

The 22% FCNR Mirage

R. Suryamurthy

The Reserve Bank of India's latest Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR-B) deposit window has sparked intense interest among non-resident Indians (NRIs), with banks, wealth managers and financial influencers promoting strategies that claim returns of up to 20-22% through leverage. However, market analysts warn that the headline numbers may significantly understate the financial, regulatory and operational risks involved.

The RBI's special swap facility, available for fresh FCNR(B) deposits mobilized between June and September 2026, allows banks to hedge foreign currency deposits with the central bank at a fixed exchange rate. The move effectively removes currency hedging costs that previously reduced returns on FCNR deposits and has enabled several large lenders to offer dollar deposit rates approaching 6-7%.

For NRIs holding idle dollar balances, the proposition appears attractive. FCNR deposits are denominated in foreign currency, carry

no exchange-rate risk for the depositor and remain tax-exempt in India for eligible account holders.

The controversy centers on a second layer being aggressively marketed by some advisors: borrowing against FCNR deposits and repeatedly redeploying the funds to magnify returns.

Proponents argue that leverage can transform a 6-7% deposit yield into annual returns exceeding 20%, drawing comparisons with the highly successful FCNR mobilization program introduced during India's 2013 balance-of-payments pressures.

(Contd. on page 7)

A SOBER DISAGGREGATION OF THE TWO SCENARIOS

Leverage, Returns and Risks: 2013 vs 2026

METRIC	2013 LEVERAGE CASE	2026 LEVERAGE CASE
 FCNR yield	~4.5%	6–7.1%
 Borrowing cost	~2.5%	~6–6.5%
 Net spread	~2%	0 to +1% at best
 Leverage multiple	9–19x (reported) Realistic: 3–5x	3–5x
 Gross leveraged return	22–42%	12–17% (before costs)
 After SBLC, tax, cash flow, friction	Not meaningfully disclosed then	Estimated 6–10% net in many real-world cases
 Systemic risk flag	Raised by Aditya Birla Group's chief economist at the time, who warned that leveraged money can leave as abruptly as it comes in, increasing systemic risk	 Same risk remains



KEY TAKEAWAY

The leverage story that looked extraordinary in 2013 rested on an unusually wide spread, ultra-cheap funding, and very high leverage multiples. In 2026, the spread is thin, funding is expensive, and realistic leverage is modest—so after real-world frictions, returns compress to mid-single digits in many cases.

India Criticizes UNSC Reform Paper



Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni speaking at the IGN meeting on June 15, 2026, at the United Nations Headquarters in NY. (Photo courtesy: Screenshot/India@UN)

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

India has criticized the revised Elements Paper circulated by the co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on United Nations Security Council reforms, arguing that the document fails to accurately reflect the views of a majority of member states and does not adequately represent the current state of discussions.

Speaking at the IGN meeting on Security Council reforms held on June 15, 2026, in the Trusteeship Council Chamber at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, said "In our view, it neither captures the overall state of play accurately nor accounts for the overwhelming sentiments of a majority of member states, not unlike similar Elements Papers of the last two years at least."

The Ambassador noted that the Elements Paper, circulated on June 10, characterizes developments within the IGN process and across the five key negotiation clusters based on the co-Chairs' interpretation.

(Contd. on page 3)

SABCVA Hosts Virginia Networking Event

SAH Staff Reporter

The South Asian Business Council of Virginia (SABCVA) hosted a networking and happy hour events on June 12 at the Hyatt Regency Herndon in Virginia, bringing together more than 400 business, government, and community leaders.

According to a statement issued by SABCVA, the event attracted CEOs, executives, entrepreneurs, elected officials, government leaders, business owners, mentors, students, sponsors, and professionals from across Virginia.

The gathering served as a platform for networking, collaboration, mentorship, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and community engagement. Attendees had the opportunity to connect with industry leaders, explore business and career opportunities, exchange ideas, and build professional relationships aimed at strengthening Virginia's business ecosystem.

The evening reflected SABCVA's broader mission of creating opportunities, supporting entrepreneurs, developing

future leaders, and fostering collaboration among diverse communities.

"At SABCVA, we believe that one meaningful connection can change a life," said Mansoor Qureshi, chairman of SABCVA. "Our mission is to create opportunities for professionals, entrepreneurs, students, and future leaders through networking, mentorship, internships, education, and community engagement. The incredible turnout at this event demonstrates the power of our community and the impact we can create

together. This is only the beginning."

A key focus of the event was workforce development and career advancement. SABCVA announced the successful launch of its 100 AI and Cybersecurity Internship Program, designed to provide students and young professionals with hands-on experience, mentorship, and exposure to two rapidly growing industries.

The organization also introduced Mission 1000 Internships, an initiative aimed at creating 1,000 internship opportunities by

connecting students and young professionals with corporations, government agencies, technology companies, non-profit organizations, and experienced mentors.

In addition, SABCVA unveiled plans for Empower VA 2026, a statewide initiative focused on leadership development, entrepreneurship, workforce readiness, mentorship, innovation, and community engagement. The program is intended to bring together diverse communities across Virginia, including South Asian, Latino, African American, Asian American, and other multicultural groups.



(Photo courtesy: SABCVA)

Rajkumar Gains Community Backing in Queens



Jenifer Rajkumar
(Photo courtesy: X@JeniferRajkumar)

SAH Staff Reporter

A day before early voting began on June 13, One City Rising, a citywide community organization focused on advancing practical solutions to New York City's most pressing challenges, announced its recommendation of New York State Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar for re-election in the 38th Assembly District.

Early voting will run from June 13 through June 21, with Election Day scheduled for June 23.

According to a statement from Rajkumar's office, One City Rising recently praised her Sunlight Bill, anti-corruption legislation designed to increase transparency by requiring greater disclosure of lobbyists' government affiliations. The measure aims to help New Yorkers better understand who is seeking to influence public policy.

"I am deeply honored to receive the recommendation of One City Rising," said Assemblywoman Rajkumar. "We share a belief that government must move beyond division and deliver real, practical results for the people it serves."

The statement highlighted Rajkumar's legislative record during her tenure in the State Assembly, citing measures such as the SMOKE-OUT Act, which targets illegal smoke shops, efforts to establish Diwali as a New York City public school holiday, and legislation aimed at accelerating the construction of housing and essential infrastructure projects.

It also noted that Rajkumar has secured funding for public safety initiatives, libraries, youth programs, food assistance, veterans' services, economic development efforts, and community organizations across South Queens. In addition, her office has assisted thousands of constituents with housing-related issues, access to benefits, interactions with government agencies, quality-of-life concerns, and other essential services.

"My office gives every constituent our all," Rajkumar said. "Whether there is an election or not, I am answering the phone, solving problems, bringing government services directly into our neighborhoods, and fighting every day for the people of South Queens. Public service is my passion, and I will never stop showing up."

Rajkumar, the first South Asian woman elected to state office in New York and the first woman to represent the 38th Assembly District, is the daughter of immigrants.

One City Rising describes itself as an independent grassroots organization dedicated to voter education, community engagement, opposition to divisive politics, and the promotion of common-sense reforms.

Bridging Rajasthan and America



(Photo Courtesy: Rajasthan Foundation USA Inc)

SAH Staff Reporter

A new organization aimed at strengthening ties among the Rajasthani diaspora in the United States and fostering closer connections with Rajasthan was formally launched in New York with the inauguration of Rajasthan Foundation USA Inc..

The launch event brought together diplomats, elected representatives, business leaders, community members and prominent members of the Indian-American community. Organizers described the initiative as a platform to connect Rajasthanis across the United States while promoting cultural heritage, economic engagement, education, youth leadership, women's empowerment and community service.

Addressing the gathering, representatives of the foundation said the organization would work to create stronger links between Rajasthan and its overseas

community, encouraging investment opportunities, cultural exchanges and collaborative development initiatives.

President of Rajasthan Foundation, NY Chapter, Purnima Voria, expressed gratitude to Consul General of India in New York, Binaya Pradhan; Deputy Consul General Vishal Harsh; Consul (Trade), Rajlaxmi Kadam, MPs Milind Deora and Shashank Mani Tripathi; Navneet Rajpurohit of BJP Rajasthan Overseas Cell, Naveen Rajpurohit; Haridas Kotahwala; Samin Sharma; Kailash Jhalani; Kailash Rawat; and Navin Shah.

Speaking on the occasion, organizers emphasized the foundation's vision of encouraging greater engagement by overseas Rajasthanis in initiatives benefiting both their adopted homeland and their state of origin. They said the platform would seek to unite members of the diaspora under a common mission of preserving Rajasthan's cultural identity while creating opportunities for future generations.

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Fashion, Family and South Asian Pride

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

Paaie, a Virginia-based South Asian fashion brand, hosted a fashion show in partnership with Dulles Town Center Mall on June 6, 2026, at the Mall, in Sterling, Virginia.

The family-friendly event featured 75 models showcasing Paaie's signature collections, highlighting a blend of traditional South Asian attire and contemporary fashion. The runway presentation highlighted Paaie's mission of bringing "Indian craftsmanship and global fashion," together in a way that connects "generations and communities," according to organizers Yashvi Gupta and Riya Gupta.

More than 500 people attended the event, which featured participants including Mrs. India DMV USA 2025 Mohini Swapnil, Mrs. Asia Pacific Universe 2026 Dr. Soniya Upadhyay, Mrs. India USA 2025 First Runner-Up Sapna Mishra, and Miss India DMV USA 2025 Mahika Rami.

According to Yashvi and Riya, the event represented more than a fashion showcase. They described it as a celebration of family, empowerment, diversity, and the growing influence of South Asian fashion within

the local community. With models of varying ages and backgrounds, the runway served as a platform for "confidence, self-expression, and representation."

Yashvi said, "I'm truly grateful for the incredible support we received from our community, team, sponsors, and families. Our models brought so much energy, elegance, and heart to the runway, making the show a memorable celebration for everyone involved."

She added, "Paaie's journey continues because of the people who believe in us, support us, and grow with us. Together, we are celebrating not just fashion, but community, culture, and a shared vision."

Riya noted the strong support the brand received throughout the planning process. "Seeing the love and support that has come together throughout this journey has been truly incredible. We may work behind the scenes, it is our models who bring the Paaie vision to life on the runway," she said.

Riya added that the models' "belief, energy, and dedication" mean everything to Paaie and that the event would not have been possible without them.

According to Yashvi and Riya, Paaie has organized fashion shows in New York, Paris,



Models pose during the fashion show. (Photo courtesy: Paaie)

Orlando, and Washington, D.C., over the past four years, steadily expanding its presence on national and international fashion platforms.

Founded by the Gupta family, including Mayank, Anjali, Riya, and Yashvi Gupta, Paaie has grown from a business focused on ethnic jewelry and silver products into a recognized South Asian fashion brand. The company operates a flagship store at Dulles Town Center and maintains an online retail

presence, offering fashion collections for men, women, and children while blending traditional Indian heritage with contemporary design.

Looking ahead, Mayank said the team is preparing for several upcoming events, including New York Fashion Week on September 11 and 12, 2026, and the Miss India DC, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia competition.

Raman Reaches Los Angeles Mayoral Runoff

SAH Staff Reporter

Indian American Impact (IA Impact) has congratulated Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman on advancing to the November runoff election for mayor of Los Angeles, a contest that could make her the "first South Asian American mayor" of the nation's second-largest city.

In a statement, IA Impact said Raman's advancement reflects the growing political influence of Indian American and South Asian American communities in California, which is home to more than one million South Asians, the largest such population in the United States.

"Nithya Raman's advancement to the November runoff is a testament to the power of a campaign built on a simple, urgent truth: Los



Nithya Raman.
(Photo courtesy: X@nithyavraman)

Angeles must be affordable and safe for everyone," said Chintan Patel, executive director of IA Impact.

"As an immigrant herself, Nithya knows firsthand what is at stake for communities like ours," Patel said. "If she wins in November, South Asian Americans will lead the two largest cities in the

United States. Indian American Impact could not be more proud to stand with Nithya, and we will do everything in our power to see her across the finish line."

Raman said she was "incredibly honored" by the opportunity to advance to the general election and thanked supporters who contributed to her campaign efforts.

"Now our fight for a healthier, safer, more affordable, and more joyful Los Angeles continues. For too long, City Hall has prioritized giving political advantage to powerful interests that fund elections. Meanwhile, working people pay the price in higher rents, depleted services, and a city that has stopped working for them," she said adding "If you're as frustrated by the broken status quo as I am, I hope you'll join our movement to build a city that works for everyone."

Celebrating Gujarati Asmita

SAH Staff Reporter

The Federation of Gujarati Associations of USA (FOGA USA) celebrated the successful conclusion of its inaugural National Gujarati Competition, held during the 2nd United Gujarati Convention 2026 in Orlando, Florida, over Memorial Day weekend from May 22 to 25.

Inspired by the Gujarati language competition launched by the Gujarati Mandal of Central Ohio (GMOCO) in 2023, the national initiative was designed to "promote, preserve, and celebrate" the Gujarati language among younger generations of Gujaratis growing up in the United States, according to a statement from FOGA USA.

More than 50 children and young adults from across the country participated in the competition, demonstrating their skills in reading, writing, speaking, and appreciating the Gujarati language. Organizers noted that at a time when maintaining heritage languages can be challenging,

it is especially encouraging to see children born and raised in the United States confidently expressing themselves in their (mother tongue) ગુજરાતી.

Participants competed in a variety of categories, including essay writing, public speaking, and poetry recitation.

According to the statement, the competition topics encouraged participants to explore themes related to family, Gujarati personalities, tourism, food, culture, and Bharat.

"It was particularly encouraging to see children and youth articulate their opinions through heartfelt Gujarati essays, vocalize their thoughts through Gujarati public speaking with confidence, and develop a meaningful connection with Gujarati (literature) ગુજરાતી through poetry," the statement said. "Their submissions demonstrated not only language skills but also a deep appreciation for Gujarati culture, history, values, traditions, customs, and cuisine."

India Criticizes...

(Contd. from page 1)

The revised document, titled Revised Co-Chairs Elements Paper on Convergences and Divergences on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters, was presented as an assessment of discussions during the 80th session of the General Assembly. The co-Chairs said it seeks to identify areas of common ground while also highlighting issues where differences remain.

In his remarks, Ambassador Harish said India fully aligned with statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of St. Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the L.69 Group and Japan on behalf of the G4 grouping,

Ambassador Harish outlined eight key concerns.

First, he said the paper lacks a clear and objective definition of "convergences" and "divergences," making the assessment subjective. Second, he noted that General Assembly Decision 62/557 calls for a solution based on member state proposals with the widest political acceptance and makes no reference to "bridging proposals."

Third, India questioned the inclusion of a Fixed Regional Seats proposal for expanding permanent membership, saying the concept appears only in the current Elements Paper.

Fourth, Ambassador Harish argued that the paper unnecessarily treats the concept of permanency as unresolved, despite the UN Charter's clear distinction between permanent

and non-permanent Security Council members.

Fifth, he said the document understates support for expanding permanent membership by describing it as the position of "a significant number of delegations," despite backing from a majority of member states through national statements and group affiliations such as L.69, G4, and CARICOM.

Sixth, India argued that presenting expansion of two-year non-permanent seats as a convergence overlooks the broader reform conditions and linked proposals attached to such support. Seventh, Ambassador Harish cautioned against using the principle that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" to delay progress and preserve the status quo.

Eighth, he said India's support for

expanding permanent membership is aimed at making the Security Council more balanced, representative, and equitable, while recognizing its distinct structure under the UN Charter.

Calling for a more substantive reform process, Ambassador Harish said the IGN should move toward text-based negotiations, consistent with other UN processes. He urged the co-Chairs to develop a negotiating text with clear milestones and timelines to facilitate focused and outcome-oriented discussions.

In Conclusion, India expressed hope that its concerns would be reflected in a revised Elements Paper and reaffirmed its commitment to working with member states and negotiating groups to achieve meaningful reform of the UN Security Council.



South Asia Notes

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Iran War Adds To Strains In US-India Ties

The whole world would heave a collective sigh of relief when the US and Iran will sign the deal on Friday.

This would be particularly true for India, which has borne expected and unexpected costs of the war. Fuel imports have been impacted, as have been investments and remittances. But more importantly, the loss of Indian lives, breadwinners in most cases.

This was brought home most pointedly this past week when the US attacked a Palau-flagged merchant ship – the Settebello – on June 10 for apparent violation of the US blockade of the Straits of Hormuz. Three of the 24 Indian sailors aboard were killed.

Ironically, the Settebello was struck less than 24 hours after India called in the US Charge d’Affaires Jason Meeks to protest the US’s firing on another Palau-flagged tanker, the Marivex, which too had 24 Indian seafarers. Meeks was summoned once again after the Settebello attack, which angered and horrified Indians equally. Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar posted on X that he had spoken to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to underline “India’s strong protest,” adding “such lethal actions against commercial shipping are not justified.”

Rubio responded that “all commercial vessels should immediately comply with orders from US forces as they seek to uphold peace and security in the Strait. He underscored that violations of the US blockade and the illicit transport of Iranian oil will not be tolerated.” No regret for lives lost, no condolences, no sympathy.

This has raised hackles in India – politicians and common people all expressing outrage; others are questioning the viability of the India-US partnership nurtured by different administrations in India and the US across 25 years. True, the partnership has acquired dimensions, breadth and depth that will keep it from a complete rupture. But one can’t deny the extensive damage wrought by the nearly one and a half year-old Trump administration to the so-called Strategic Partnership.

The imposition of tariffs even as trade talks were underway last April, an additional 25% penalty for buying discounted Russian oil, the US cosying up to Pakistan and the repeated references to how Trump intervened to calm tensions between India and Pakistan in May 2025, Trump’s description of India as a dead economy, his apparent endorsement of a right wing supporter’s characterisation of India as a “hellhole” and anti-immigration policies that have affected a large number of Indians have all taken their toll. Rubio’s four-day visit to India last month was aimed at undoing some of that damage and bridging the widening gap, but it seems to have achieved little.

The Settebello incident has only widened the chasm; it shows the US cares little for its strategic partner and friend. Against this backdrop, India has to take some stronger steps than just diplomatic protests to reinforce the message that Indian lives matter. And that a country of 1.45 billion is no pushover. Given that Trump respects leaders who stand up to him, i.e., “strong men” like China’s Xi Jinping and Russia’s Putin, perhaps it’s time India pushed back a little. One way would be to practice its multi-alignment strategy and indicate to the US that it has alternatives in partners and friends.

Disclaimer: Views expressed by the author do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of South Asian Herald.

Kiwi Curry Power

SAH Staff Reporter

Several candidates of South Asian origin, predominantly from the Indian community, are seeking election to New Zealand’s Parliament in the general election scheduled for November 7, 2026, reflecting the growing political influence of one of the country’s fastest-growing ethnic groups.

The Labour Party appears to offer the strongest prospects for increased South Asian representation, with several Indian-origin candidates holding favorable positions. Rakesh Naidoo, a superintendent of Indian heritage, is ranked 13th on Labour’s party list, a placement widely

considered secure based on current polling. Former Cabinet minister Priyanka Radhakrishnan, one of New Zealand’s most prominent Indian-origin politicians, is ranked 18th and is also expected to return to Parliament.

Labour is additionally targeting the competitive Takanini electorate in South Auckland, where candidate Kharag Singh is mounting a strong campaign. A victory in Takanini could increase Labour’s Indian-origin parliamentary representation to three MPs.

The National Party is fielding its largest-ever slate of Indian-origin candidates, although many are contesting

electorates that traditionally favor Labour. Among them, Mahesh Muralidhar, a technology entrepreneur originally from Kerala, is contesting Tamaki, regarded as National’s most promising opportunity among South Asian candidates. Other National candidates include Lalit Arya in Ōtāhuhu, Ghouse Majeed in Manurewa, Sunil Kumar in Glendene, Ankit Bansal in Palmerston North, and Karuna Mathu in Wellington Bays.

Other parties have also nominated South Asian candidates, including ACT’s Manu Singh and Malkiat Singh. With more than 260,000 people of Indian origin living in New Zealand, the community is emerging as an increasingly significant voting bloc, particularly in Auckland, and its growing representation is expected to be closely watched in the 2026 election.

Modi Calls for Trust

SAH Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged world leaders to rebuild trust and strengthen international solidarity as he addressed the G7 Outreach Session in Évian, France.

Modi said the world was facing a “shortage of trust, not resources,” and described mutual trust as the most important strategic asset in an increasingly

interconnected world. He stressed that global partnerships can succeed only when founded on transparency, dialogue and respect for international law.

The prime minister also called for secure maritime trade routes and greater protection for seafarers amid rising geopolitical tensions. His remarks came days after three Indian sailors were killed in a military strike near the Strait of Hormuz.

Highlighting India’s development partnerships, Modi said the Global South seeks equal partnerships rather than a donor-recipient approach. He cited initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance and India’s capacity-building efforts in Africa as examples of cooperation that empowers countries to build their own capabilities. He also welcomed progress toward peace in West Asia.

Homeland Round Up

Water Treaty Standoff

India continued to hold the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance following the 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, with senior officials reiterating that the agreement will not be restored until Pakistan ends support for cross-border terrorism. New projects on western rivers, including the Chenab, are moving ahead as New Delhi seeks to maximize its share of water resources.

At home, youth frustration over unemployment and governance issues fueled continued protests in several regions. Security forces intensified counterterrorism operations in Jammu & Kashmir, while ethnic tensions in Manipur remained a concern.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expanded diplomatic outreach to Europe and multilateral partners as India sought to strengthen its position amid shifting global alliances. Monsoon preparedness, water management, and urban safety also remained key policy priorities.

Budget Amid Pressures

Pakistan’s federal government presented a budget of **Rs. 18.8 trillion (approximately US\$67 billion)** for fiscal year 2026-27, focusing on fiscal discipline, debt servicing, social welfare spending, and increased defense allocations. Nearly 43 percent of government expenditures are expected to go toward servicing debt obligations.

The budget includes expanded

funding for the Benazir Income Support Program while providing limited relief measures for overseas Pakistanis. Critics argue that higher taxes and inflationary pressures continue to burden the middle class.

The dispute with India over the Indus Waters Treaty remained a dominant foreign policy issue. Islamabad continued warning that restrictions on river flows could have serious consequences for agriculture and food security.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also highlighted progress toward a potential U.S.-Iran peace arrangement, positioning Pakistan as a regional diplomatic facilitator.

Reform Test Begins

Nepal’s young government under Prime Minister Balendra “Balen” Shah continued implementing anti-corruption and governance reforms following its landslide election victory earlier this year.

The administration is pursuing procurement digitization, infrastructure reviews, and public sector modernization while attempting to address persistent youth unemployment and economic challenges. Early controversies and cabinet changes have tested the government’s ability to deliver on its ambitious promises.

Trade concerns emerged after tighter Indian export regulations threatened Nepal’s tea industry, exposing the country’s economic dependence on its larger neighbor. Kathmandu continues balancing relations with

both India and China while managing rising public expectations.

Mandates Meet Reality

Bangladesh’s transitional government continued efforts to stabilize the economy and implement reforms following the political upheavals of recent years. Inflation, energy security, and governance reforms remained key concerns despite the country’s relatively strong ranking in regional peace indicators.

Sri Lanka faced similar challenges as authorities worked to sustain economic recovery while addressing public dissatisfaction over austerity measures and institutional reforms. Disaster preparedness and cybersecurity concerns also emerged as important issues during the week.

Both nations remain examples of youth-driven political change confronting the practical realities of governance and economic management.

Afghanistan’s Challenges

Afghanistan continued dealing with the return of large numbers of migrants from Pakistan and Iran while facing ongoing humanitarian and economic difficulties. Border tensions with Pakistan persisted amid security operations targeting militant groups.

Meanwhile, the Maldives hosted regional sporting events, including a four-nation football tournament involving Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, while Bhutan maintained a relatively quiet political landscape.



A Visit That Cuts Many Ways

The pomp and splendor that went along with President Xi Jinping’s visit to North Korea is nothing out of the ordinary. After all, China is one of a small group of friends and benefactors that Chairman Kim Jong Un has in the comity of nations, a very special country that keeps North Korea afloat economically, diplomatically and modernization of nuclear and missile wares. But what has intrigued many is what President Xi would have had in mind traveling to the hermit kingdom, other than wanting to keep a highly mercurial leader sitting on the border with nuclear weapons in good humor.

President Xi’s trip to Pyongyang comes at a time when Chairman Kim has completely rewritten his country’s constitution, which has made a few important changes that the region and the world had to take note of. Once and for all, the long-standing goal of reunification has been consigned to the dustbins of history. Legally, there are now two Koreas, with North Korea defined as a sovereign and distinct nation bordering China and Russia to the north and South Korea to the south, with all references to peaceful reunification officially expunged.

More important to the Indo Pacific, East Asia and the world is that Chairman Kim has made it known that his nuclear program is “absolute, non-negotiable” and hence any thoughts of de-nuclearization will now be a pipe dream. Also to show the world that North Korea belongs to the nuclear club, Chairman Kim has given all indications that he is actively expanding the nuclear arsenal as well as commissioning new production centers, all with a view to giving permanent teeth to the newfound status in the country’s constitution. Even before President Xi left Beijing, he was quite aware that any hopes of bringing Chairman Kim to any negotiating table with the United States would be a non-starter.

FOR ALL THAT CHINA-RUSSIA-NORTH KOREA BONHOMIE OF THE RECENT PAST, BEIJING MUST HAVE TAKEN NOTE OF MOSCOW AND PYONGYANG GETTING CLOSER, NO SMALL THANKS TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE. CHAIRMAN KIM GENEROUSLY SENT THOUSANDS OF HIS TROOPS TO FIGHT ON THE FRONTLINES ALONG WITH RUSSIAN SOLDIERS AND IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN HANDSOMELY REWARDED BY WAY OF MONEY, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR MILITARY MODERNIZATION.

For all that China-Russia-North Korea bonhomie of the recent past, Beijing must have taken note of Moscow and Pyongyang getting closer, no small thanks to the war in Ukraine. Chairman Kim generously sent thousands of his troops to fight on the frontlines along with Russian soldiers and is said to have been handsomely rewarded by way of money, economic assistance and technology for military modernization. Still, perhaps President Xi wanted to make sure that North Korea remained firmly in China’s orbit.

Hopefully, President Xi would have also advised Chairman Kim not to push his luck too much in East Asia-Pacific with his nuclear and missile rhetoric and bombast. China would not want to get involved in any active conflict involving South Korea, Japan and the United States. It is not as if Beijing could be worried militarily, but of being forced to dilute its own economic plans and political-strategic calculations in the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific. Further, the last thing China would want-- thanks to North Korea-- is giving ideas or a pretext to Japan on the nuclear route, if it has not already!



Opinion

Sridhar Krishnaswami
Senior Journalist and Columnist

One Agreement, Many Unanswered Questions

If what has been put out by President Donald Trump in his social media post is anything to go by, there must be a sigh of relief in the region and elsewhere that the conflict in the Middle East has finally come to a close. And it really does not matter to the exact time line-- a memorandum of understanding inked digitally first; or parties are getting together in a third country to put pen to paper.

“The Deal is scheduled to get signed tomorrow (Sunday) and immediately after it is signed, the Hormuz Strait is OPEN TO ALL,” President Trump posted in his Truth Social. This prompted official Iran to maintain that the date of signing was yet to be determined but “it will not be tomorrow,” adding “The possibility of this happening in the coming days cannot be ruled out.” Washington for its part will lift the naval blockade once the Hormuz re-opens.

But the real problem seemed to be in the different versions put out with President Trump upset that Tehran would even release details. For a start, on the status of re-opening the Strait of Hormuz Iran appears to maintain that it can levy a service charge for the use of the waterways which has been clearly rejected by the Trump administration. Also, there is a degree of confusion on what it is that Iran and Oman are “working together” for the use of Hormuz.

Tehran has also been saying that any agreement should have Lebanon as an integral part as also in a demand of no foreign military bases in the region. The pressure has always been on Iran to rein in its proxies like the Hamas and Hezbollah which Washington will insist in any agreement even if the Hamas is now a spent force in the Gaza. And for quite some time now there has been the talk of releasing Iran’s frozen assets, again the question of timing of whether coinciding with the initialing the accord or when all conditions have been met.

The real problem for Iran and the United States has always been the nuclear issue with President Trump quite clear on where he stands on the subject. Iran, he

has said in a post, will “no longer want a Nuclear Weapon, nor will they have one, either through purchase, development or any other form of procurement.” The deal will have set aside a sixty-day period of negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program; that all of Iran’s nuclear material would be destroyed and the nuclear program completely dismantled.

Getting hold of nearly one-half ton of enriched uranium from Iran is not going to be an easy task for Tehran cannot be expected to hand over meekly or the United States attempting to take it by force through a land invasion by special forces. An exclusive report by *CNN* points to Iran having sealed off the uranium in containers and ringing them with mines so as to prevent any forced attempt to wrest control.

“Even for the Iranians themselves... removing the enriched material would now be difficult and dangerous. It would require heavy excavation equipment and de-mining efforts — which are difficult and risky,” *CNN* has said quoting unnamed sources. And this brings up the issue of trust with sceptics wanting to argue that Tehran could always end up hiding some highly enriched uranium on the pretext that it was destroyed in the excavation process.

In all the talk of the peace deal, a key component has been missed: where is Israel in all this, especially on the nuclear front which was supposed to be the prime reason why it goaded the United States to start the bombing operations against Iran on February 28? And of course, there is Lebanon where the government of Benjamin Netanyahu has refused to take the heat off even if some 4000 civilians have been killed in the last few weeks.

Above all there is one lesson that the Middle East conflict has for all world leaders: make sure of objectives before embarking on any foreign adventurism for changing goalposts is embarrassing, to say the least.

(Disclaimer: Views expressed by the author do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of South Asian Herald.)



South Asian Herald

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U.S. Leaders Celebrate PM Modi's Leadership Milestone



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi. (Photo courtesy: narendramodi.in)

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

U.S. President Donald Trump, bipartisan congressional leaders, and corporate executives have congratulated India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his 4,399 consecutive days in office, on June 10, 2026, making history as the longest serving Prime Minister in Indian history.

First elected in 2014, PM Modi's unbroken tenure of 4,399 days in office, surpassed the record of first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Congratulations to my friend, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on becoming India's longest-serving Prime Minister - And a Great One he is! He is a strong, healthy, and wise man, and will have many years of Greatness and Success ahead of him," said President Trump.

In response to his wish, PM Modi expressed, "Thank you, President Trump, for your warm wishes. I look forward to working with you to further advance the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, for the benefit of both our nations and the world."

US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, stated "Congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on becoming India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister," adding "This achievement is a powerful testament to his decades of dedicated public service and leadership! Wishing him all the best."

Governor Tate Reeves said, "Mississippi is proud of our Indian-American community and growing economic relationship with India."

Praising PM Modi's leadership, House Foreign Affairs Committee noted "India continues to be a critical partner in the Indo-Pacific," while House Republicans, hailed, "Great to see democracy thrive."

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith noted, "As a leading agricultural state, Mississippi understands the value of strong international partnerships, particularly when it involves offering what we produce to the world. I look forward to strengthened trade and economic ties between our two nations," congratulating PM Modi.

Senator Roger Wicker said as the world's largest democracy, India is a "critical partner" in a free and open Indo-Pacific. "Mississippi values our strong U.S.-India partnership," he said praising PM Modi.

Senator John Cornyn emphasized "4,399 days of leadership earned through the trust of 1.4 billion people across three democratic mandates." From lifting 250 million out of poverty to making India the world's fastest-growing major economy, PM Modi's tenure has been nothing short of "transformational," he said adding "The US-India partnership has never been stronger."

Sen. Ted Cruz, said India is the world's largest democracy, and the U.S.-India alliance is a critical to the national security of both countries. "I congratulate Prime Minister Modi on becoming India's longest-serving Prime Minister. This milestone is a testament to his political acumen and leadership," he added.

Congratulating PM Modi, Senator Rick Scott said, throughout his 12 years in office, PM Modi has shown that he is committed to a strong working security partnership with America and their "great shared ally" Israel. "We look forward to building on that success and cooperation for years to come," he added.

Commending his 4,399-day journey, Rep. Shri Thanedar, said "His journey from humble beginnings to national leadership is one that reflects a life of hard work and public service."

Rep. Brad Sherman: "As the world's oldest and largest democracies, the United States and India share a natural partnership rooted and enduring bond. I send my heartfelt congratulations to the people of India on this historic milestone."

Rep. Joe Wilson said "The relationship between the United States and India is critical as the free world is threatened by dictators seeking to overturn prosperity and Rule of Law. Best wishes to the Prime Minister and to the Indian people."

Rep. Bennie Thompson said "This milestone speaks to the enduring strength of India's democratic system and the participation of millions of citizens in shaping their nation's future. I look forward to the continued friendship and cooperation between the United States and India."

Commending his 12-year tenure, Rep. Rick McCormick pointed out "That kind of sustained leadership earns respect. India is a critical partner for the United States, and strong allies matter. Here's to many more years of friendship between our two nations."

Arvind Krishna of IBM noted that PM Modi's period has brought "unprecedented economic growth," propelling India's GDP and creating an environment where entrepreneurs and business can both thrive. "The US-India partnership has expanded and is strategically important for both countries. I wish you success in the future to keep the focus on all these endeavors," he added.

Tim Cook of Apple, thanked the Prime Minister for "supporting innovation that enriches people's lives."

Satya Nadella of Microsoft PM Modi's "leadership and dedication to India's progress are an inspiration."

USISPF President, Mukesh Agni noted the partnership between the two democracies continues to

expand across "technology, defense, trade, and innovation," creating opportunities for both our nations.

President of USIBC, Atul Keshap, recalled ten years ago this June the PM addressed the US Congress, declaring that India and the US have overcome "the hesitations of history" and called for stronger economic ties between both countries, a mission USIBC strives to fulfill every day.

Thanking PM Modi, Padma Bhushan Vijay Amritraj, noted that from expanding opportunity to strengthening strategic cooperation, the relationship between India & the world has grown stronger than ever.

Congratulating PM Modi, President & CPO, Cisco, Jeetu Patel "His administration's focus on digital inclusion and technological advancement has shaped a more connected and resilient future for India and the world. It's remarkable how his administration's focus on digital infrastructure has driven India's economic growth."

Reps. Michael Guest, Mike Harldopolos, Julie Johnson, Andy Barr, Tom Kean, Pete Sessions, Brian Fitzpatrick, Tom Suozzi, Andrew Garbarino, Mike Ezell, Jason Smith, French Hill and others congratulated PM Modi as well.



Dhanayoga

Sethu Venkataraman
Personal Finance Consultant

Asset Classes and Their Suitability to Goal-Based Investing

In the realm of investing, understanding the relationship between asset classes and time horizons is crucial for achieving specific financial goals. This document explores various asset classes, their characteristics, and how they align with different investment time frames. By linking investment strategies to time horizon-based goals, investors can optimize their portfolios to meet both short-term and long-term objectives effectively.

UNDERSTANDING TIME HORIZON IN INVESTING

Time horizon refers to the length of time an investor expects to hold an investment before needing to access the funds. It plays a pivotal role in determining the appropriate asset classes to include in a portfolio. Generally, time horizons can be categorized as short-term (0-3 years), medium-term (3-10 years), and long-term (10+ years). Each category has distinct risk and returns profiles, influencing the choice of asset classes.

ASSET CLASSES OVERVIEW

1. Equities (Stocks)

- Characteristics: High potential for growth, but also high volatility.
- Suitability: Best suited for long-term goals (10+ years) due to their ability to recover from market fluctuations over time. Investors seeking capital appreciation can benefit from equities, especially in a growing economy.

2. Fixed Income (Bonds)

- Characteristics: Generally lower risk and more stable returns compared to equities.
- Suitability: Ideal for medium-term goals (3-10 years) as they provide regular income and are less volatile than stocks. Bonds can help preserve capital while still offering some growth potential.

3. Cash and Cash Equivalents

- Characteristics: Highly liquid and low-risk, including savings accounts, money market funds, and Treasury bills.
- Suitability: Best for short-term goals (0-3 years) where capital preservation is paramount.



Cash equivalents provide easy access to funds while minimizing risk.

4. Real Estate

- Characteristics: Tangible asset with potential for appreciation and income generation through rental yields.
- Suitability: Suitable for medium to long-term goals (3+ years). Real estate can provide diversification and a hedge against inflation, making it a valuable addition to a long-term investment strategy.

5. Commodities

- Characteristics: Physical goods such as gold, oil, and agricultural products, often used as a hedge against inflation.
- Suitability: Typically, more volatile and better suited for long-term goals (10+ years) or as a tactical allocation in a diversified portfolio. Commodities can provide diversification benefits but require careful consideration of market conditions.

6. Alternative Investments

- Characteristics: Includes hedge funds,

private equity, and collectibles, often with unique risk-return profiles.

- Suitability: Generally, more appropriate for long-term investors (10+ years) who can withstand illiquidity and higher risk. These investments can enhance portfolio diversification and potentially yield higher returns.

CONCLUSION

Selecting the right asset classes based on the time horizon linked to specific financial goals is essential for effective goal-based investing. By aligning investments with the appropriate time frames, investors can manage risk and optimize returns, ultimately leading to a more successful investment journey. Understanding the characteristics of each asset class and their suitability for different time horizons empowers investors to make informed decisions that align with their financial aspirations.

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Business Round Up

MSME Lending Cools

Amid increasing global uncertainty, credit growth in the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) sector has started showing signs of moderation, with loan growth declining to 13 per cent year-on-year in April 2026 from 20 per cent in December 2025, according to a report by IIFL Capital.

The brokerage, however, expects the impact of the slowdown to be cushioned by the government's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0, which was announced in May 2026 to

support MSMEs facing challenges arising from the West Asia conflict.

Under the latest version of the scheme, the government has extended 100 per cent credit guarantee coverage for loans provided to standard MSMEs, with the total loan amount capped at Rs. 1 billion per borrower.

IIFL Capital estimates that the scheme could lead to an additional credit flow of around Rs 2.55 trillion, equivalent to nearly 5 per cent of outstanding MSME loans. As of the end of May, lenders had already sanctioned loans worth Rs. 350 billion under the initiative. (UNI)

TCS Expands AI Play

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced a global strategic

partnership with Anthropic, the developer of AI assistant Claude, to help enterprises scale artificial intelligence adoption and move AI initiatives from pilot projects to production.

As part of the collaboration, TCS will set up a dedicated business unit focused on developing industry-specific AI solutions, customer offerings, and building expertise around Anthropic's Claude family of AI models.

The partnership will combine Anthropic's AI capabilities with TCS' implementation expertise, enterprise governance frameworks, and industry knowledge to support businesses in deploying AI solutions at scale. (UNI)

Remittance Revolution

India and Nepal launched a peer-to-peer (P2P) cross-border remittance mechanism to provide citizens of both countries with seamless mobile banking.

This system establishes a direct link between India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Nepal's National Payments Interface (NPI).

It represents a major achievement in financial inclusion and fosters strong economic and digital ties between India and Nepal.

This UPI-NPI remittance linkage will eliminate the friction of physical currency exchange and also allow Nepali businesses to gain access to a massive, tech-savvy Indian visitor demographic, driving higher transaction volumes. (UNI)

Meta Bets On India

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, has tied up with Reliance Industries to build its first AI-powered data center in India with a capacity of 168-megawatt facility located in Jamnagar. Meta will take this center on lease with an option to expand, and will cover the full cost of the energy and water for the facility. "This investment is a significant milestone in Meta's global infrastructure expansion and deepens our long-standing strategic partnership with Reliance — one that spans connectivity, commerce, and AI innovation in one of the world's most dynamic digital markets," Meta said. (UNI)

The 22% FCNR...

(Contd. from page 1)

Analysts, however, say the comparison is increasingly misleading.

"The mathematics works on a spreadsheet, but today's interest-rate environment is fundamentally different from 2013," said a Mumbai-based banking analyst. During the earlier FCNR scheme, offshore borrowing costs were often close to 2%, while deposit rates were substantially higher, creating a wide positive carry. Today, borrowing costs linked to the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR), together with bank spreads and guarantee

charges, can approach or even exceed FCNR deposit yields.

Research houses estimate leveraged returns of 12-17% under favorable conditions, but analysts note that these projections often exclude several layers of costs.

Among the concerns cited are standby letter of credit (SBLC) charges, floating-rate borrowing costs, liquidity mismatches and tax treatment in investors' home jurisdictions. While FCNR interest remains tax-free in India, investors in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom and Canada may still face taxation on global income, potentially reducing net returns.

Market experts also highlight asset-liability

mismatches embedded in the strategy. FCNR deposits typically lock in a fixed return for three to five years, while financing costs remain linked to floating benchmark rates. A rise in global interest rates could quickly erode profitability.

Regulatory uncertainty is another issue. Some wealth managers caution that the most aggressive leverage structures involving multiple borrowing and redeposit cycles may attract scrutiny if they resemble circular financing arrangements.

Questions have also been raised over concentration risk. India's deposit insurance framework covers only ₹5 lakh per depositor per bank, leaving large FCNR balances effec-

tively uninsured beyond that threshold. Analysts broadly agree that the RBI's FCNR window offers a compelling opportunity for NRIs seeking dollar-denominated fixed-income exposure.

However, they argue that the leveraged versions being promoted in wealth-management circles should be viewed as complex carry trades rather than low-risk wealth-building strategies.

"The FCNR deposit itself is attractive," one analyst said. "The leverage overlay is where investors need to carefully evaluate whether the additional return truly compensates for the added financial, regulatory, tax and liquidity risks."

Haunted 3D: Echoes Of The Past



Mahakshay Chakraborty in *Haunted 3D: Echoes of the Past*
(Photo courtesy: Trailer Video Grab)

Rajiv Vijayakar

In the final analysis, do reviews and critical appreciation really matter? As a sock in the solar plexus of websites that want 'Me-First' Reviews at any cost ('critics' are seen writing reviews inside cinema halls, beginning with the interval point!!). We find that the film with the least favorable review is topping the list this week!

While a fifth film (!), *The Narmada Story*, chickened out of the race, *Haunted 3D: Echoes of the Past*, a sequel to the 2011 success (not hit), *Haunted 3D*, has opened best this week, and what's more

important, sustained better over the weekend as well!

The critics' favorite was the Naseeruddin Shah-Diljit Dosanjh film, *Main Vaapas Aaunga*, directed by the high-profile Imtiaz Ali. The next two were real stories, the financial thriller, *The Silent Saviour: Governor*, toplined by Manoj Bajpayee, about the 1991 economic crisis in India, and *Bharat Bhagya Viddhata*, Kangana Ranaut's production on the roles nurses played during 26/11, the infamous Mumbai terror strikes.

Main Vaapas... got the highest ratings and best reviews, the other two getting decent to good critiques, while *Haunted...* which had no star or face value other than its genre and average branding (the original came 15 years back!), effortlessly led despite no media hype whatsoever and very limited screens and shows! The promotion was also cockeyed at their end, and even their premiere clashed with the press screening of *Governor*. Interestingly, *Bharat's...* media screening time was changed to avoid a clash after the former film's press show was finalized!

Genre or branding?

The film's box-office performance also surprised the trade, with

veteran analyst Taran Adarsh terming *Haunted...* the "biggest surprise" of the year. He posted on X: "NO BOGO – NO DISCOUNT OFFERS – YET, 'HAUNTED 3D' SCORES – SHOCKS THE INDUSTRY... Box office can be highly unpredictable, but that's the beauty of this business... #Haunted3D springs the biggest surprise, emerging as the No. 1 opener among ALL new #Hindi releases as well as #Hindi holdover titles. The film had to struggle for screens and shows initially, but as the day progressed and the audience response became evident, additional shows continued to be added. The business in Tier-2 and Tier-3 centres, in particular, has been very good..."

Another good eye-opener was that India's largest multiplex brand, PVR-Inox, which has also financed films, and frequently played dirty politics with low-profile filmmakers and good films, including regional ones, stayed away from *Haunted...* but had to kowtow to the public and have two or more shows introduced.

Featuring Mahakshay Chakraborty and the unknown Chetna Pande, Vikram Bhatt's latest film, produced by Anand Pandit, Javed Khan King and Bhatt's daughter, Shwetaambari Bhatt,



The Lowest Opener—Manoj Bajpayee and Paritosh Sand in *The Silent Saviour Governor*. (Photo courtesy: Spice PR)

opened at Rs. 2.5 crore all-India net and strengthened its position on Saturday with Rs. 3.25 cr. coming in, and the number of screens rising from 1232 on Friday to 1500. Up to Sunday's afternoon shows, the score stands at a very admirable Rs. 7.75 crore!

Main Vaapas Aaunga opened at Rs. 1.15 crore, less than half of *Haunted...* but had a decent ascent to Rs. 1.85 crore on day 2. Growing slowly, it has reportedly already earned Rs. 1.77 crore by Sunday afternoon, with the total standing at Rs. 4.77 crore.

The other films, too, showed growth, though as trade analysts always point out, such clashes, even among small films, are avoidable as they definitely cut into each other's prospects despite positive feedback. *Bharat...* which had

a Rs. 1 crore opening and collected Rs. 1.45 crore on Saturday, had crossed Rs. 1.04 crore by Sunday afternoon.

The lowest opener—the *Governor*, which opened at a mere Rs. 0.9 cr. (90 lakh), earned Rs. 1.38 crore on Saturday. The Sunday 'live' collection (until afternoon) is pegged at Rs. 0.81 crore. While the screen count for this film has dropped from 1427 on opening day to 928, the occupancy shows a rise from 15 to 21 percent.

The bottom line is clear: Horror as a genre may still be in (*Obsession* and *Bhooth Bangla* are still doing terrific and decent business, respectively), but in the end, people will not be swayed by hype, promotions or big names and will watch what *they* want to watch. Period.

Boompala Gets A Punjabi Twist

SAH Staff Reporter

In a massive cross-cultural milestone bridging the worlds of Korean and Indian pop, the fastest-growing K-pop girl group Le Sserafim has joined forces with Guru Randhawa for the official global remix of their smash-hit single, *-Boompala*.

This groundbreaking collaboration with Le Sserafim marks Randhawa's first official foray into the K-pop universe, while simultaneously marking the very first time the group has collaborated with an Indian artiste.

The star-studded partnership facilitated by Warner Music India arrives on the heels of massive global success for Le Sserafim's second studio album, *Pureflow pt. 1*, released in May 2026. The album earned the five-piece group that consists Kim Chaewon, Sakura, Huh Yunjin, Kazuha and Hong Eunhae their fifth consecutive Top 10 entry on the Billboard 200, debuting at No. 10 and securing No. 1 on Billboard's Top Album Sales chart.

The original focus track, built on a vibrant Latin house foundation that samples the globally recognized hit, *Macarena*, already generated immense early momentum by entering the U.S. Billboard Bubbling Under Hot

100 at No. 10. Now, the remix elevates the track into a true cross-continental festival anthem.

The Indian singer, songwriter, composer and actor seamlessly weaves his signature high-energy Punjabi charisma into the track, blending modern Indian pop sensibilities with the quintet's dynamic production. Recognizing no borders, Randhawa has fundamentally broken regional boundaries, expanding his sonic empire through high-profile cross-continental collaborations with legendary Western Hip-Hop, Rap, and electronic artistes such as Pitbull, Jay Sean, The Chainsmokers, Rick Ross and French Montana. As one of the most-watched and most-streamed Punjabi artists worldwide, he stands as one of the few authentic global pop exports from South Asia, proving that his music effortlessly transcends cultural boundaries.

Says Guru Randhawa states, "Le Sserafim is incredible and *Boompala* already has an infectious energy that reminds me of the massive, celebratory vibe we love in India. Bringing a touch of my signature style to a Latin-house K-pop track sampling *Macarena* felt like a beautiful masterpiece. I can't

wait for fans worldwide to dance to this."

Le Sserafim states, "We are absolutely thrilled to collaborate with Guru Randhawa. When we created *Boompala*, our goal was to bring people together across different generations and cultures through a shared, festival-like energy. Guru's incredible Indian artistry brought an entirely new, vibrant life to the track. It's an honor to connect with our fans in India and around the world through this special cross-cultural celebration."

The remix extends the mature themes of fear and growth explored in *Pureflow pt. 1*, fostering an inclusive space for those feeling isolated or unseen. This official remix amplifies the album's central message, transforming it into a collective celebration. The lyrics seamlessly interweave Korean, English, and Spanish lines from the original sampled track with Guru Randhawa's newly-added Punjabi verses. It highlights a feeling of being completely unconcerned with the world's worries while maintaining a high, relaxed energy, turning a cross-generational singalong into a completely borderless global anthem.

The official remix is available now on all major streaming platforms worldwide.

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Weekly Horoscope

JUNE 19 - 25

BY ASTROLOGER MANISHA KUSHIK

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ARIES

(Mar 21 to Apr 20)

Aries natives may experience encouraging progress in both personal and professional life this week. Financial opportunities, especially through investments or short-term ventures, may prove rewarding if handled wisely. Emotional stability may help strengthen relationships, while a heart-felt gesture from your partner may brighten your mood. Travel plans may create pleasant memories, and workplace responsibilities may highlight your leadership abilities.

TAURUS

(Apr 21 to May 20)

Taurus natives may benefit from staying calm and focused throughout the week. Health and fitness may improve through disciplined eating habits and better routines. Romantic relationships may grow stronger through honest communication and emotional understanding. Financial decisions may require caution, while professional growth may come through learning new skills and expanding your knowledge.

GEMINI

(May 21 to Jun 21)

Gemini natives may need flexibility and emotional balance this

week. Support from your partner may help you handle challenges with greater confidence and stability. Workplace ideas may face resistance initially, making patience and persistence important for progress. Property investments may strengthen financial security, while travel plans may feel tiring yet productive overall.

CANCER

(Jun 22 to Jul 22)

Cancerians may experience positive movement across several areas this week. Financial inflow may exceed expectations and bring a stronger sense of stability. Professionally, steady effort and visible contributions may improve recognition and future opportunities. Travel related to work may prove beneficial, while property investments may support long-term growth and security.

LEO

(Jul 23 to Aug 23)

Leo natives may feel motivated to take purposeful action this week. Workplace seniors may assign new responsibilities that encourage stronger performance and professional growth. Financial planning may support long-term investments, while family matters may require unity and cooperation. Travel plans may move smoothly,

though property decisions may need postponement for now.

VIRGO

(Aug 24 to Sept 23)

Virgo natives may focus strongly on self-improvement and practical decision-making this week. Professional teamwork and collaboration may increase productivity and bring appreciation for your efforts. Romance may flourish through sincere attention and emotional connection with your partner. Financial matters and business decisions may require patience, while property concerns should be handled carefully and thoughtfully.

LIBRA

(Sept 24 to Oct 23)

Libra natives may feel optimistic and energized throughout the week. Professional reliability and consistent performance may earn appreciation and strengthen your reputation. Family relationships may improve through thoughtful communication and shared experiences. Financially, avoiding impulsive decisions may help maintain stability, while encouraging property news may brighten your outlook.

SCORPIO

(Oct 24 to Nov 22)

Scorpios may need discipline and

emotional balance this week. Professional responsibilities may increase, but your determination may help maintain strong standards and steady progress. Romantic relationships may require patient conversations to preserve harmony and understanding. Financial plans should be reviewed carefully, while travel may require extra caution and attention to safety.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 to Dec 21)

Sagittarius natives may approach the week with optimism and curiosity. Career growth may improve as you gain a deeper understanding of workplace systems and responsibilities. Financially, speculative opportunities may bring gains if evaluated wisely and patiently. Romantic encounters may feel exciting and emotionally rewarding, while travel planning may require better organization to avoid stress.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 to Jan 21)

Capricorn natives may feel determined and highly focused this week. Strong energy levels may help you manage professional demands efficiently and achieve steady progress. Romantic relationships may feel warmer through thoughtful gestures and

emotional support from your partner. Property matters may need immediate attention, while disciplined study habits may support academic success.

AQUARIUS

(Jan 22 to Feb 19)

Aquarius natives may benefit from creativity and practical thinking this week. Financial opportunities may emerge through smart planning and resource management. Family relationships may improve through understanding and appreciation for each other's perspectives. Professional responsibilities may demand better time management, while travel plans may require flexibility and patience.

PISCES

(Feb 20 to Mar 20)

Pisces natives may experience promising career growth and emotional fulfillment this week. Financial decisions may strengthen long-term security and encourage greater confidence about the future. Romantic relationships may deepen through kindness, compassion, and genuine emotional support. Property matters may move favorably, while travel with your partner may create memorable and joyful experiences.



Soul Talk

Chhavi Upadhyay

Life Coach and Mentor



(Photo: AI Generated)

One Day, One Life: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Living

Tomorrow morning, when you open your eyes, try something. Do not think of it as the start of another day. Think of it as the start of another life.

This is not just a poetic metaphor. Indian tradition holds an old understanding of time that many of us grew up with but rarely stopped to notice. The Dharmashastra tradition divides life into four ashramas: Brahmacharya, the years of

learning; Grihastha, the years of building; Vanaprastha, the years of turning inward; and Sannyasa, the years of release and rest.

Now think about your day. Indian tradition also divides it into four prahars, or watches — morning, noon, evening, and night — each with its own mood and purpose. This parallel is not decorative. It is precise. Each day holds the full arc of a life, compressed into hours. Once you see it that way, something

shifts — not in the day itself, but in how you move through it.

Morning is your Brahmacharya. The sun rises, and so do you. The body is fresh, the mind is open, the world has not yet made its demands. Notice how children wake up: quick, curious, ready. That energy is not reserved for the young. It returns to you every morning. This is the time to learn, absorb, and set direction.

Noon is your Grihastha. The sun stands directly overhead — no shadows, nowhere to hide. This is the blaze of the householder years:

peak energy, full engagement, the hours to build, create, earn, and work with purpose. Life asks everything from you now, and you answer. This is not the time to reflect. This is the time to act.

Evening is your Vanaprastha. The light softens and the pace slows — not from weakness, but from a quiet, earned wisdom. You begin releasing what you no longer need: urgency, ambition, the compulsion to prove. Vanaprastha was never about leaving life behind. It was about finding balance. The sky often does its finest work at dusk.

And then comes night — your Sannyasa. You return home, return to yourself. The world grows quiet. There is nothing left to chase. You are safe in your abode, and all that is asked of you is rest. This is not an ending to fear. It is a completion.

Now here is the thought that changes everything.

Every night, when sleep takes you, something ends. And every morning, when your eyes open, something new begins.

वासंसी जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि
गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि। तथा शरीराणि
विहाय जीर्णान्यानि संयाति नवानि
देही॥

— Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2
(Sankhya Yoga), Verse 22

As a person discards worn-out garments and puts on new ones, so the soul discards the old body and moves into a new one.

You do this, in miniature, every night. Sleep is a small death — gentle, necessary, complete. Waking is a small birth — fresh, unburdened, full of breath.

Whatever yesterday held — the failure, the regret, the exhaustion — ended last night. It belonged to a life already finished. Every day is not just another day. It is a new life. And every morning is a gift: a fresh start and a new chance to live more truly than you did before.

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Beauty Basics with
Shahnaz Husain

Yoga Unlocks Beauty From Within

Celebrated worldwide on June 21, International Yoga Day is the perfect reminder to slow down, stretch out, and let your inner glow shine through. Yoga beauty is the art of integrating traditional yoga practices into your beauty routine. It is a blend of physical postures, breathing exercises, and mindfulness techniques that help boost your skin's appearance from within.

Yoga increases blood flow to the face, delivering oxygen and nutrients while flushing out toxins. Blood circulation delivers oxygen and nutrients, removes waste, supports healing, and keeps your complexion glowing. Oxygen

and nutrients carried through the blood circulation keep skin strong, supple,

Pranayama, a powerful breathing practice rooted in yoga, works from within. Instead of treating skin issues only on the surface. Pranayama enhances oxygen levels, better micro-circulation and lymphatic drainage; conditions that are key factors that directly affect your skin health and make it glow.

Mindfulness meditation can have benefits for health and performance, including improved immune function, reduced blood pressure and enhanced cognitive function.

Mindfulness meditation involves a breathing practice

and holistic awareness of body and mind. In a world filled with endless distractions, mindfulness offers a pathway to inner peace, and surprisingly, to radiant skin.

Meditation helps to preserve collagen, the protein responsible for skin's elasticity, thus reducing the signs of ageing and promoting a youthful glow.

Yoga helps lower stress hormones that compromise the immune system, while also conditioning the lungs and respiratory tract, stimulating the lymphatic system to oust toxins from the body, and bringing oxygenated blood to the various organs to ensure their optimal function, which helps us to remain healthy and attain inner beauty.

The appeal of Yoga lies in the

fact that it helps both body and mind. It not only works on all the muscle groups, but also increases vitality, tones the internal organs, stimulates the nerve centers, relieves stress and clears the mind, which boosts immunity and gives you an attractive personality and beauty from within. Thus, it helps oxygenation, which boosts immunity and imparts a feeling of physical and mental exhilaration. This is so important for beauty because feeling good is an integral part of looking good.

Yoga improves blood circulation, including the circulation of blood to the skin surface. This is so important for the good health of the skin, as it helps to supply essential nutrients to the skin. It also promotes the removal of toxins through the skin, which boosts immunity. This is so important, especially in cases of skin congestion.

Yoga helps to promote blood circulation and oxygenation to the scalp and hair follicles. This helps to supply nutrients in the bloodstream to the hair follicles. It promotes hair growth and keeps the scalp healthy.

If you are leading a life that does not provide enough physical activity, you are

actually encouraging aging. Yoga is a potent remedy for premature aging, not only because it strengthens the body, but also keeps it looking trim, fit and enhances immunity in the body.

It fights aging at a cellular level by reducing oxidative stress, lowering chronic inflammation, and preserving telomeres. Many beauty problems are triggered by stress. Elevated cortisol from stress breaks down collagen, triggers inflammation, and causes breakouts or dullness.

Since yoga helps to induce relaxation and reduce stress, it certainly helps in dealing with stress-related conditions like acne, hair loss, dandruff, etc. Lower stress improves blood circulation for a brighter complexion, balances sebum production, prevents stress-induced hair loss or dullness *and brings back your natural glow.*

Indeed, the benefits of Yoga reflect external beauty. For flawless skin, shiny hair and a slim, graceful figure, make yoga a part of your daily life.

Disclaimer: Views expressed by the author do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of South Asian Herald.



Beyond the Mat

Mitabh Saud

*Communication Expert, Certified Yoga and
Meditation Teacher*

We Die Every Day

Death is a concept we fear, avoid and rarely romanticize. Yet, if you look closer, we willingly surrender to a mini-death every single night. When we wake up and say, "I slept like a log," we say it with deep satisfaction. To live fully tomorrow, we must learn to "die" well tonight, allowing sleep in its totality to restore us.

A healthy night's rest requires seven to nine hours, cycling through distinct stages. In yoga philosophy, we move from dreaming (Svapna) to deep, dreamless sleep (Sushupti). Modern science echoes this: we need deep sleep for physical repair and tissue growth, but we equally need REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep for emotional processing. While deep sleep clears physical toxins from the brain, REM organizes our memories and regulates mood. If you get enough deep sleep but lack REM, you wake up feeling chemically unbalanced, foggy and cranky. Total well-being requires the complete cycle.

Unfortunately, modern city life has completely wrecked our natural rhythm. The latest data from the ResMed Global

Sleep Survey proves it: over half the world's population fails to get a decent night's sleep more than four times a week, with stress and anxiety acting as the ultimate sleep thieves. We do this to ourselves. By letting daily pressures bully our minds, our non-stop mental loops - the late-night planning, the agonizing over conversations, the sheer overthinking - hijack our nervous systems. We keep our bodies trapped in a permanent, self-induced panic mode, shattering our natural sleep cycles and leaving us feeling like absolute ghosts by morning.

However, the good news is that we can reclaim this total balance with three simple acts of alignment:

Ditch the Blue Light: Turn off screens forty-five minutes before bed. Blue light suppresses melatonin, the hormone needed to kickstart the natural transition into your first sleep cycles.

Legs-up-the-Wall (Viparita Karani): Rest your feet up the wall for five minutes, quietly observing your breath. This shifts the nervous system out of "fight-or-flight," slowing your heart rate to prepare the brain for both deep and REM stages.



(Photo courtesy: AI generated)

A Warm Evening Drink: A cup of warm milk or chamomile tea acts as a natural sedative, relaxing muscle tension and easing the mind into a peaceful surrender.

These simple steps are not grand rituals; they are small, manageable habits. Even if you can incorporate just one of them tonight, you will start seeing changes in your daily energy. A yogic lifestyle isn't about perfection; it's about making a conscious choice to slow down and listen to

what the body actually needs. Because for a balanced and happy life, we need to die every single day - and we need to die well. Embracing this total, unbroken cycle is our ultimate prescription to be reborn vibrant, clear-headed and ready for whatever the modern world throws at us tomorrow morning.

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Roots & Rights



Sonam Chandwani
Managing Partner,
KS Legal & Associates

Medical Visitors Must Prove Need and Means

Where a foreign national is undergoing continuing medical treatment in the United States and is unable to depart prior to the expiration of the period of authorized stay, such individual may seek an extension of non-immigrant status by filing the prescribed application with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. The request for extension is ordinarily required to be supported by evidence demonstrating that the applicant was lawfully admitted, has maintained valid non-immigrant status, and that the need for continued stay arises from bona fide medical circumstances necessitating ongoing treatment.

In such cases, documentary evidence generally includes a detailed letter from the treating physician or medical institution specifying the nature of the illness or condition, the treatment already administered, the anticipated duration of further treatment, and the reasons why interruption of the treatment or departure from the United States would be medically inadvisable. Copies of medical records, hospital reports, and evidence of appointments and treatment schedules may also be furnished in support of the application.

In addition, the applicant is expected to establish financial capability to bear the expenses associated with medical treatment and living costs during the extended period of stay. Evidence in this regard may include bank statements, proof of income, affidavits of support, sponsorship letters, insurance coverage documents, or any other material demonstrating the availability of sufficient funds without recourse to public assistance.

Q Inquiry concerning U.S. visa requirements for medical treatment: Please provide guidance on the necessary visa classification and the documentation required to verify medical and financial eligibility.

A To obtain a U.S. medical visa, you must apply for a B-2 visitor visa via Form DS-160 and attend a consular interview. You must provide a formal letter from a U.S. medical facility outlining the treatment plan, expected duration, and total estimated costs, along with proof from your local doctor that the treatment is necessary and unavailable in your home country. Additionally, you must submit bank statements or financial records proving you can afford all medical and living expenses, while demonstrating “binding ties” (such as employment or property) to prove your intent to return home after treatment. Given the strict documentation requirements, consulting with an immigration attorney is highly recommended to ensure your application is complete.

Q In light of my ongoing medical treatment, I require an extension of my current authorized stay. Please outline the necessary procedures and documentation required to formally extend my non-immigrant status.

A To request an extension of stay for medical treatment, you must file Form I-539 with USCIS prior to the expiration of your current I-94 authorization. The application must be supported by a formal statement from your U.S. physician detailing the necessity and expected duration of continued care, as well as evidence of sufficient financial resources to cover all expenses and proof of your intent to return to your home country. Please be advised that those admitted under the Visa Waiver Program (ESTA) are ineligible for extensions; therefore, it is strongly recommended that you consult with a qualified immigration attorney to ensure your filing meets all regulatory requirements.

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Crispy Pan-Toasted Paneer & Spinach Wraps

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Servings: 2 Large Wraps

Arti M. Patel

When you need a lunch or dinner that delivers an incredibly satisfying crunch, melted cheese, and a burst of fresh greens, these pan-toasted wraps are the ultimate solution. Featuring golden, gently spiced paneer cubes (or firm tofu), fresh wilted spinach, and a bright herb spread, this wrap is tightly rolled and crisped to perfection in a hot skillet.

It's an effortless, vibrant, and incredibly comforting meal that looks just as beautiful on the plate as it tastes.

INGREDIENTS

The Protein & Spices

- 7 oz (200g) Paneer or extra-firm tofu, cut into small cubes
- 1 tbsp Neutral cooking oil (plus more for pan-toasting)
- ½ tsp Ground turmeric
- ½ tsp Kashmiri red chili powder or paprika
- ½ tsp Ground cumin
- To taste Salt

The Veggies & Greens

- 3 cups Fresh baby spinach, washed and stems removed
- ¼ cup Red or green bell pepper, finely diced (optional)

The Base & Assembly

- 2 large Flour tortillas or flatbreads
- ½ cup Shredded mozzarella or Monterey Jack cheese
- 2 tbsp Creamy herb spread or pesto



Crispy pan-toasted wraps packed with spiced paneer cubes, wilted baby spinach, and melted cheese (Photo courtesy: Arti M. Patel)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Sear and Spice the Protein**
Heat one tablespoon of oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the cubed paneer or tofu. Dust evenly with the turmeric, red chili powder, cumin, and a pinch of salt. Sauté for 4 to 5 minutes, turning occasionally, until the cubes develop a beautiful golden-brown crust on all sides. Remove from the pan and set aside.
- 2. Wilt the Spinach**
In the same skillet, turn the heat down to low. Add the fresh baby spinach and diced bell peppers. Sauté gently for 1 to 2 minutes just until the spinach collapses and wilts down. Remove from the heat immediately to preserve its bright green color.

3. Assemble the Wrap
Lay your tortillas flat on a clean surface. Spread a generous tablespoon of your creamy herb spread across the center of each tortilla. Lay down a base of the warm, wilted spinach, then top with the spiced paneer cubes. Finish with a generous handful of shredded cheese.

4. Roll and Tuck
Fold the left and right sides of the tortilla inward over the filling, then tightly roll from the bottom up to create a secure, closed burrito-style wrap.

5. Pan-Toast to Golden Perfection
Wipe your skillet clean and place it back over medium heat with a light drizzle of oil. Place the wraps into the hot skillet, seam-side down first to seal them shut. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes until the bottom is a deep, crispy golden brown. Flip carefully and toast the other side until the exterior is beautifully crunched and the cheese inside has completely melted.

CHEF'S TIP FOR A PERFECT SEAL

Always place your wraps into the hot skillet seam-side down first. The heat immediately crisps the outer layer of the tortilla, fusing it together and locking the cheese and fillings securely inside. This keeps the wrap tight and makes flipping completely mess-free.

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Stars, Saucers and Sand

G.Srinivasan

Traversing by road from the bucolic landscapes of Arizona into the quietly charming state of New Mexico in the American Southwest is an enthralling experience. The Spanish influence remains palpable, lending the region a distinctive cultural character. Santa Fe, the state capital, sits at an elevation of nearly 7,000 feet and is the highest capital city in the United States. Yet beyond the scenic vistas and vast open spaces, what strikes a traveller most is the sense of calm. Even on long stretches of highway with sparse traffic, one feels neither intimidated by the solitude nor exhausted by the journey.

For Indian grandparents travelling with their daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren, the road trip offered both discovery and delight. The younger members of the family ensured that every day was filled with energy and laughter. Our first stop was the Apache Point Observatory, a research facility operated by the Astrophysical Research Consortium. Home to several astronomical telescopes, it offers sweeping views and a glimpse into the world of modern astronomy. However, during our



(Photo courtesy: International UFO Museum and Research Centre)

afternoon visit, there were few staff members available to explain the facility's scientific significance.

The journey then took us to Roswell and the International UFO Museum and Research Center, where visitors continue to explore one of America's most enduring mysteries. In 1947, rancher W.W. "Mac" Brazel discovered unusual debris near Roswell. Initial reports from military officials appeared to suggest the recovery of a "flying saucer," only for the claim to be quickly withdrawn and replaced with an explanation that the debris came from a weather balloon.

Decades later, the U.S. Air Force acknowledged that the material was part of Project Mogul, a secret programme designed to monitor Soviet nuclear activity. Subsequent reports

dismissed stories of alien bodies, attributing them to misidentified military experiments and other incidents. Yet the Roswell mystery has never entirely faded. Believers continue to suspect a government cover-up, while sceptics remain unconvinced. The result is a thriving tourism industry built around the enduring fascination with extraterrestrial life. A visit to the museum, with its collection of exhibits and artefacts, remains almost obligatory for curious travellers.

Our final major stop was White Sands National Park in south-central New Mexico. Spread across the Tularosa Basin, its vast gypsum dunes create an extraordinary landscape of shimmering white. The sight evokes memories of the White Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, though the two are formed by very different natural processes. Children and adults alike delight in sliding down the dunes, while the setting sun transforms the landscape into a spectacle of remarkable beauty. The serenity of twilight at White Sands is unforgettable.

New Mexico offers far more attractions than can be covered in a single visit. Yet even a brief exploration reveals a state rich in history, mystery and natural splendour.

(The author is a Delhi-based senior journalist.)

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Tamil Trailblazer at FIFA World Cup

Anirudh Nair

The 2026 FIFA World Cup has kicked off, and history was made just two days into the tournament for the South Asian community.

Australia's Nishan Velupillay became the first player of Tamil origin to appear at a FIFA World Cup when he came off the bench in the Socceroos' 2-0 victory over Turkey in their opening fixture on June 13. While he did not have much impact on the match after entering in the 61st minute, he became only the second player of South Asian descent to play at a FIFA World Cup, 20 years after Vikash Dhorasoo represented France on football's biggest stage.

Velupillay was born in Melbourne in 2001 to a Malaysian father of Sri Lankan Tamil heritage and an Anglo-Indian mother. He has made more than 100 appearances for Melbourne Victory



(Photo courtesy: @nishan.velupillay/Instagram)

in Australia's A-League and earned his first international cap in 2024 during a World Cup qualifier against China, a match Australia won 3-1.

Unlike Dhorasoo, Velupillay is not alone in representing the South Asian community at this year's World Cup. He is joined by three other players representing different nations, each looking to create their own milestones.

Qatar has Tahsin Jamshid, a 20-year-old Malayali winger who was an unused substitute in the team's opening match against Switzerland. If he makes an appearance during the tournament, he could become the first Indian citizen to play at a FIFA World Cup, as he reportedly still holds an Indian passport while representing the Asian champions through a special mission passport granted by Qatar.

He is joined by New Zealand's Sarpreet Singh and DR Congo's

Samuel Moutoussamy, both regulars for their respective national teams.

Singh has competed at the highest levels of European football, making appearances for German giants Bayern Munich and earning a Bundesliga winner's medal. Now playing back home for Wellington Phoenix, Singh's appearance at the tournament would make him the first player of Sikh descent to compete at a FIFA World Cup.

Moutoussamy has earned 58 caps for DR Congo and spent seven years with French club Nantes, where he won the Coupe de France in 2022. His South Asian roots come through his father, who is of Indo-Guadeloupean descent with Tamil ancestry.

With the tournament just getting underway, keep an eye on these four players as they continue to make history for the South Asian community on the world's biggest stage.

Sibling Grandmasters Lead India's Next Chess Surge

SAH Staff Reporter

Indian chess is poised for another landmark chapter, and much of the spotlight is falling on Chennai siblings R Praggnanandhaa and R Vaishali, whose recent successes have reinforced the country's growing dominance on the global chess stage.

The brother-sister duo, the first siblings in history to both achieve the Grandmaster title, head into the second half of 2026 carrying significant momentum after a series of breakthrough performances.

Praggnanandhaa, 20, captured the prestigious Norway Chess 2026 title earlier this month, becoming the first Indian player to win the tournament. His dramatic final-round victory over Vincent Keymer

secured the crown and capped a remarkable run that included two classical victories over former world champion Magnus Carlsen.

The triumph has strengthened Praggnanandhaa's standing among the world's elite players and boosted expectations ahead of future top-level events, including the Candidates cycle and major international tournaments.

Within hours of her brother's success, Vaishali added another milestone by winning the opening leg of the WR Women's Chess Tour Tokyo 2026 in Japan. The victory continued an exceptional year for the 24-year-old, who earlier became the first Indian woman to win the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament 2026.

That achievement earned Vaishali the right to challenge reigning champion Ju Wenjun

for the Women's World Chess Championship later this year. A title victory would make her the first Indian woman to hold the women's world crown.

The siblings are central figures in a new generation of Indian chess talent that includes reigning world champion D Gukesh and top-ranked grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi. Together, they are driving a surge that began with India's double-gold success at the 2024 Chess Olympiad and continues to reshape the sport's global hierarchy.

Guided by longtime coach R B Ramesh and supported by their mother Nagalakshmi Rameshbabu, Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali have emerged as symbols of India's chess revolution.



(Photo courtesy: All India Chess Federation/Facebook)

Sports Round Up

Guiyang Challenge

World No 1 Minakshi Hooda will headline an 18-member Indian squad at the World Boxing Cup 2026, scheduled to be held here in the People's Republic of China from June 15 to 21.

A total of 333 boxers from 44 different federations will compete in the tournament, which offers ranking points that will help towards qualification for the season-ending World Boxing Cup Finals.

The meet in Guiyang is the second World Boxing Cup of the year, following the Stage 1 held in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil. Indian boxers skipped the Brazil meet, but were the most successful team in the 2025 World Boxing season, accumulating 40 medals, including 13 golds, across three tournaments, including the Finals. In Guiyang, competitions will be held across 10 weight categories for both men and women. (UNI)

Doha Showdown

Indian javelin star Neeraj Chopra will start his athletics season at the Doha Diamond League 2026 in Qatar, after organizers confirmed his participation in the event in the entry list for the competition.

This will be Neeraj Chopra's fourth consecutive appearance at the Doha leg of the Diamond League. The two-time Olympic medalist won the 2023 edition of the Doha Diamond League with an 88.67m effort, logged 88.36m for second place in 2024 and produced a national record of 90.23m last year, only to finish runner-up behind Germany's Julian Weber.

This will be the first competition of the 2026 athletics season for Neeraj Chopra, who was recovering from a back injury in an off-season training camp in Switzerland, according to olympics.com. (UNI)

Golden Arrows

Indian archery continued its impressive rise on the global stage as Olympian Dhiraj Bommadevara and 17-year-old Kumkum Mohod stunned reigning Olympic champions South Korea 5-1 to clinch the recurve mixed team gold medal at the Archery World Cup.

The triumph marked India's first gold medal in the recurve mixed team event since 2022 and underlined the country's growing strength in one of archery's most competitive disciplines.

The Indian duo dominated throughout the competition, opening their campaign with a commanding 6-0 victory over Denmark before overcoming the United States 6-2 and Germany 6-2 en route to the final. Remarkably, they conceded only four set points during their entire title-winning run.

Facing the formidable Korean pair in the gold medal match, Dhiraj and Kumkum displayed exceptional composure and consistency, racing to a 5-1 victory to secure the top podium finish. (UNI)

Twin Milestones

Former India captain Rohit Sharma created history with a remarkable double milestone during the rain-hit first ODI against Afghanistan at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium.

Sharma became the oldest male cricketer to represent India in One-Day Internationals, taking the field at the age of 39 years and 75 days. In doing so, he surpassed a 37-year-old record held by former India all-rounder Mohinder Amarnath, who last played an ODI in 1989 at 39 years and 36 days. (UNI)