, defence technologies and aerospace technologies. What united all these fields was the aim of addressing practical problems using the indigenous scientific capabilities of the country.

A young student who reads this story may wonder what made Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar such a successful scientist. Perhaps it was the combination of many small acts of discipline that added up to phenomenal achievements. It was learning, questioning, and repeated experimentation in the face of adversity. It was realizing that the dependence on technology, especially foreign technology, was not the way forward, and finding ways to overcome such hurdles. Dr. Iyengar did not have a famed invention to begin with; instead, she started with learning. The results of such learning evolved from laboratory instruments to aviation systems and eventually to critical defence and aerospace technologies. Her story serves as a reminder that the most rewarding scientific discoveries often occur quietly and unnoticed.

In 2026, the Government of India honored Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar with the Padma Shri in Science and Engineering for her contributions to materials science, civil aviation, defence technology, and indigenous innovation. By then, Dr. Iyengar had been a part of CSIR-NAL for almost 5 decades. Hence, it was not surprising that the Padma Shri was not only a reward for one invention but a lifetime of research, experimentation, and service to the country through science.

Moral of the Story: The life of Dr. Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar teaches us that great achievements are often the result of patience, discipline and continuous learning. Her journey reflects important values of the Indian Knowledge System, particularly Karma Yoga, Swadhyaya, perseverance, self-reliance and Lok-Kalyan. She used knowledge not merely for personal success but to address practical challenges in aviation, defence and aerospace technology. Her work also reminds young people that difficult circumstances need not become excuses for giving up. A problem can become an opportunity to learn, create and innovate. Her life shows that knowledge gains its highest value when it is connected with responsibility towards society and the nation.

DARIPALLI RAMAIAH: THE POTTER WHO BECAME INDIA'S TREE MAN AND PLANTED A CRORE SAPLINGS



In the dry, red-soiled village of Reddipalli in Telangana's Khammam district, a boy grew up watching his mother carefully save vegetable seeds for the next planting season. He couldn't have known it then, but that quiet ritual would shape the next eight decades of his life. That boy was Daripalli Ramaiah, and by the time he died on April 12, 2025, at the age of 87, he had become one of India's most quietly extraordinary environmentalists, a man the world came to know simply as "Vanajeevi," the forest dweller, or "Chettu Ramaiah," the tree man.

Ramaiah was born on July 1, 1937, in Reddypally, then part of Hyderabad State and now within Telangana. He never studied beyond the tenth standard, and by trade he worked as a potter. But formal schooling never limited his intellect or his curiosity. He would plant seeds wherever he went, and his wife Janamma contributed significantly to his plantation efforts as well. Together, this working-class couple turned tree-planting into a shared mission that would stretch across more than five decades.

He started small, commemorating the births and deaths of admired figures by planting saplings in their memory, before the practice grew into something far larger than ceremony. He began collecting seeds of native species:

neem, sandalwood, bael, peepal, teak, and the golden shower tree, among many others, carrying them on foot and later by bicycle to barren patches of land across Khammam district. When his own resources ran out, he sold his three acres of farmland to buy more seeds and saplings, choosing trees over the very land that had sustained his family.

What made Ramaiah instantly recognizable was not just his dedication but his appearance. He wore a placard, sometimes made of steel, hung around his neck bearing the Telugu phrase "Vriksho Rakshati Rakshitaha," the idea that those who protect trees are, in turn, protected by them. In his early years, this eccentricity drew mockery rather than admiration. Children reportedly chased his bicycle through the streets, and adults dismissed him as an oddity. He pressed on regardless, driven by a conviction he expressed simply: he saw nature itself as divine, rather than reserving that reverence for temples and idols alone.

By his own estimate, corroborated by government and independent reports, Ramaiah personally planted or inspired the planting of more than one crore (ten million) saplings over his lifetime, with his trees now standing in more than 2,000 schools across the region. A former Indian Forest Service officer who worked with

him recalled that Ramaiah was practicing environmental reuse and recycling, collecting discarded plastic bags to raise seedlings, decades before sustainability became a mainstream concern. He also composed dozens of songs and thousands of sayings about the value of trees, treating conservation as something to be sung and remembered, not just practiced.

Recognition eventually caught up with him, even if he never sought it. The Andhra Pradesh government honored him early on, and after Telangana's formation, his work fed directly into the state's flagship Haritha Haram, or "Green Garland," afforestation programme. He received the Seva Award in 1995, the Vanamitra Award in 2005, and the National Innovations and Outstanding Traditional Knowledge Award in 2015. In 2017, President Pranab Mukherjee presented him with the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian honor, at Rashtrapati Bhavan. He would later also receive an honorary doctorate and a place in school textbooks in both Telangana and Maharashtra, his life story taught to children as an example of purpose lived quietly and completely. In a gesture that captured his devotion, he even named his granddaughters after plants and flowers, weaving his life's mission into his own family.

Ramaiah suffered a heart attack at his home in Reddipalli and died on the morning of April 12, 2025. Tributes followed swiftly and from across the political spectrum, from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who called him a champion of sustainability, to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who described his death as an irreparable loss to society, to former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, who credited Ramaiah's decades of solitary work with inspiring the state's own tree-planting programmes. Even as official praise poured in, reporting around the time of his death also noted a more uncomfortable truth: that some of the recognition and institutional support for his work had quietly faded in his final years, even as his personal legend grew.

What Ramaiah leaves behind cannot be fully counted in saplings or awards. He leaves behind forests where there was once only bare red earth, and a simple, radical idea: that a single, unremarkable life, lived with total consistency of purpose, could still change the shape of a landscape, one seed at a time.

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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.

Pets are not just becoming part of Indian families they are becoming part of India's consumer economy. Across cities and towns, pet owners are spending on premium food, grooming, healthcare, accessories, training, boarding and even pet-friendly travel. What was once a relatively small household expense is evolving into a specialised marketplace, creating demand for new products, services and business models.

This shift highlights a powerful principle of commerce: when consumer behaviour changes, markets change with it. As India's relationship with pets evolves, everyday needs are creating opportunities for entrepreneurs, service providers, retailers and technology platforms.

This is the Pet Economy where changing lifestyles create demand, demand creates markets, and markets create economic opportunity.

When Affection Creates Demand

The transformation begins with what pet owners choose to spend on. Beyond basic food and shelter, many are seeking better nutrition, healthcare, hygiene, comfort, entertainment and convenience.

Example: A pet owner may buy specialised food, schedule regular grooming, use

preventive healthcare services and choose professional boarding while travelling.

Each requirement represents a spending decision and collectively, these decisions create sustained demand for businesses across the value chain.

From Products to Services

As demand becomes more specialised, the market is expanding beyond products to veterinary care, grooming, training, boarding, pet sitting and other professional services.

Technology is accelerating this shift, with digital platforms enabling customers to discover products, place recurring orders, book services and connect with professionals, while social media helps smaller businesses reach customers.

The result is an integrated market where products, services and digital platforms work together.

The Rise of Premium Pet Care

Another notable shift is premiumisation. Pet owners are increasingly looking for specialised nutrition, preventive healthcare, personalised accessories and quality care.

This changes the basis of competition. Businesses are no longer competing only on price; they are also differentiating themselves through quality, convenience, customisation, reliability and trust.

For commerce, this is a familiar pattern: as consumers become more selective, businesses respond with greater segmentation and specialised offerings.

Where Entrepreneurs See Opportunity

A growing market creates space for businesses that can solve specific customer needs. Opportunities are emerging in:

- Specialised pet food and treats
- Grooming and wellness
- Customised accessories
- Training and behavioural services
- Boarding, daycare and pet sitting
- Veterinary and diagnostic services
- Pet-friendly travel and experiences
- Digital pet-care platforms
- Pet waste management

The strongest opportunities often lie in

solving a recurring problem more conveniently or effectively.

Example: A pet-care entrepreneur offering monthly grooming, food delivery or subscription-based wellness services can convert occasional purchases into recurring revenue.

The model illustrates an important business principle: recurring needs can create recurring customers and more predictable revenue.

The Economic Chain

The pet economy also demonstrates how one consumer purchase can support several businesses. A pet product may involve manufacturers, packaging companies, distributors, retailers, logistics providers and digital payment platforms before reaching the customer.

Similarly, a grooming appointment creates income for the groomer while generating demand for equipment, hygiene products, transport and digital booking services.

This interconnected chain creates value beyond the final transaction, supporting business activity, employment and local entrepreneurship.

What Commerce Students Can Learn

The sector provides a practical example of concepts studied in commerce classrooms. Consumer behaviour, market segmentation, pricing, branding, e-commerce, supply-chain management, customer relationship management and financial planning all come into play.

It also highlights an important entrepreneurial skill: observing how society is changing and recognising a need before it becomes a mainstream market.

For students, the lesson is simple business opportunities are often created not by inventing new needs, but by finding better ways to serve emerging ones.

The Challenges Behind the Opportunity
Growth also brings challenges. Pet



businesses must balance quality, customer trust, service standards, operating costs and trained professionals.

Affordability matters too, as premium products and specialised services may not suit every customer. Responsible practices are essential to protect animal welfare and consumer confidence.

Long-term success will depend on building ethical, reliable and sustainable businesses.

The Bigger Lesson

The pet economy demonstrates that markets evolve with society. As attitudes towards pets change, so do spending patterns, product preferences and service expectations, creating new economic opportunities.

The broader lesson extends beyond pets: today's lifestyle changes can become tomorrow's markets, rewarding businesses that recognise emerging needs and create value around them.

The Take Away

India's pet economy shows how changing lifestyles can reshape consumption, create markets and generate livelihoods. From local groomers to digital pet-care platforms, everyday needs are creating new commercial opportunities.

Because when pets become family, caring for them becomes an economy of its own.

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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.

THE POWER OF A QUESTION

A question can be small, but its impact can be enormous.

“Why?” has driven scientists to discover new things. “How?” has inspired inventions. “What if?” has given writers, artists, and entrepreneurs the freedom to imagine possibilities that did not exist before.

Great learning does not begin with having all the answers. It begins with asking meaningful questions.

A curious student does not simply memorize information. They observe, investigate, connect ideas, and seek explanations.

Think about the questions that changed the world:

- Why do objects fall?
- How can we communicate across distances?
- What if machines could learn?

Every discovery once began as a question.

Takeaway: Never be afraid of asking a question. Sometimes, a question is the first draft of an idea.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The word “deadline” originally referred to a literal line in prison camps that prisoners were warned not to cross.
- The word “quarantine” comes from the Italian quaranta, meaning forty. Historically, ships arriving from areas affected by disease could be kept isolated for 40 days.
- “Robot” comes from the Czech word robota, associated with forced labour.
- The word “alphabet” comes from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet: alpha and beta.
- “Serendipity” describes a fortunate discovery made unexpectedly.
- The International Day of Peace is observed every year on 21 September. The United Nations established the fixed date in 2001.
- World Alzheimer's Day is observed on 21 September every year as part of World Alzheimer's Month.
- Your brain is highly energy-hungry: Although the brain makes up only about 2% of body weight, it uses roughly 20% of the body's energy at rest.
- A day on Venus is longer than its year: Venus takes about 243 Earth days to rotate once on its axis, but only about 225 Earth days to orbit the Sun.

GRAMMAR TIP

WHO vs. WHOM

Who is generally used for the person doing an action.

Whom is traditionally used for the person receiving the action.

Example:

Who called you?

Whom did you invite?

Easy Trick:

If you can replace it with he/she → WHO

If you can replace it with him/her → WHOM

Remember:

Who = subject

Whom = object

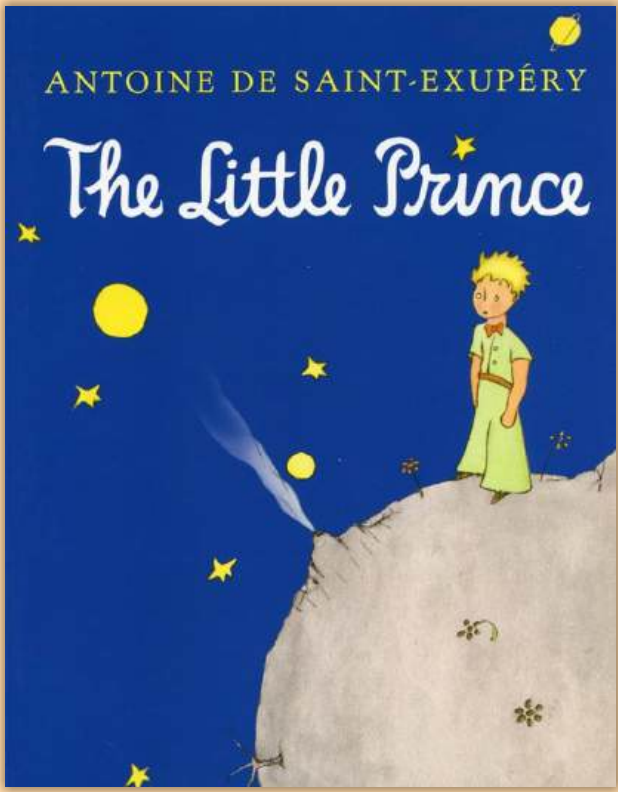
WRITER OF THE WEEK

Stephen King

Stephen King is one of the most widely read contemporary American writers. Born on 21 September 1947, he is known especially for horror, suspense, fantasy, and psychological fiction. His writing demonstrates how ordinary places, people, and situations can become powerful settings for extraordinary stories. Some of his well-known works include Carrie, The Shining, It, Misery and The Green Mile. **Literary Insight:** King's writing is often associated with strong characters, suspenseful storytelling, vivid settings, and the exploration of fear, courage, relationships, and human choices.

BOOK REVIEW

The Little Prince— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



The Little Prince is a philosophical tale about a young prince who travels from planet to planet and meets different characters, each revealing something about human behaviour and relationships. The story appears simple, but beneath its fairy-tale style are deeper ideas about friendship, love, loneliness, imagination and the meaning of life.

Why Read It? The book encourages readers to look beyond appearances and question what truly matters in life. Its simple language and memorable characters make it accessible to both young readers and adults.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt

CREATIVE WRITING

THE LAST PAGE

I opened the book
and found no words.

Only a blank page,
waiting patiently.

I turned it again,
nothing.

Then I realised:

Perhaps the story
was not missing.

Perhaps
it was waiting for me
to write it.

So I picked up my pen
and began.

One word.
One thought.
One possibility.

And suddenly,
the blank page
did not look empty anymore.

It looked like a beginning.

Poetry by
- Ravi Singh

WORD OF THE WEEK

Ephemeral (adjective)

Meaning: Existing or lasting for only a short time.
Example: The beauty of the sunset was ephemeral, but its memory remained.

IDIOM HIGHLIGHT

“Break the Ice”

Meaning: To do or say something that makes people feel more comfortable when they first meet.
Example: The teacher told a funny story to break the ice before the workshop began.

AI CAN TRANSFORM THE FUTURE OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE

Artificial intelligence is beginning to change how farms are managed, but the shift is unfolding differently in the United States and India. Research on farming in the US and other regions shows farmers are already experimenting with generative AI for planning, information and everyday decisions. In India, the bigger challenge is ensuring that agricultural AI can work for farmers across different languages, farm sizes, crops, income levels and levels of digital access. Generative AI is emerging as a fast-growing agricultural technology.

The research shows that about 17 per cent of farmers globally now use generative AI for farm-related tasks. Adoption is considerably higher in the Americas. Around 26 per cent of farmers covered by the research in Latin America use generative AI, while the figure for North America stands at 23 per cent. Europe is at 13 per cent and Asia at 7 per cent.



The figures show that agricultural AI is not developing at the same speed everywhere. Farmers in some regions have already started incorporating AI into routine work, while adoption remains at an earlier stage elsewhere. The technology is also arriving at a difficult time for agriculture. Farmers have faced pressure from costs associated with labour, land, equipment, financing and fertiliser. Unpredictable weather and labour shortages can make decisions at farm level more difficult.

TAMIL NADU PETITIONS SUPREME COURT OVER 17.604 TMCFT CAUVERY WATER BACKLOG

The Tamil Nadu government has filed an urgent application in the Supreme Court, urging the court to direct Karnataka to immediately release a backlog of 17.604 TMCFT of Cauvery water to make up for the accumulated deficit as mandated by regulatory authorities. The state contends that despite orders from the Cauvery Water Management Authority, Karnataka has failed to ensure the scheduled daily flows at the Biligundlu gauge station.

The deficit has triggered severe water stress across the agricultural belt of the Cauvery Delta, where farmers are facing critical shortages during crucial crop cultivation phases.

Tamil Nadu argued that Karnataka's continued under-release of water violates the equitable distress-



sharing principle established by the apex court. With storage levels in lower-riparian reservoirs dropping dangerously low, the state stressed that immediate judicial enforcement is vital to safeguard standing crops, protect rural agricultural livelihoods, and meet basic drinking water requirements across multiple southern districts.

DHARASHIV MP PUSHES FOR CROP LOSS SURVEY AND COMPENSATION FOR MARATHWADA FARMERS

Shiv Sena Member of Parliament from Dharashiv, Omprakash Raje Nimbalkar, has urged the Maharashtra state government to conduct an immediate joint survey of dried-up crops and disburse financial aid to drought-affected farmers across the Marathwada region.

In a formal representation to Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Nimbalkar highlighted that an extended dry spell spanning nearly 45 days has severely damaged standing Kharif crops, particularly soybean, across several districts. The prolonged moisture stress has left cultivation dried up in the fields, creating acute financial distress for regional farming households.

The crisis stems from a sustained monsoon deficit across Marathwada. Revenue department statistics indicate that the eight districts comprising the region received only 381 mm of rainfall—roughly 77 percent of the expected 498.8 mm average. The moisture deficit is particularly severe in



the Dharashiv Lok Sabha constituency, where seasonal rainfall lags by 25.3 percent, with the district receiving just 301.5 mm against a normal average of 403.5 mm. Calling for urgent state intervention, Nimbalkar demanded that the revenue and agriculture departments jointly assess crop damage to ensure all eligible, loss-affected growers receive prompt financial compensation and relief assistance.

33% OF INDIA'S LAND IS DEGRADED AND THE SOIL CRISIS THREATENS FARMING AND FOOD SECURITY

Nearly one-third of India's soil is already degraded, raising concerns over agricultural productivity, farmer livelihoods and the country's long-term food security, according to the report Reimagining Indian Agriculture, Unlocking the Regenerative Opportunity. Regenerative farming can involve practices such as reduced tillage, cover cropping, crop rotation, agroforestry and livestock integration.

The scale of degradation matters because soil is the foundation of India's farm economy. As soil quality declines, the ability of farmland to support stable and productive agriculture can weaken.

The report cites data from the Soil Physics Division of the ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science, which estimates that 115–120 million hectares, or around 33% of India's total land area, had been degraded by 2024. The report links soil degradation with rising risks to agricultural productivity,



farmer livelihoods and long-term food security. It also points to climate variability and groundwater depletion as additional pressures increasing production risks. India has several initiatives aligned with regenerative farming. The National Mission on Natural Farming has received ₹2,481 crore and targets one crore farmers for training and adoption. The Agri SURE Fund has a corpus of ₹75 crore, while the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana provides ₹31,500 per hectare for three years for organic clusters.

AFTER TESTING 70,000 SAMPLES, THE DATA SHOWED HOW MUCH PESTICIDES ARE PRESENT IN YOUR PLATE



Under the Ministry of Agriculture's Monitoring Programme (MPRNL), 70,652 food samples were tested from markets across 23 states and union territories between 2023 and 2026. These tests found 2,223 samples with pesticide residues exceeding the safe limits set by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). These samples were collected from various markets under the National Pesticide Residue Monitoring (MPRNL) programme of the Agriculture Ministry. A total of 70,652 samples including vegetables, fruits, spices, cereals, pulses, herbs, tea, milk and eggs were tested during this period.

These samples were taken from 23 states and union territories including Karnataka, Telangana, Punjab, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Jharkhand, Delhi and Chhattisgarh. Of the states whose data has been released, Karnataka had the highest number of samples with pesticide residues exceeding the FSSAI limits.

A total of 9,176 samples were tested in Karnataka, of which 334 samples had pesticide levels exceeding the prescribed limit. Maharashtra followed, with 260 out of 5,295 samples having pesticide residues exceeding the prescribed limit. Gujarat had 170 out of 6,035 samples, and Haryana had 152 out of 2,371 samples.

HARVARD EXECUTIVE EDUCATION SET FOR HYDERABAD

Hyderabad: Harvard University is set to offer executive education programmes in Hyderabad from December 2026, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy announced on September 17. The announcement came during a meeting with a delegation representing UK business schools and universities at the Dr Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute.

The initiative is part of Telangana's efforts to develop Hyderabad as a global knowledge and education hub. The state says such collaborations could strengthen links among universities, industry and research institutions.

Reddy said the government would support international universities and business schools interested in establishing a presence in Telangana. The state is also developing an Education Hub in Bharat Future City, intended to bring together educational institutions, industries and research organisations.

The UK delegation included business-school and university

representatives, along with UK House of Lords member Karan Bilimoria, British Council officials and representatives of the British Deputy High Commission.

Telangana is also pursuing international collaborations in executive education, research, faculty development and degree programmes. Discussions have involved institutions including MIT, Purdue University, the University of London, Virginia Tech and Northeastern University.

Details about the specific Harvard courses, eligibility requirements, fees and delivery format have not yet been announced. The December launch would give Hyderabad learners access to Harvard-linked executive programmes.

The move is part of Telangana's effort to expand international education and connect higher learning with industry and research.

KARNATAKA PLANS RS 35-CRORE AI HUB AT IIIT-BANGALORE

The Karnataka government has proposed establishing an Artificial Intelligence Hub at the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIIT-Bangalore) with an estimated outlay of Rs 35 crore. The centre will support AI skilling, research and startups.

Karnataka Minister for Electronics, IT and Biotechnology Priyank Kharge announced the proposal as part of the state's wider plans to strengthen its artificial intelligence ecosystem. The AI Hub is expected to combine training, innovation and advanced research, creating opportunities for students, graduates, researchers and technology companies.

The initiative is linked to Karnataka's broader plans for an AI University and is aimed at developing the talent and research capacity needed for artificial intelligence. IIIT-Bangalore, which already has expertise in information technology and advanced computing, is expected to provide an academic base for the

proposed hub. AI skilling is expected to be a central component of the project. Training programmes could help students and graduates build practical capabilities in areas connected to the expanding AI sector. Startup support is another proposed focus, potentially giving new technology ventures access to research expertise and institutional support.

The hub is also expected to strengthen academia-industry connections. Karnataka has been seeking to expand its technology sector beyond established IT services into emerging fields such as artificial intelligence.

Further details on governance, programmes, implementation timelines and the final allocation are expected as the proposal moves forward. The project would add to Karnataka's AI education and innovation ecosystem.

UP TO TURN 14,429 SCHOOLS INTO SMART SCHOOLS

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has approved a proposal to transform 14,429 primary schools under the Basic Education Council into smart schools, marking a major push toward technology-enabled classroom learning. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on September 15.

According to Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, the state has earmarked Rs 300 crore for the initiative. Each selected school is expected to receive Rs 2.07 lakh for developing digital facilities. The smart-school programme will include internet connectivity and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) laboratories, allowing teachers to use digital resources during classroom instruction.

The government said the initiative is intended to modernise teaching in government primary schools and provide students with greater access to technology. With internet-enabled classrooms, teachers will be able to use online educational material and ICT-based teaching methods alongside



conventional instruction.

The project is also expected to strengthen digital exposure among children studying in government schools, particularly in areas where access to technology outside school may be limited. Officials have indicated that the number of schools covered could increase if implementation costs are lower than the sanctioned amount.

The initiative comes as schools across India increasingly adopt digital tools, smart classrooms and technology-based learning. Its implementation will now depend on procurement, installation of facilities and effective use of the new infrastructure.

IIT DELHI SUMMIT FLAGS ENGINEERING SKILLS GAP

A two-day innovation summit at IIT Delhi has highlighted concerns over the gap between classroom education and the practical skills expected by industry. Organised by the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), the summit brought together industrialists, founders and academics.

During discussions on manufacturing and semiconductors, industry representatives stressed the need for engineering students to gain greater exposure to real-world hardware, practical problem-solving and interdisciplinary work. Taranjit Kohli of Cadence Design Systems said students and researchers need stronger engagement with problems faced by industry and the country.

Maruti Suzuki executive Dr Shailendra Singh said the issue was not necessarily the quality of Indian graduates but their limited practical experience. He cited the company's training centre as an example of industry-led efforts to develop hands-on skills.

Academics also discussed changes in research and education. IIT Delhi professor Sunil Jha proposed a parallel translational research track for PhD students, focusing on converting existing problems into practical solutions and products alongside conventional fundamental research.

In agriculture, Professor B.R. Kamboj suggested moving beyond the traditional “lab to land” model by involving farmers from the beginning of the research process.

The summit also discussed AI literacy. India AI Mission COO Kavita Bhatia announced a free, credit-bearing AI literacy course in Indian languages, covering AI concepts, applications and risks.

The discussions underscored the need for stronger links between education, research and employers so graduates can apply classroom knowledge to workplace challenges.

TRIPURA INTRODUCES AI LEARNING ACROSS GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



The Tripura government has launched “AI Utsav – Skill Competition 2026”, a state-level initiative to introduce artificial intelligence learning in government schools. The programme will provide free AI courses to students from Classes VI to XII across all eight districts of the state.

The courses will be delivered through the Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH), the national digital skilling platform operated by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Around 1,920 government schools offering Classes VI to XII are proposed to be covered under the initiative.

According to Skill Development Director Pradeep Krishnaraj, the programme is intended to help students understand emerging technologies and develop skills relevant to a changing digital economy. Students who successfully complete the courses will be able to download a national certificate through the SIDH platform.

The initiative combines school-level technology exposure with structured digital learning. By introducing AI concepts at the school level, the state aims to give students an early opportunity to understand the technology and develop digital confidence.

The “Skill Competition” component places the programme within a broader skills-development framework. It is expected to encourage participation in emerging-technology learning.

The programme covers government schools across Tripura's eight districts, giving it a statewide proposed reach. Its implementation will depend on student participation, school access to digital resources and support for learners and teachers.

The initiative adds Tripura to states introducing AI and digital-skilling programmes in schools.

UPI'S NEW PRICING ERA: WHAT THE CHARGES MEAN TO INDIA'S DIGITAL PAYMENT ECONOMY

India's UPI revolution is entering a new phase. Starting on October 15, 2026, selected high-value payments to merchants via UPI will incur a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR), creating a revenue stream for the rapidly growing digital-payment infrastructure. However, it will generally be protected from the costs beyond a select few categories of transactions.

Under the new framework, a 0.4% MDR will generally be applied to specified UPI payments to merchants with amounts above ₹2,000. This charge will generally be incurred within the merchant side payment ecosystem, not the customer. For transactions worth more than ₹75,000, the MDR will generally be capped at ₹300. Additionally, payments between individuals will remain free regardless of the amount, as will those of merchants with amounts below ₹2,000.

It is worth noting the difference between volume and value in such transactions. While high-value payments to merchants above ₹2,000 represent only a small proportion of the total number of P2M transactions, they comprise a disproportionately large proportion of their total value. Thus, the new system can target a relatively narrow segment without imposing a broad cost. Moreover, official estimates suggest that about 96% of merchant UPI transactions will generally remain unaffected by the changes.

However, for merchants, the changes represent a new operating cost. A ₹3,000 eligible transaction, for example, would incur an MDR of ₹12. In turn, a ₹10,000 transaction, for instance, would incur ₹40 before applicable taxes. Therefore, the change could have more visible implications for businesses frequently dealing with high-value digital

payments. At the same time, special protection has generally been extended to eligible small merchants, including those QR businesses that receive up to ₹1 lakh per month through UPI.



The framework generally creates different treatment for specific sectors. Essential services such as railways, telecom, insurance, fuel and agricultural inputs will face a flat ₹5 MDR on eligible transactions above ₹2,000. Additionally, payments connected with mutual funds and capital-market transactions will have a lower MDR of 0.02% subject to a ₹300 cap.

These differentiated rates acknowledge that a uniform percentage could have a disproportionately large impact on large-value payments in sectors with relatively narrow margins.

In turn, for consumers, the immediate cost generally will be limited as the rules state that the MDR is not to be recovered from customers. However, the indirect impact on pricing will generally remain an important consideration. Merchants incurring higher payment-processing costs could generally reconsider payment preferences or make the costs a factor in their broader pricing decisions, but it is intended to prevent them separately charges for UPI payments.

The larger economic question is whether UPI can remain both affordable and financially sustainable for the growing scale. NPCI data indicate that UPI processed more than 24.5 billion transactions worth about ₹29.82 lakh crore in August 2026 alone. Thus, maintaining the scale requires continuous investment in technology, security, fraud prevention, processing capacity and customer support.

The new framework, therefore, generally represents more than a price change. It is a clear signal of a shift to a new phase in a digital-payment system that has grown substantially. Its broader impact will therefore depend on the ability to enhance the reliability and reach of UPI without undermining the simplicity and affordability of digital payments.

JAPAN DEEPENS INDIA SEMICONDUCTOR GAMBIT, FROM CHIP CHEMICALS TO LOGISTICS

Japan's interest in India's semiconductor ambitions is proving to be more than just investments in manufacturing. From chemical suppliers to automation and logistics, Japanese companies are looking to position themselves in India's broader semiconductor value chain.

India's push is drawing Japanese firms into the space, from chemical suppliers to automation and logistics. As India's semiconductor ambitions gather pace, it has drawn in a range of Japanese firms from chemical suppliers to automation and even logistics companies.

Japan has a strong presence in the semiconductor manufacturing chain, from chemicals and automation to factory equipment and even software. Thus, while these developments do not represent a major turnaround for India's chip-making plans, the Japanese interest spans beyond just one key player.

At SEMICON India 2026 in Bengaluru, a Japanese company announced its Rs 800-crore investment in setting up a semiconductor materials manufacturing facility in India. Fujifilm is set to begin its operations in India in phases, with the first phase focusing on front-end semiconductor materials. The commercial production is slated to begin in 2028. In addition to this, the Japanese company has tied up with Tata Electronics for the supply of materials for the semiconductor foundry that Tata is setting up in Gujarat.

While Japanese companies are eyeing India's chip-making ambitions, chemical supply chains are also set to benefit. A Japanese

chemical company has tied up with Tata Electronics for the supply of materials like photoresist and other chemicals required for semiconductor manufacturing. In addition to this, the two companies are also looking to localize the manufacturing of some of these materials.

Japan is also eyeing the automation sector in India's semiconductor manufacturing space. Hirata Corporation has announced its plans to localize semiconductor automation and material-handling equipment in India. The material handling segment is an important enabler for semiconductor manufacturing. While it may not be as high-profile as the foundry or packaging and testing units, the automation and handling equipment are essential for moving wafers and panels between processes and machines without damaging them or contaminating the environment.

Japanese companies are also eyeing India's growing design capabilities. Tokyo Electron has set up a development office in Bengaluru to create semiconductor design software and manufacturing equipment. In addition to this, the company is also looking to collaborate with Indian academic institutes on semiconductor technologies, including design. It must be noted that Tokyo Electron, in partnership with another Japanese company, has already helped set up an assembly and testing plant in Gujarat. Assembly and testing is one of the key steps in semiconductor manufacturing.

With India's semiconductor manufacturing facilities inching towards commercial production, another key area in which Japanese companies are looking to benefit is logistics. Nx Group, a Japanese logistics company, is looking to set up infrastructure close to semiconductor manufacturing

facilities. Nx Group is also looking to enhance its procurement and spares management solutions for semiconductor manufacturers. It should be noted that semiconductor manufacturing equipment, as well as the finished products, require extremely delicate handling. The transportation conditions are extremely important, as improper handling can lead to mechanical damage and malfunction.

Nx Group is also considering India as a potential export hub for the Middle East and Africa. Thus, the presence of Japanese logistics companies in India is likely to play a crucial role in facilitating India's export ambitions.

While Japan's semiconductor sector has not been as prominent in India's semiconductor manufacturing plans, its presence is set to grow significantly. From electronics manufacturing to chemicals and logistics, Japanese companies are positioning themselves to benefit from India's growing semiconductor ambitions. If any of these partnerships bear fruit, they could significantly enrich India's domestic semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem.

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Q. Do You Think Relationships
Should Be Unconditional?

Ans. The question of whether relationships should be unconditional has been debated across cultures and philosophies for centuries. In modern society, people often believe that true love, friendship, family, and even workplace relationships should be unconditional. While this idea appears noble and compassionate, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) presents a more balanced and practical perspective. Rather than treating every relationship as unconditional, Indian philosophy teaches that each relationship is governed by Dharma (righteous duty), Kartavya (responsibility), Maryada (ethical boundaries), and Nyaya (justice). Thus, IKS recognizes that some relationships are naturally unconditional, while others are necessarily conditional because they exist to fulfill specific social, ethical, and professional purposes.

The Indian Knowledge System views human life as a network of interconnected relationships, each carrying its own obligations. Ancient texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, and Arthashastra explain that harmony in society depends not merely on affection but on the proper performance of one's duties. Relationships flourish when individuals act according to Dharma rather than personal emotions alone.

- The highest example of unconditional relationships in Indian thought is the relationship between parents and their children. Parents are expected to nurture, educate, protect, and guide their children with selfless love. This spirit of sacrifice reflects the ideal of Seva (selfless service). Even when children make mistakes, parents usually continue to care for their welfare. Such unconditional love is considered sacred because it supports the growth and development of the next generation.
- Similarly, the relationship between the Divine and humanity is often described as unconditional. The Bhagavad Gita teaches that the Supreme Being extends compassion to all living beings without discrimination. Divine grace is available to everyone regardless of wealth, status, or background. However, even divine compassion does not eliminate moral responsibility. Individuals are still expected to perform righteous actions and accept the consequences of their choices according to the principle of Karma. Thus, unconditional love does not mean freedom from accountability.
- The Indian Knowledge System also values deep friendship. The friendship between Krishna and Sudama is remembered as an example of affection that transcended social and economic differences. Krishna welcomed Sudama with warmth despite his poverty, demonstrating humility, gratitude, and genuine concern. Yet even this friendship was rooted in mutual respect and virtuous character rather than blind acceptance of wrongdoing. Indian philosophy consistently teaches that love should elevate the individual toward righteousness rather than encourage harmful behaviour.
- While some relationships are naturally unconditional, IKS clearly explains that many social relationships are based on defined responsibilities and ethical expectations. Marriage, for example, is considered a sacred partnership founded on mutual commitment, trust, fidelity, and shared Dharma. Husband and wife are expected to support one another through life's challenges. However, marriage also carries responsibilities toward family, society, and future generations. When these responsibilities are repeatedly violated through injustice,

cruelty, or betrayal, Indian ethical thought recognizes the need to protect Dharma rather than preserve appearances at any cost.

- The Guru-Shishya tradition further illustrates this principle. A teacher guides students with patience, compassion, and dedication, while students are expected to demonstrate discipline, humility, and commitment to learning. The relationship is deeply respectful, but it is not without expectations. If either the teacher abandons ethical conduct or the student rejects learning and discipline, the relationship no longer fulfills its intended purpose. Thus, the relationship is sustained by shared responsibilities rather than unconditional acceptance of every action.

Professional relationships provide another important example. Employers and employees work together to achieve organizational goals. According to the Arthashastra, leaders should appoint people based on merit, reward sincere effort, maintain transparency, and ensure justice. Employees, in turn, should perform their duties honestly and competently. Compassion and mutual respect are encouraged, but professional relationships remain guided by accountability. A workplace should be humane, but it cannot function if performance, integrity, and responsibility become unconditional.

- The Mahabharata provides one of the most profound lessons about the limits of unconditional relationships. The conflict between the Pandavas and the Kauravas arose partly because personal attachment repeatedly overshadowed justice. Dhritrashtra loved his son Duryodhana unconditionally but failed to correct his unethical conduct. His attachment blinded him to Dharma and ultimately contributed to widespread suffering. The epic teaches that affection without wisdom can become destructive when it ignores justice and moral responsibility.
- The Bhagavad Gita reinforces this lesson through the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna wished to avoid battle because his opponents were his relatives, teachers, and friends. Krishna reminded him that while personal relationships deserve respect, Dharma must remain the highest guiding principle. Justice, truth, and righteousness cannot be sacrificed merely because the wrongdoer is a family member or close companion. This teaching demonstrates that unconditional attachment should never replace ethical responsibility.
- Another central principle of IKS is Maryada, or ethical boundaries. Healthy relationships require mutual respect, honesty, trust, and

appropriate conduct. Boundaries protect both individuals and society. When people tolerate exploitation, abuse, corruption, or injustice in the name of unconditional love or loyalty, relationships lose their ethical foundation. Indian philosophy therefore encourages compassion without abandoning discernment.

- The principle of Karma further explains why unconditional acceptance has limits. Every individual is responsible for the consequences of their own actions. While forgiveness is considered a noble virtue, forgiveness does not eliminate accountability. A person may be forgiven with compassion while still being required to correct their mistakes and accept the outcomes of their actions. This balance between mercy and justice reflects the ethical maturity of the Indian Knowledge System.
- The concept of Lokasangraha, explained in the Bhagavad Gita, also broadens our understanding of relationships. It teaches that individuals should act for the welfare and stability of society as a whole. Decisions should promote collective harmony rather than merely satisfy personal emotions. Therefore, maintaining a harmful relationship unconditionally at the cost of justice, organizational integrity, or social welfare would not be consistent with Lokasangraha.

From the perspective of Indian leadership, the ideal relationship is neither completely unconditional nor purely transactional. Instead, it is a relationship guided by Dharma. Leaders should care for their employees with compassion while maintaining fairness and accountability. Parents should love their children while teaching responsibility. Teachers should educate with patience while encouraging discipline. Friends should support one another while inspiring moral growth. In every case, affection and duty must remain inseparable. In conclusion, the Indian Knowledge System does not support the idea that all relationships should be unconditional. Instead, it teaches that relationships should be ethical, compassionate, responsible, and guided by Dharma. Some relationships, such as parental love and divine compassion, may approach unconditionality because they are rooted in selfless care. However, social, educational, marital, and professional relationships must also uphold justice, responsibility, mutual respect, and accountability. True love is not blind acceptance of every action; it is the willingness to guide, correct, forgive when appropriate, and uphold righteousness. According to IKS, the strongest relationships are not those without conditions, but those founded on Dharma, where compassion is balanced with wisdom, rights are balanced with duties, and love is strengthened by truth and justice. Stay blessed!

DO YOU HAVE A PERSONALITY OR JUST AN AESTHETIC?

Scroll through Instagram for five minutes, and you'll notice something strange. Everyone seems to have a "type." The coffee girl. The gym bro. The dark academia reader. The K-pop fan. The self-improvement guy who posts 5 AM gym reels. Somewhere along the way, having a personality quietly turned into having a brand.

This is the pressure most young people feel today, even if they can't name it. It's not enough to just exist and figure yourself out slowly. You're expected to package yourself. Pick an aesthetic. Choose interests that photograph well. Have a "vibe" that's instantly recognizable, because if people can't describe you in one sentence, do you even have an identity online?

The scary part is how early this starts. Teenagers who are still discovering who they are get shown thousands of already-finished personalities every single day. So instead of asking, "What do I actually like?" the question quietly becomes, "Which one of these existing templates fits me best?" That's not self-discovery. That's shopping for an identity off a shelf someone else built.

And here's the deeper problem: real personality is messy. It contradicts itself. One day, you want to be productive and disciplined; the next day, you want to lie in bed doing nothing and feel zero guilt about it. You can love loud music and also crave silence. You can be ambitious and lazy in the same week. That's just being human. But social media rewards consistency, not contradiction. Algorithms don't know what to do with a person who doesn't fit neatly into a category, so slowly, without realizing it, people start editing themselves to fit one.

This creates a quiet kind of exhaustion. Many young people today feel like they're performing a version of themselves rather than actually being themselves. There's a strange guilt in liking something that doesn't match your "type." Like a football fan feeling embarrassed about also loving poetry because it doesn't fit the image they've built.

Here's what's worth remembering: real personality isn't something you curate. It's something that leaks out naturally when you're not trying to prove anything. It shows up in the way you laugh at bad jokes, the songs you replay at 2 AM, the random facts you get excited about for no reason, and the way you care about people without posting about it.

You don't need an aesthetic to be interesting. You don't need a niche to be worth knowing. Some of the most fascinating people are the ones who can't be summarized in one Instagram bio line because they're too busy actually living to package themselves for an audience.

So maybe the goal isn't to build a personality people will recognize instantly. Maybe it's just to become someone you recognize, even on the days when no one's watching.



THE GOOD PLATES ARE STILL IN THE BOX AND SO ARE WE!



Every household has one. A cupboard, a shelf, sometimes a whole cabinet that's off-limits for daily use. Inside it sits the "good" cutlery, the fancy dinner set, the crystal glasses that catch the light beautifully and are touched maybe twice a year. They're kept for guests. For special occasions. For "someday." Meanwhile, we eat our everyday meals off chipped plates and mismatched spoons, without a second thought.

It seems like a small, harmless habit. But it says something quietly powerful about how we treat ourselves versus how we treat others.

Somewhere along the way, many of us absorbed the idea that we don't deserve the good things unless someone else is watching. The nice cutlery isn't really about cutlery at all. It's about worth. We save the best version of everything for people we want to impress, and we hand ourselves the leftovers, literally and emotionally. The good candle stays unlit because "it's too nice to waste." The nice perfume sits untouched because we're "saving it for something special." But what's more special than an ordinary Tuesday of your one and only life?

This habit usually isn't about the object either. It comes from a quiet belief that we're not important enough to be the occasion. We think worth has to be earned through some big event, guests coming over, a festival, a celebration, before we

allow ourselves nice things. Until then, we exist in maintenance mode. Functional. Fine. Never fully looked after.

There's something a little sad about a beautiful tea set sitting in a box for years while we drink chai from a plain steel cup every single day of our lives. It's not that the good cutlery is wrong to save. It's that we never save anything just for ourselves. We treat guests better than we treat the people we live with every single day, including ourselves.

Think about it. Would you ever serve a guest food on a broken plate? Probably not. You'd want them to feel valued, cared for, worth the effort. So why do we accept less for ourselves, day after day, without even noticing?

Maybe the real shift isn't throwing away the "guest" cutlery. It's realizing that you are allowed to be your own occasion. You don't need a festival to light the nice candle. You don't need visitors to use the good cup. You don't need permission to treat an ordinary evening like it matters, because it does. Every day you live is a day worth showing up for, cutlery and all.

So today, maybe skip the chipped mug. Use the one you've been "saving." Not because anyone's watching, but simply because you're finally allowed to matter to yourself, without an occasion, without a guest, without waiting for someday that never really comes.

BRICS STEPS UP WORK ON AYURVEDA AND OTHER TRADITIONAL CARE

At the 18th BRICS Summit, leaders backed the New Delhi Declaration. The document gives fresh momentum to work on Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine, often called TCIM. It also helps create a wider stage for systems like Ayurveda. BRICS leaders approved plans to set up an Expert Working Group on TCIM. This group would sit under the BRICS Health Track. The working group is meant to help countries work together on research. It would also support sharing know-how and methods. Members plan to exchange lessons on what works best in each country. A key area will be research on medicinal plants and herbal products. Leaders also point to the value of traditional knowledge held in BRICS member states. They say this could aid the making of treatments that are safe, work well, and cost less. The declaration adds another point. Traditional medicine should not rely only on tradition. It should have scientific backing, clear quality rules, safety checks, and suitable ways to regulate products. For India, the plan offers an outside platform for Ayurveda and other AYUSH systems. The goal is to promote these fields through research and stronger evidence. It also supports working with other BRICS partners. The move matches the wider push from WHO for traditional medicine that is backed by evidence.



HANUMAN ANSH" SECURES THIRD PLACE AMONG HIGHEST-GROSSING HINDI FILMS IN 2026

Another Vishal Chaturvedi's religious movie, "Hanuman Ansh", has become one of the largest Hindi films of 2026 and entered the list of top three highest-grossing Bollywood films in the world. As reported by India Today, "Hanuman Ansh" grossed ₹279.80 crore worldwide by Day 39. The movie beat "Mirzapur: The Movie", which grossed ₹273.64 crore by Day 11, and Akshay Kumar's "Bhooth Bangla", which earned ₹231 crore in the world. It should be noted that the film's success was unexpected considering its modest opening. As reported, "Hanuman Ansh" opened with only ₹10 lakh and was filmed with an initial budget of approximately ₹2 crore. Instead of fading into oblivion right after the release, "Hanuman Ansh" attracted more and more people and continued running in the cinemas for almost a month. Whereas "Mirzapur: The Movie" and "Bhooth Bangla" got to their respective positions much quicker, "Hanuman Ansh" managed to do that within 39 days. Such performance indicates that this movie has unusual longevity in the cinemas.



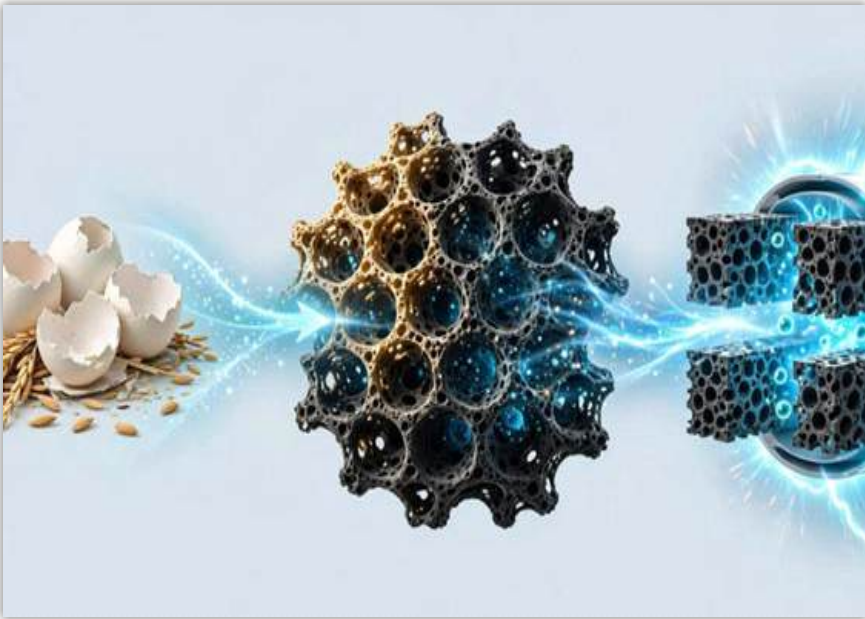
WATER-TREATMENT WASTE TURNED INTO FILTER THAT REMOVES UP TO 97.1% OF MICROPLASTICS

A new innovative way of solving the issue of microplastics pollution by designing a filter out of water treatment waste was recently suggested by scientists. The filter produced out of water treatment waste was tested in the scientific research done in 2026. According to the results of the experiments, the filter was efficient in removal of 86.9%-97.1% of microplastics. One may assume that this innovative method of removal of microplastics will help to solve not only the problem of microplastics pollution but also the waste created during water purification. Water treatment waste is a valuable material that can be utilized to create filters. Currently, microplastics are found in rivers, lakes, oceans and even in sources of drinking-water. Many issues arise in relation to the effects of microplastics on the environment and health of people. Although modern technologies allow removing certain amounts of plastics particles from water, further improvement of efficiency of the filtration process is one of the priorities of scientific studies.



EGG AND RICE SCRAPS CAN BE CHANGED INTO A MATERIAL THAT STORES ELECTRICITY.

A team of scientists says it made a porous carbon from leftover egg and rice. The work was shared in Molecules. Their method used pre-carbonisation and pyrolytic activation. The goal was to form nitrogen and oxygen doped porous carbon from a blend of egg waste and rice waste. The best batch was called YPAC-1. It had a three dimensional honeycomb style shape. Under a microscope, it showed many tiny pores. The material measured about 1,572.1 square metres per gram in surface area. That large area leaves room for electrical charge. It also helps electrolyte ions travel through the carbon. In supercapacitor tests, YPAC-1 reached 446.22 F/g. This was measured at a current density of 1 A/g. A two-electrode device using the material recorded an energy density of 8.3 Wh/kg at 136 W/kg. The material also retained 82.26% of its capacitance after 10,000 charge-discharge cycles. The research demonstrates how food waste can be converted into a functional energy-storage material, although further development would be needed before such technology could be used commercially.



INDIA TARGETS DOUBLING EXPORTS TO EU WITHIN THREE TO FOUR YEARS

India wants to grow its exports to the European Union by about two times over the next three to four years. It plans to use the proposed India-EU Free Trade Agreement to help Indian firms sell more in Europe. The agreement, whose negotiations concluded in January 2026, is currently going through the EU's legal and approval process and could become operational after the required formalities are completed. India exported goods worth \$72.39 billion to the EU in FY26, accounting for 16.4% of the country's total exports. The government plans to organise high-level delegations and business-to-business meetings across EU member states to help Indian exporters make greater use of the preferential access provided under the agreement. However, higher exports will depend on Indian companies expanding production capacity and meeting EU quality, technical and sustainability standards. The agreement provides significant tariff concessions: the EU has committed to eliminating duties on about 70.4% of tariff lines immediately, covering nearly 90.7% of India's export value. The government's export strategy therefore combines tariff access with greater industry readiness and stronger engagement with European markets.



FROM “NOT GATE” TO “AND GATE”, INDIA IS PUTTING MORE WEIGHT BEHIND CHIPS

India is now moving past policy talk and toward a full semiconductor ecosystem. That includes work on chip design, chip making, packaging, key materials, and the tools used in fabs. It also covers research, and efforts to grow skilled talent. This shift is being shown at SEMICON India 2026. The emphasis is no longer only on drawing in single projects. Instead, the event highlights the links needed to support a wider chip industry. The push started with the ₹76,000-crore Semicon India Programme in 2021. That plan backed semiconductor fabs, compound semiconductors, sensors, and silicon photonics. It also supported ATMP and OSAT facilities, plus chip-design projects. Under Semicon 1.0, 12 semiconductor manufacturing units have been approved, with cumulative investments exceeding ₹1.64 lakh crore, while 24 chip-design projects have also been approved. The next phase, Semicon 2.0, approved in July 2026 with an outlay of ₹1.275 lakh crore, expands the focus to six areas including design, research, talent, machines and materials, new fabs and advanced packaging. The shift is also attracting major industry commitments. Applied Materials announced a \$5-billion investment over the next decade for research, supply-chain development and workforce expansion in India. The objective is no longer simply to manufacture chips, but to develop the complete value chain behind them, strengthening India's role in the global semiconductor industry.



SIXTH JUNIOR MEN'S ASIA CUP TITLE WON BY INDIA

India's junior men's hockey team secured a record sixth Junior Asia Cup title after defeating South Korea 4-1 in the final at Moqi, China. The victory allowed India to successfully defend their continental crown and also secured their qualification for the FIH Junior World Cup. India took control of the final early. Ajeet Yadav opened the scoring in the ninth minute with a deflected effort before captain Anmol Ekka doubled the advantage in the 13th minute. South Korea struggled to break through India's defence, and Prabhdeep Singh added a third goal in the 21st minute. India went into half-time with a commanding 3-0 lead. The Indian side continued to press after the break and earned several penalty corners. Ashu Maurya converted one in the 50th minute to make it 4-0. South Korean captain Lee Minhyeok pulled one back from a penalty stroke in the 54th minute, but India comfortably held on for the win. The triumph adds to India's previous Junior Asia Cup titles in 2004, 2008, 2015, 2023 and 2024, making them the most successful team in the tournament's history.



INDIAN WOMEN CLINCH WOMEN'S ASIA CUP 2026

India produced a commanding all-round performance to defeat Sri Lanka by 72 runs in the Women's Asia Cup 2026 final in Dubai, securing a record-extending eighth continental title. The victory also completed an unbeaten campaign for Harmanpreet Kaur's side. Batting first, India posted 183/5 in 20 overs, powered by a spectacular opening partnership between Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana. The duo added 129 runs for the first wicket. Shafali smashed 68 off 39 balls, including nine fours and two sixes, reaching her half-century from just 24 deliveries, the fastest fifty in Women's Asia Cup history. Mandhana followed with a fluent 59 off 39 balls, registering her 36th T20I fifty. Sri Lanka's chase never gathered momentum as India's bowlers kept taking wickets at regular intervals. Sree Charani was the standout performer with 4/20, while Deepti Sharma claimed 3/19. Sri Lanka were eventually bowled out for 111 in 20 overs, with captain Chamari Athapaththu top-scoring with 36. The triumph marked India's eighth Women's Asia Cup title, further extending their record in the tournament.



GUKESH AND NIHAL GUIDE INDIA TO 3-1 WIN OVER ITALY AT CHESS OLYMPIAD

India's men's team registered a 3-1 victory over Italy in the third round of the 46th Chess Olympiad in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, with victories from D Gukesh and Nihal Sarin deciding the contest. Italy entered the match with an all-Grandmaster line-up, but India produced a strong performance across all four boards. Playing with the black pieces, reigning world champion D Gukesh defeated Sabino Brunello in 33 moves. Gukesh employed the Queen's Indian Defence and gradually built an advantage before converting it into a decisive win. The result marked his return to winning form after a draw in the previous round. Nihal Sarin also secured a full point against Francesco Sonis with the white pieces. Using the Trompowsky Attack, Nihal capitalised on an error from his opponent and eventually won a rook before finishing the game. On the remaining boards, R Praggnanandhaa drew Lorenzo Lodici, while Arjun Erigaisi drew Luca Moroni Jr. The two draws ensured that Gukesh and Nihal's victories were enough to give India a comprehensive 3-1 win. The result strengthened India's campaign as the team continued its pursuit of another strong Olympiad showing.



TANVI PATRI WINS ASIAN U17 TITLE IN ALL-INDIAN FINAL

Fifteen-year-old Tanvi Patri won the girls' singles U17 title at the Badminton Asia U17 & U15 Junior Championships in Chengdu, China, defeating compatriot Shaina Manimuthu 11-15, 15-10, 15-12 in an all-Indian final. The second-seeded Patri recovered after losing the opening game to complete a three-game comeback and secure the continental title. Patri faced a demanding route to the final. After a first-round bye, she edged China's Zhou Jing Li 18-16, 12-15, 15-13, before beating Japan's Shizuku Kashio 15-9, 15-12. She then defeated China's Lin Heng Men 15-8, 15-8 in the quarter-finals and overcame Yu Ying Gui 15-9, 11-15, 15-11 in the semi-final. Manimuthu, the sixth seed, also produced a strong campaign, defeating Japanese opponents Yui Itabashi and Anon Okimoto to reach the final. Her silver medal adds to the U15 Asian title she won last year. Patri's victory means India has retained the U17 girls' singles crown for a second consecutive year, following Diksha Sudhakar's 2025 triumph. The title also adds to Patri's 2024 U15 Asian crown, while Indian pair Aaditya Singh Negi and Tanmay Verma won bronze in U15 boys' doubles.



JAY MEENA AND AADHYA TIWARI TARGET HISTORIC SOFT TENNIS MEDAL AT ASIAN GAMES

Jay Meena and Aadhya Tiwari are leading India's six-member soft tennis squad at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, with the duo aiming to secure the country's first-ever medal in the sport at the continental event. India has previously reached the knockout stages but has yet to finish on the podium. Meena will compete in men's singles, men's team and mixed doubles, while Tiwari will feature in women's singles and mixed doubles. Their partnership has already produced India's first-ever World Soft Tennis Championships medal — a bronze in mixed doubles in 2024. Meena also became the first Indian to win an individual medal at the Asian Soft Tennis Championships, taking bronze in men's singles in 2025. Tiwari, meanwhile, is currently India's No. 1 women's soft tennis player. She represented India at the Asian Games at just 15 in 2018 and finished fifth in the women's team event at the 2023 Hangzhou Games. In 2025, she won bronze medals in both mixed doubles and mixed team events at the Asian Soft Tennis Championship. The Indian men's team has already reached the quarter-finals in Aichi-Nagoya, beating Laos and Mongolia 3-0, before losing 3-0 to Chinese Taipei and later Indonesia.



SUJEET SINGH BOOKED HISTORICAL ENTRY INTO ASIAN GAMES SQUAD

Sujeet Singh has scored a huge personal triumph when he won in the World Championships trials, and thus became the first Indian wrestler, who won a place in the Asian Games squad. Sujeet demonstrated a tough and composed game during the World Championships trials, where he outshined his rivals. This victory has provided him with an opportunity to take part in Asian Games on behalf of India, and thus added another success to his successful wrestling career. This particular success is especially valuable since World Championships trials are an important step in choosing the team of wrestlers that will represent India in major competitions. Besides, this success provides Sujeet with valuable confidence and experience, which will be important for his further performances. Having qualified for the Asian Games squad, Sujeet now has enough time to concentrate on training and preparing for the event. Participating in Asian Games will give Sujeet the opportunity to compete with the best wrestlers from the whole of Asia. Sujeet now has to work hard and continue developing his skills in order to demonstrate his best result at the Asian Games.



BPSC School Teacher TRE 4.0
Recruitment 2026

The Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) has released the notification for the School Teacher Recruitment Examination (TRE 4.0) 2026 for 32,388 school teacher vacancies in Bihar.

- Key Highlights**
- Organization: Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC)
 - Exam Name: School Teacher Recruitment Examination (TRE 4.0)
 - Total Vacancies: 32,388 Posts

Educational Qualification

- Candidates should possess the educational qualifications prescribed for the respective teaching post. Depending on the level and subject,
- Candidates may be required to have the relevant Graduation/Postgraduation degree, B.Ed., D.El.Ed., CTET/STET or other prescribed teaching qualifications.

- Important Dates**
- Notification/Advertisement: 2026
 - Application Start Date:21.09.2026
 - Examination Date: To be notified

- Age Limit**
- Minimum Age: 18 Years
 - The maximum age limit varies according to the teaching post and applicable category.

- Salary**
- Primary and Middle School Teachers: Pay as prescribed by the Bihar Government
 - Secondary/Senior Secondary Teachers: Pay according to the respective teacher pay scale
 - Selected candidates will receive salary and applicable allowances according to the prescribed Bihar Government rules.

- Application Fee**
- All candidates : ₹100

- Selection Process**
- Written Examination
 - Document Verification
 - Eligibility/Certificate Verification
 - Final Selection

- How to Apply**
- Visit the official BPSC website
 - Check the revised TRE 4.0 advertisement,
 - Complete the online registration once the application window opens,
 - Enter the required personal and educational details,
 - Upload the necessary documents,
 - Pay the applicable fee and submit the application before the revised closing date.
 -

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

BGSSL RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 1,949 APPRENTICE, EXECUTIVE AND MORE POSTS



Baroda Global Shared Services Limited (BGSSL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, has released the recruitment notification for 1,949 vacancies across 18 job roles.

- Key Highlights**
- Organization: Baroda Global Shared Services Limited (BGSSL)
 - Major Posts: Apprentice, Executive, Collection Officer, Sales Officer, Aadhaar Operator & Others
 - Total Vacancies: 1,949 Posts

- Number of Job Categories: 18
- Category: Banking/Corporate Recruitment

Educational Qualification

- Candidates should possess the educational qualifications prescribed for the respective post.
- Depending on the position, eligibility may include 10th/12th pass, Graduation, postgraduation or relevant professional qualifications along with the required experience.

- Important Dates**
- Application Start Date: 31 August 2026
 - Online Application Start: 01 September 2026
 - Last Date to Apply: 30 September 2026
 - Closing Time: 11:59 PM

- Age Limit**
- Age limits vary according to the post.
 - Candidates should check the individual job description for the prescribed age criteria before applying.

Salary

- Salary/CTC will vary according to the position, qualifications, experience and job responsibilities.

Application Fee: No Fee

- Selection Process**
- Application/Resume Screening
 - Shortlisting
 - Personal Interview/Assessment
 - Document Verification
 - Medical Examination (where applicable)
 - The selection process may vary according to the position.

- How to Apply**
- Visit the official BGSSL Careers portal,
 - Check the available job roles and eligibility requirements,
 - Select the suitable position,
 - Complete the prescribed application process and submit the required resume/documents before 30 September 2026.

For more details candidates are asked to visit the official website

INCOME TAX PUNE SPORTS QUOTA RECRUITMENT 2026 – APPLY ONLINE FOR 85 MTS, ASSISTANT, STENO POSTS

The Office of the Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Pune, has released the official notification for the recruitment of 85 posts.

- Key Highlights**
- Organization: Office of the Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Pune
Post Names: Stenographer Grade-II, Tax Assistant & MTS
Total Vacancies: 85 Posts
Stenographer Grade-II: 6 Posts
Tax Assistant: 40 Posts
MTS: 30 Posts
Category: Sports Quota Recruitment

Educational Qualification

- Candidates should possess the educational qualifications prescribed for the respective post.
- Stenographer and Tax Assistant posts require the relevant qualifications and skill requirements, while MTS candidates must fulfil the prescribed matriculation-level eligibility.

- Important Dates**
- Notification Date: 10 August 2026
 - Application Start Date: 15 August 2026
 - Last Date to Apply: 30 September 2026

Age Limit

- Stenographer Grade-II: 18–27 Years
- Tax Assistant: 18–27 Years
- MTS: 18–27 Years

- Salary**
- Stenographer Grade-II: Pay Level 4 – ₹25,500–₹81,100
 - Tax Assistant: Pay Level 4 – ₹25,500–₹81,100
 - MTS: Pay Level 1 – ₹18,000–₹56,900

Application Fee: ₹200

- Selection Process**
- Sports
 - Eligibility/Certificate Verification
 - Written/Relevant Selection Test
 - Skill Test (where applicable)
 - Document Verification
 - Medical Examination

- How to Appl**
- Visit the official Income Tax Department recruitment portal,
 - Complete the online registration,

- Enter personal, educational and sports achievement details
- Upload the required certificates and documents,
- Pay the applicable fee and submit the application before 30 September 2026.
- Eligible candidates are asked to visit the official website

For more details candidates are asked to visit the official website





Why Is the Keyboard Layout Called QWERTY?

Look at the top-left letters on a standard keyboard: Q W E R T Y

That is where the name QWERTY comes from.

The layout traces back to typewriters in the 19th century. Early mechanical typewriters could have problems when commonly used letter combinations caused the metal typebars to collide or jam.

The QWERTY arrangement was developed to help manage these mechanical limitations. It became widely established through the success and adoption of early typewriter designs, and its familiarity helped the layout survive even after mechanical typewriters disappeared.

Today, QWERTY remains the standard keyboard layout in many English-speaking countries, despite modern electronic keyboards no longer having the same mechanical-jamming problem.

THE TAKEAWAY: A keyboard layout designed for 19th-century typewriters is still shaping how we type in the digital age.



The Missing Rupee

Three friends pay ₹300 for a hotel room. Later, the actual bill is ₹250.

The waiter returns ₹50 but keeps ₹20 and gives ₹10 to each friend.

Each friend therefore paid ₹90 → ₹270 total.

The waiter kept ₹20.

Where did the ₹10 go?

The waiter's ₹20.
The friends' ₹270 already includes

₹250 (hotel) + ₹20 (waiter) = ₹270

The correct calculation is:

The mistake is adding ₹20 to ₹270.

There is no missing ₹10.

Answer



NARALI BHAAT

This Week, We're Relishing Festive Narali Bhaat!

Narali Bhaat is a traditional Maharashtrian festive sweet made with rice, fresh coconut, jaggery, ghee, and aromatic cardamom. Sweet, fragrant, and comforting, this classic dish is perfect for Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations and festive family gatherings.

Ingredients:

1 cup rice, 1 cup freshly grated coconut, ¾–1 cup jaggery, 2 tablespoons ghee, 2 tablespoons chopped cashews, 1 tablespoon raisins, ½ teaspoon cardamom powder, a few strands of saffron (optional), and a pinch of salt.

Preparation

- Wash the rice thoroughly and soak it for 20–30 minutes. Drain and cook the rice with approximately 1½–2 cups of water until the grains are tender but remain separate.
- Heat 1 tablespoon of ghee in a heavy-bottomed pan. Add the grated coconut and jaggery. Cook on low flame until the jaggery melts and combines well with the coconut.
- Add cardamom powder, saffron, and a pinch of salt. Mix gently and cook for a few minutes until the mixture becomes fragrant.



- Add the cooked rice to the coconut-jaggery mixture and gently fold everything together. Cook on low flame for 2–3 minutes, ensuring that the rice grains remain intact.
- Heat the remaining ghee in a small pan and lightly roast the chopped cashews and raisins until golden. Add the roasted nuts and raisins to the Narali Bhaat and mix gently.
- Cover and allow the Narali Bhaat to rest for a few minutes so that the flavours blend beautifully.

Serving Tip:

Serve Narali Bhaat warm in a traditional festive bowl or platter. Garnish with roasted cashews, raisins, and a few strands of saffron for a beautiful Ganesh Chaturthi-inspired presentation.

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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