



South Asian Herald

Voice of the Diaspora

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(Photo courtesy: hinduamerican.org)

From Dotbusters to Frisco: Is History Repeating Itself?

SAH Special Correspondent

The image lasted only seconds. Outside Frisco City Hall in Texas earlier this month, a protester tore an Indian flag as anti-India chants echoed through an immigration-related demonstration. Yet for many Indian Americans, the incident represented something far larger than a single act of provocation.

It raised an unsettling question: Is North America witnessing the beginnings of a new wave of anti-Indian hostility?

The concern is serious enough that six Indian American members of Congress—Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ami Bera, Pramila Jayapal, Ro Khanna, Shri Thanedar and Suhas Subramanyam—issued a rare joint statement condemning the incident.

"We strongly support the constitutional right to freedom of expression

for all Americans. At the same time, we condemn the tearing of an Indian flag outside Frisco City Hall alongside hateful anti-India rhetoric, which continues to fuel anti-Indian violence and xenophobia," the lawmakers said. "Acts of hate and intimidation targeting any community are unacceptable and have no place in our country."

Their warning reflects a growing anxiety within the South Asian diaspora that anti-immigration politics is increasingly crossing into anti-Indian sentiment.

History offers a troubling parallel. In the late 1980s, New Jersey's infamous Dotbusters gang targeted South Asians because of their ethnicity, assaulting immigrants and terrorizing neighborhoods. The murder of Indian American Navroze Mody became a symbol of a dark chapter in America's immigrant experience.

Nearly four decades later, the methods may have changed, but the underlying narrative feels familiar.

Today, Indians account for roughly 70 percent of H-1B visa holders in the United States and occupy prominent roles in technology, healthcare, academia and business. Their success has made them highly visible—and increasingly vulnerable to political scapegoating.

As economic anxieties mount over jobs, housing affordability and the future of work, immigrants are once again becoming convenient targets. Online platforms are flooded with claims that Indians are taking jobs, driving down wages or altering local communities. Civil rights groups report sharp increases in anti-Indian slurs, threats and xenophobic content linked to immigration debates.

What begins online does not always stay online. (Contd. on page 4)

Indian Embassy Marks IDY 2026

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

The Embassy of India in Washington D.C., hosted the 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebration on June 19, 2026, at the iconic Lincoln Memorial, drawing a large gathering of community members and yoga enthusiasts.

Welcoming participants, India's Ambassador to the United States, Vinay Kwatra, highlighted yoga's enduring significance and its global appeal.

"Today, we are celebrating one of the great treasures of our civilization," Ambassador Kwatra said, thanking community members for attending the event in large numbers.

"Many of us practice yoga individually every day, but when we come together to practice as one, its impact and the

experience become many times greater. Once again, a very warm welcome to all of you," he added.

Addressing the origins of the International Day of Yoga, Ambassador Kwatra recalled that the observance was established through a United Nations General Assembly resolution adopted in 2014 following an initiative led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The resolution garnered the support of nearly 175 countries.

"We are celebrating it here today, although the International Day of Yoga is officially observed on June 21," he noted.

Speaking to *South Asian Herald* about the strong turnout, Ambassador Kwatra praised the Indian diaspora for its continued engagement and support. (Contd. on page 8)



Community members participating in IDY 2026 organized by the Embassy of India on June 19, in Washington DC. (Photo courtesy: T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman, SAH)

Breaking Barriers, Making History

Anirudh Nair

17 years. 6,219 days. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi plus an additional 21 months. That's how long this historic moment was in the making. Harmanpreet Kaur has achieved a milestone no woman or man has ever reached in cricket. The Indian captain became the first player to appear in 200 T20 Internationals, reaching the landmark against South Africa on June 21, in Manchester during the 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

The day itself did not go Kaur's way. She scored 24 runs as India fell to a six-wicket defeat. However, this moment is about celebrating a career that has made Kaur a trailblazer not only for women's cricket, but for Indian cricket as a whole.



Harmanpreet Kaur playing a stroke against South Africa at Old Trafford in Manchester. (Photo courtesy: Anirudh Nair, SAH)

Kaur began her international journey in an era alongside icons such as Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami, Neetu David, and Anjum Chopra, a time when women's cricket was often viewed as secondary

and little more than a part-time pursuit. The 37-year-old has helped shatter those perceptions.

Through her performances, leadership, and longevity, Kaur has helped create a pathway for her

younger teammates and for future generations to pursue and thrive in women's cricket at the highest level.

"Nobody has gone there," said Indian head coach, Amol Muzumdar about his captain's achievement. "200 games in T20 international. We see a lot of men's cricket and no one has gone to 200. So, it becomes even more special. I think Harman has been a phenomenal player and an inspiration, not just restricted to India, but worldwide. People look up to her and may it continue."

Currently the third-highest run scorer in Women's T20 Internationals with more than 4,000 runs, winning the Women's T20 World Cup would serve as the crowning achievement of an already illustrious career. That would come on the heels of leading India to the ODI World Cup title in 2025 on home soil.

With those accomplishments and a historic first women's Test at Lord's Cricket Ground on the horizon in July, it would be fair to say

Kaur will have experienced nearly everything the sport has to offer. She may even have won it all.

Yet the veteran has no intention of stepping away anytime soon.

"Why? Do you think I should stop?" replied Kaur to a journalist before the start of the Women's T20 World Cup on whether this would be her final World Cup.

"Not at all, just checking," said the journalist nervously.

"Then why are you asking?" questioned Kaur.

As women's cricket continues its rapid growth, Kaur appears determined to continue for as long as she can, knowing her work is never truly finished.

That commitment, perhaps more than any statistic or trophy, is what makes Harmanpreet Kaur a genuine pioneer of the women's game.

Indian Missions Mark IDY 2026 Nationwide

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

Indian diplomatic missions across the United States marked the 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) with events that brought together community members, diplomats, elected officials, and yoga enthusiasts to celebrate the ancient practice and its health benefits.

The International Day of Yoga was established through a United Nations General Assembly resolution adopted in 2014 following an initiative led by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The resolution received the support of nearly 175 countries.

The Permanent Mission of India (PMI) to the United Nations observed IDY 2026, on June 18, under the theme, “Yoga for Healthy Ageing,” highlighting yoga’s widely recognized role in enhancing physical vitality, mental resilience, and emotional well-being, and helping individuals lead healthier, more active, and fulfilling lives.

In his opening remarks, India’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Harish Parvathaneni, highlighted yoga’s growing global reach and influence.

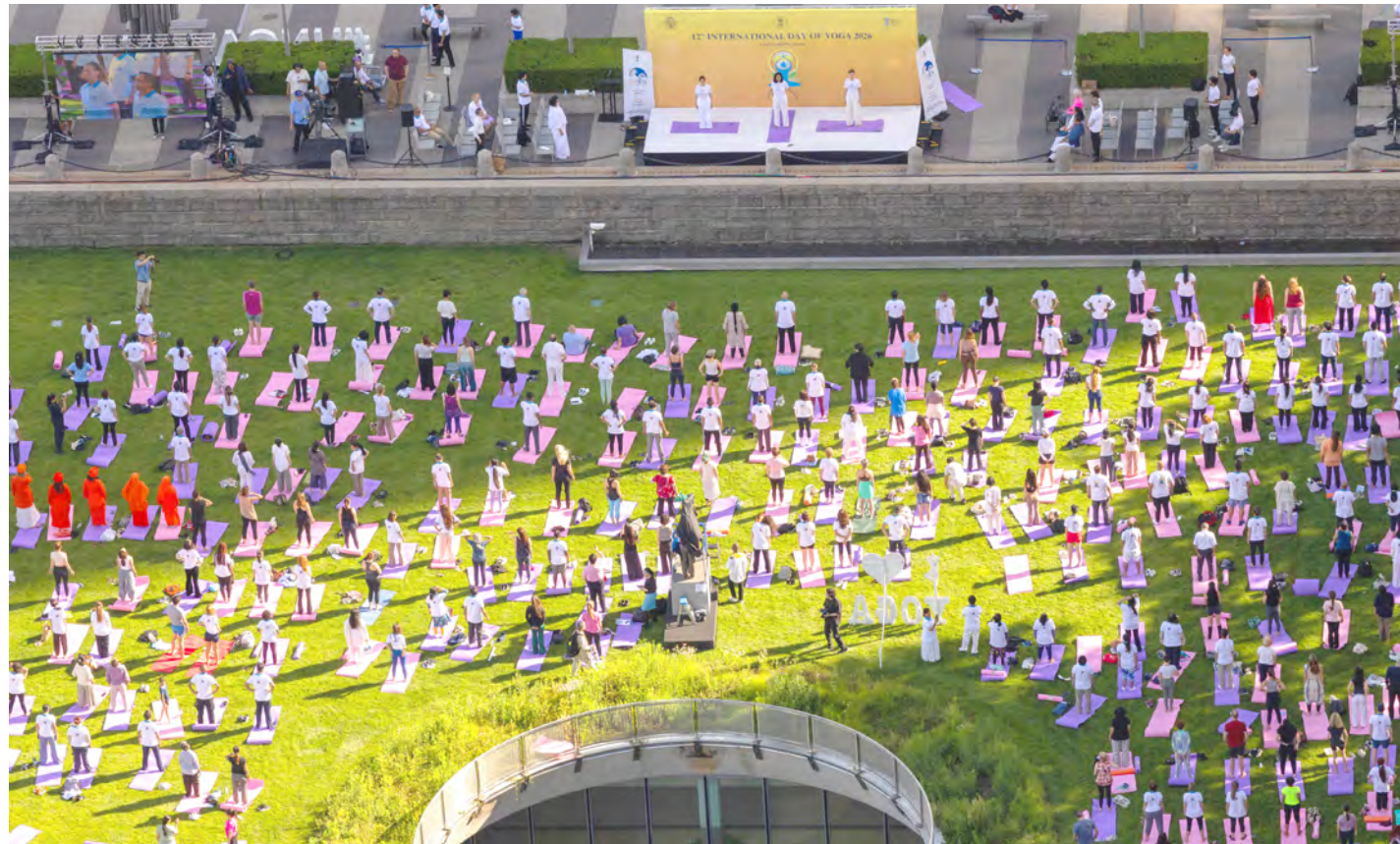
He described yoga as a “powerful force” that promotes “physical, mental, and spiritual well-being” across “geographies, cultures, and faiths,” emphasizing its universal appeal. He also noted that yoga is rooted in India’s ancient wisdom and guided by the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, meaning “the world is one family.”

In a special message marking the occasion, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said yoga teaches mindfulness, respect, and care for humanity, the planet, and one another.

The Consulate General of India (CGI) in New York, in collaboration with the Times Square Alliance, also celebrated IDY 2026 at Times Square on June 21, drawing nearly 10,000 yoga enthusiasts from diverse nationalities.

According to CGI New York, the day-long event featured seven yoga sessions, reflecting the growing popularity of yoga across New York City and the United States.

The celebrations were attended by Padma Shri Guruji Dr. H.R. Nagendra, a globally recognized yoga master and meditation expert. Addressing participants, Guru Nagendra



(Photo courtesy: PMI, New York)

spoke about the “timeless relevance” of yoga and meditation in promoting a “healthy and harmonious” lifestyle.

“He encouraged participants to embrace yoga not merely as an ancient tradition, but as a practical and transformative discipline for modern living,” CGI New York said in a statement.

Consul General Binaya Pradhan highlighted yoga’s growing acceptance in the United States, noting its increasing integration into the daily lives of Americans and the Indian American community.

He said this year’s theme underscores yoga’s role in promoting “longevity, well-being, and an improved quality of life.”

In Houston, Consul General D.C. Manjunath joined Sugar Land Mayor Carol McCutcheon at IDY 2026 celebrations organized by HSS and Hindu Yuva at Brazos River Park in Sugar Land on June 20.

The event brought together community

members to celebrate the enduring benefits of yoga. Addressing attendees, Manjunath spoke about this year’s theme, “Yoga for Healthy Ageing,” and highlighted the significance of the International Day of Yoga in promoting “holistic health, well-being, and harmony.”

As part of a broader series of IDY events, the Hindu Temple of The Woodlands hosted a Common Yoga Protocol session at its premises, followed by a day-long Health Mela featuring wellness activities and community engagement.

Consul Prashant Sona represented the Consulate at the event and commended the temple leadership, volunteers, and yoga instructors for their efforts in promoting “holistic well-being and the spirit of Yoga.”

The Consulate General of India in Atlanta also marked IDY 2026 with strong community participation. According to the Consulate, attendees included Georgia

State Senator Shawn Still, Co-Chair of the Georgia Senate India Caucus, and Representative Matt Reeves, who addressed participants through a video message.

The Consulate thanked yoga enthusiasts, community leaders, partner organizations, organizing committee members, and volunteers for supporting the celebrations and promoting “health, harmony, and well-being” through yoga.

In collaboration with the Indian American Business Association and Chamber and the Shri Shiv Dham Hindu Temple, the Consulate also organized IDY celebrations in Orlando, Florida.

In Seattle, the Consulate brought together yoga practitioners and community members at Kerry Park, on June 21, where participants performed yoga against the backdrop of the city skyline.

The Consulate thanked Bellevue Mayor Mo Malakoutian for attending the event and recognizing India’s “timeless contributions” toward promoting “wellness, harmony and unity.”

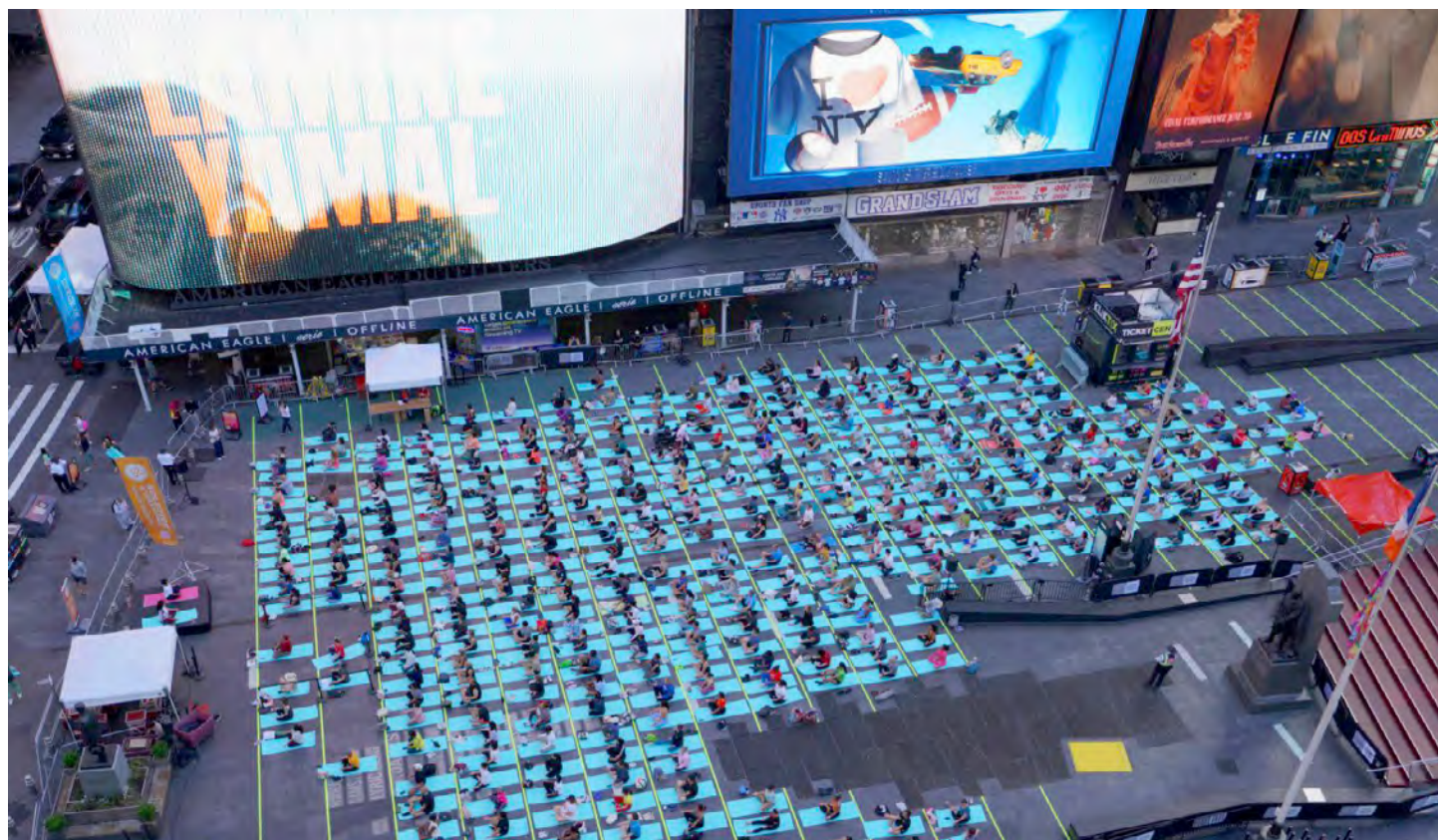
Participants also paid tribute at the Swami Vivekananda Monument in Seattle. According to the Consulate, it was “a fitting tribute to honor Swami Vivekananda, who first carried India’s message of Vedanta and Yoga to US shores.”

The Consulate General of India in San Francisco partnered with the Art of Living Foundation in Sacramento to organize a session featuring “asanas, breathwork, and meditation” centered on this year’s theme.

The Consulate also collaborated with the Hindu Temple of Fresno on June 21, bringing together members of the local community to mark the occasion.

In Puerto Rico, the Consulate and the Indian Association of Puerto Rico hosted celebrations that brought together yoga practitioners, families, and community members in a shared observance of “wellness and unity.”

Reflecting on this year’s theme and yoga’s global appeal, the Consulate noted that the practice, rooted in India’s ancient traditions and embraced worldwide, continues to inspire “healthier lives and stronger communities.”



(Photo courtesy: India in New York)

Community Leaders Honor Outgoing Embassy Official

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman

Indian American community leaders, and diplomats gathered on June 16 at the Great Falls residence of Anu and Anil Sharma for a farewell reception honoring Jagmohan, the outgoing (Minister) Community Affairs at the Embassy of India in Washington D.C.

Addressing attendees, Jagmohan expressed gratitude for the support he received from the community during his posting in Washington.

Jagmohan said it was wonderful to be “surrounded” by many “familiar faces” and described it as a “privilege” to have worked with members of the community during his time at the Embassy. Reflecting on his tenure, he noted that his official responsibilities enabled him to engage extensively with the community and that he greatly valued the support extended to him.

“I am leaving this place as a very satisfied person. Whatever little we have been able to achieve, it was due to your support,” he said. “I never treated serving the community as a responsibility, it was like serving your own family. You are part of the immediate family to me, and you never allowed me to feel as if I am away from my family.”

Jagmohan said he would leave Washington with “countless” cherished memories and pointed to the growing strength of the U.S.-India partnership that he witnessed during his three-and-a-half-year tenure.

“I’m really grateful each one of you,” he said, while urging community members to



(Photo courtesy: Catch Motion Studio)

extend the same support to his successor, who is expected to join soon.

He also thanked Anil Sharma, his wife Anu Sharma, and their family for hosting the gathering. Acknowledging the “friendship and warmth” shown by community members, he added, “Our path will cross again whenever you come to that side of world, and I am sure God will give us enough opportunities to interact in future as well.”

Host Anil Sharma, CEO of 22nd Century Technologies, said Jagmohan had become like a family member to the community and had supported countless individuals during his tenure, setting the bar “very high” for those who follow.

“We will definitely miss you,” Sharma said, adding that the community looks for-

ward to welcoming him back to Washington in the future.

Among those paying tribute was Alok Srivastava, president of the United Hindu Jain Temples Association, who described Jagmohan as a dedicated and approachable officer.

“He is such a humble and dedicated man, available 24/7. There are even incidents when people are calling him at midnight for visa and passport issues,” Srivastava said.

He also noted the personal sacrifices Jagmohan made while serving away from his family for the past three years. Jagmohan’s wife, Dr. Puja Chauhan, is a professor at Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital in New Delhi.

Former Indian Ambassador to Cambodia and Chile Pradeep Kapur described Jagmohan

as an “outstanding officer” and a valuable “asset” and “resource” for the community.

Commending his contributions, Kapur said the volume of work undertaken by Jagmohan during his tenure was “absolutely phenomenal.”

There is widespread “recognition, appreciation, acknowledgement” for the work he has done, Kapur added.

Founder of the Indian American Business Impact Group, Ravi Puli also reflected on Jagmohan’s personal warmth and humility, noting that despite being an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, he never carried himself with formality or distance.

Puli said Jagmohan helped hundreds of community members, building strong relationships during his tenure in Washington.

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Healthy Aging Through Yoga

SAH Staff Reporter

As India marked the 12th International Day of Yoga on June 21, the country's leadership used the occasion not only to celebrate an ancient tradition but also to position yoga as a cornerstone of future public health policy, preventive healthcare and global wellness diplomacy.

Leading the national observance from Kolkata, Prime Minister Narendra Modi framed yoga as a lifelong tool for healthy aging, calling for its integration into everyday life amid rising concerns over lifestyle diseases, mental health challenges and rapidly aging populations worldwide.

The theme for International Yoga Day 2026 — "Yoga for Healthy Ageing" — reflects a growing policy focus on preventive healthcare at a time when countries are grappling with increasing healthcare costs and a surge in non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular ailments.

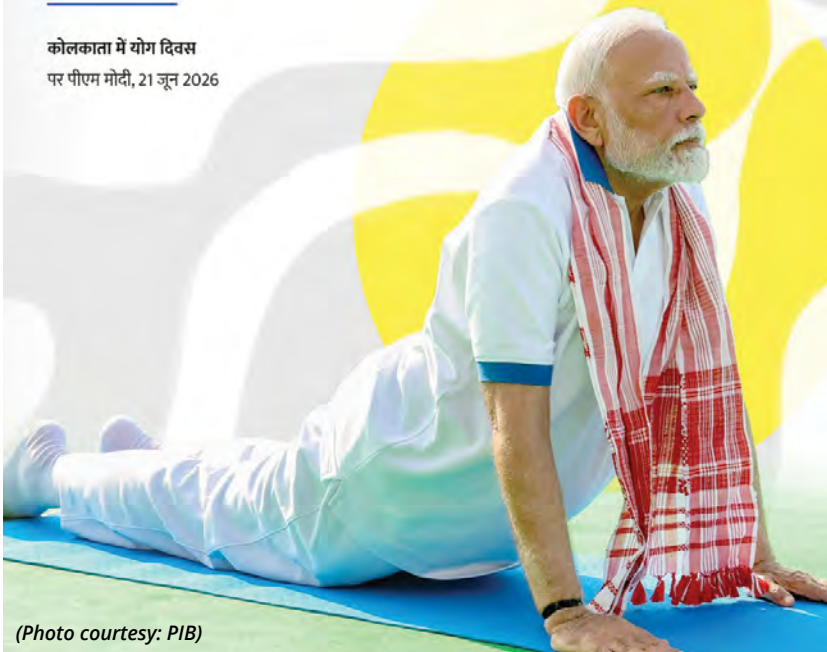
India, home to more than 1.4 billion people, is expected to see its elderly population rise significantly over the coming decades. Policymakers increasingly view yoga as a low-cost, scalable intervention that can help reduce healthcare burdens while improving physical mobility, mental well-being and quality of life among senior citizens.

Speaking at a mass yoga demonstration in Jabalpur, President Droupadi Murmu described yoga as a bridge connecting individuals, society and nature, adding that its relevance will only grow as the world seeks sustainable approaches to health and well-being.

The government's broader ambitions extend beyond domestic healthcare. Since the United Nations adopted June 21 as the International Day

“योग मानसिक स्वास्थ्य से शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य का मार्ग दिखाता है।”

कोलकाता में योग दिवस
पर पीएम मोदी, 21 जून 2026



(Photo courtesy: PIB)

of Yoga in 2014 following India's proposal, yoga has emerged as one of New Delhi's most successful instruments of soft power. Today, millions of practitioners across more than 190 countries participate in yoga-related activities, helping transform a centuries-old Indian tradition into a global wellness movement.

Officials believe the growing international embrace of yoga could create new opportunities for India in wellness tourism, teacher training, Ayurveda, digital health services and research-based preventive healthcare solutions. The Ministry of AYUSH has increasingly promoted the integration of yoga with traditional Indian systems of medicine as part of a broader strategy to expand the country's wellness economy.

The Prime Minister highlighted the expanding global footprint of yoga, noting that more than three million people from 130 countries participated in the government-backed "Yoga 365" initiative this year. Such participation, analysts say, signals that yoga is evolving from a symbolic annual observance into a year-round global health practice.

The focus on healthy aging is particularly significant as the World Health Organization and governments worldwide seek strategies to support longer life expectancy without a corresponding increase in chronic illness and healthcare expenditure. Experts argue that yoga's emphasis on flexibility, balance, breathing and mindfulness aligns closely with these objectives.

As India looks ahead, the challenge will be translating the enthusiasm surrounding Yoga Day into sustained public participation, scientific research and measurable health outcomes. If successful, yoga could become a central pillar of India's preventive healthcare model while strengthening the country's influence in the rapidly expanding global wellness economy.

For policymakers, the message emerging from this year's celebrations was clear: yoga is no longer merely a cultural tradition or fitness practice. It is increasingly being positioned as a strategic tool for healthier societies, productive aging populations and a more resilient future.

SAARC Air Quality Push

SAH Staff Reporter

South Asian countries have taken a significant step toward tackling air pollution and climate-related challenges by adopting a draft South Asia Clean Air Action Plan at a SAARC workshop held in Kathmandu, Nepal, on June 15–16.

The meeting brought together representatives from SAARC member states to develop a coordinated regional response to the growing health and livelihood impacts of poor air quality and its links to climate change. Delegates exchanged national experiences in addressing air pollution, reviewed successful practices from other regions and explored opportunities for greater cross-border cooperation.

The workshop highlighted the increasing recognition that air pollution is a transboundary issue requiring collective action. Participants noted that deteriorating air quality continues to pose serious public health, environmental and economic risks across South Asia, making regional cooperation more important than ever.

The draft action plan is expected to provide a framework for collaboration on air quality monitoring, policy coordination, knowledge sharing and capacity building. A second phase of consultations is

scheduled for later this year, when member states are expected to review and formally endorse the document.

The initiative follows recommendations made at the Fifth Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Expert Group on Climate Change in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in 2024. The recommendations called for stronger regional efforts to implement the Thimphu Statement on Climate Change and address emerging environmental challenges facing the region.

Looking ahead, discussions are expected to focus on implementation strategies, financing mechanisms and practical measures to reduce pollution levels and strengthen climate resilience. Regional experts say greater cooperation on emissions management, data sharing and early-warning systems could play a key role in improving air quality outcomes across South Asia.

The workshop was inaugurated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad Mishra, Secretary of Nepal's Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Environment. Technical and financial support was provided by the Asian Development Bank.

The proposed action plan is expected to guide future regional efforts as South Asian nations seek more coordinated solutions to shared environmental challenges.

Regional Push for Animal Health

SAH Staff Reporter

South Asian countries are expected to strengthen cooperation on animal health, disease surveillance and veterinary services following the Tenth Meeting of the SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers' (CVOs) Forum in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The two-day meeting, which opened on June 18, brought together Chief Veterinary Officers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, along with representatives from the SAARC Secretariat, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Organized jointly by the SAARC Secretariat's Agriculture and Rural Development Division, Sri Lanka's Department of Animal Production and Health, WOAH and FAO, the forum focused on enhancing regional coordination to support sustainable livestock production, food security and rural livelihoods. Sri Lanka's

Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation, D.P. Wickramasinghe, said protecting animal health is essential for food safety, rural economic development and regional trade. SAARC Secretary-General Md. Golam Sarwar called for greater technical, logistical and financial support from development partners, citing the growing importance of livestock development across South Asia.

Representatives from WOAH and FAO highlighted the forum's role as a key regional platform for addressing animal health challenges and strengthening veterinary services.

As countries face increasing risks from transboundary animal diseases, delegates emphasized the need for stronger information sharing, coordinated surveillance and joint capacity-building efforts. The discussions are expected to pave the way for future regional initiatives aimed at improving livestock productivity, enhancing food security and building more resilient agricultural systems across South Asia.

From Dotbusters...

(Contd. from page 1)

The Frisco incident demonstrated how digital hostility can migrate into public spaces, transforming rhetoric into real-world intimidation.

The six lawmakers underscored that danger in their statement, noting that "the Indian American community is an important part of our nation and deserves to feel safe and respected." They added that as Indian Americans face harassment and xenophobia, leaders must speak clearly because "hate targeting any community cannot be tolerated or ignored."

That may be the central challenge ahead.

History shows prejudice rarely starts with violence. It begins with language. Communities are first portrayed as outsiders, then as threats, and finally as scapegoats for broader societal frustrations.

Whether Frisco becomes a footnote or a turning point remains to be seen. But for millions of South Asians across North America, the lesson from the Dotbusters era is clear: warning signs ignored today often become crises tomorrow.

As the lawmakers concluded, "Everyone deserves to live with dignity and safety, free from fear, harassment, and discrimination." The question now is whether political leaders will act before today's rhetoric hardens into tomorrow's reality.



Lebanon, Hormuz, And A Peace Deal

It did not take much for the United States-Iran peace deal to run into trouble. For a conflict that was instigated by Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was kept out of the process. Miffed or perhaps even outraged at the terms of the agreement, Israel has continued with its bombardment of Lebanon, refusing to vacate the southern parts and taking aim at the capital city of Beirut. Iran had long maintained that a ceasefire in Lebanon should be part of any final arrangement. Washington gave the impression that it was included.

The continuing Israeli offensives in Lebanon have given Tehran the excuse to cry foul, saying that the United States violates the terms. But instead of tossing the entire agreement out, Iran has responded by saying it has once again closed the Strait of Hormuz, a claim disputed by the United States. And it remains to be seen how many super tankers are going to take the risk and traverse the narrow waterways, risking attacks by drones, missiles and underwater mines that no one seems to have cleared as of now. All this is not to forget the apprehensions of ship owners and insurers.

In all the persisting uncertainty, there are hopeful signs. Negotiators of the United States and Iran have reached Switzerland to begin negotiations on the finer points of an accord that has already raised eyebrows. The deal has been trashed as a sellout by the hardline crowd in both Washington and Tehran, even as President Donald Trump rubbishes these claims as coming from “ignorant and stupid people.” But there is no doubt that there is a long distance to go before any permanent peace can be reached; and this goes beyond conflicting views on collecting tolls at the Hormuz, unfreezing Iranian assets, undoing the punishing sanctions and reconstruction money.

THE CONTINUING ISRAELI OFFENSIVES IN LEBANON HAVE GIVEN TEHRAN THE EXCUSE TO CRY FOUL, SAYING THAT THE UNITED STATES VIOLATES THE TERMS. BUT INSTEAD OF TOSSING THE ENTIRE AGREEMENT OUT, IRAN HAS RESPONDED BY SAYING IT HAS ONCE AGAIN CLOSED THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ, A CLAIM DISPUTED BY THE UNITED STATES. AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MANY SUPER TANKERS ARE GOING TO TAKE THE RISK AND TRAVERSE THE NARROW WATERWAYS, RISKING ATTACKS BY DRONES, MISSILES AND UNDERWATER MINES THAT NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE CLEARED AS OF NOW. ALL THIS IS NOT TO FORGET THE APPREHENSIONS OF SHIP OWNERS AND INSURERS.

All this is not to forget Iran’s nuclear program, on which nearly everybody is eagle-eyed and not just about some 500 kilograms of uranium lying around somewhere in the country and its future safe-keeping. More than anything, negotiators have their task cut out in defining the future scope of any Iranian nuclear program, the simplistic assumption being that the brainwork of many years can be undone at the snap of a finger. It took President Barack Obama nearly two years to come up with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015, which was derailed in 2018 by President Trump; and now negotiators have only two months to figure it all out.

For any negotiations to succeed, there needs to be an element of trust, and this has been quite in short supply in the United States-Iran relations since the time the Ayatollahs threw out the Shah of Iran through a revolution in 1979. In a Congressional election year, it is now left to President Trump to convince his supporters that he can indeed take Iran at face value.



Opinion

Pavan Kaushik
Communications Expert and Author

Adi Yogi Lord Shiva is the Father and Founder of Yoga

Lord Shiva is revered as the Adi Yogi, meaning the first yogi and the founder of Yoga. According to Indian spiritual traditions, he is regarded as the source of yogic wisdom and the first teacher of the science of Yoga. His teachings laid the foundation for a practice that has guided humanity toward physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for thousands of years.

The origins of Yoga can be traced back more than 5,000 years to the ancient Indus-Sarasvati civilization of Northern India. The word “Yoga” first appeared in the Rig Veda, one of the oldest sacred texts in the world. The Vedas are collections of hymns, mantras, and rituals used by Vedic priests and form the basis of much of India’s spiritual heritage.

The term Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root “Yuj,” which means “to join” or “to unite.” Yogic philosophy explains this union as the merging of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. This state of harmony represents the perfect balance between mind and body, as well as between human beings and nature.

Among all yogis, Lord Shiva is considered the greatest. He is known by several names, including Adinatha, Maha Yogi, and Yogeshwara, each reflecting his mastery of yogic knowledge and spiritual power. Shiva symbolizes perfect meditation and inner stillness. It is believed that through his deep state of awareness, he governs the functioning of the universe while remaining absorbed in meditation.

According to tradition, Lord Shiva introduced four major paths of Yoga, known as Yoga Chaturtha: Hatha Yoga, which focuses on physical discipline and purification; Mantra Yoga, which uses sacred sounds to purify the mind; Laya Yoga, which emphasizes rhythm and the dissolution of the ego; and Raja Yoga or Dhyana Yoga, which leads to supreme consciousness through meditation. These paths collectively address the body, mind, energy, emotions, and higher intelligence.

Lord Shiva is also regarded as the source of all mantras. He is associated with Omkara, the primordial cosmic sound “Om,” from which creation is believed to have emerged. As the Lord of Meditation, he embodies the highest state of spiritual awareness and concentration.

Ancient scriptures state that Shiva first shared the secrets of Yoga and meditation with his wife, Goddess Parvati. During a sacred dialogue, he revealed profound yogic knowledge and taught her 84 Yoga Asanas, which are considered part of the ancient Vedic tradition. These postures

were believed to promote physical health, mental clarity, spiritual growth, and overall well-being. Through their practice, individuals could overcome limitations and move toward a balanced and successful life.

Tradition further narrates that Lord Shiva initially intended to keep this knowledge private, sharing it only with Goddess Parvati. However, Parvati, known for her compassion and concern for humanity, believed that the teachings of Yoga could help relieve human suffering. She encouraged Shiva to make this wisdom available to others so that people could benefit from its transformative power.

As a result, Shiva initiated the Sapt Rishis, or seven great sages, into the science of Yoga. He trained them extensively and empowered them with deep spiritual knowledge. These sages then carried the teachings to different regions, spreading the wisdom of Yoga across the world. It is believed that this historic transmission took place on the banks of Kanti Sarovar, near Kedarnath in the Himalayas.

Although yogic practices existed before the Vedic period, the sage Maharshi Patanjali played a crucial role in organizing and systematizing Yoga. Often called the father of modern Yoga, Patanjali compiled the Yoga Sutras, a collection of 196 aphorisms that explain the philosophy, principles, and practices of Yoga. His work provided a structured framework that continues to guide practitioners today.

After Patanjali, many sages, scholars, and yoga masters contributed to the preservation and development of Yoga through their teachings and writings. Their efforts ensured that yogic knowledge remained accessible to future generations.

In more recent times, teachers such as Paramahansa Yogananda and B. K. S. Iyengar helped introduce Yoga to a global audience. Yogananda spread the practice of Kriya Yoga worldwide, while Iyengar became renowned for emphasizing precision, alignment, and accessibility in yoga practice.

Today, Yoga is practiced by millions of people across the world. Beyond physical exercise, it remains a path toward self-discovery, inner peace, and spiritual growth. At the heart of this ancient tradition stands Lord Shiva, the Adi Yogi, whose timeless wisdom continues to inspire seekers on their journey toward harmony and enlightenment.

(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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Exclusive: MR Rangaswami on Diaspora, Philanthropy & AI



MR Rangaswami greeting Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi during the Indian American community reception in New York in 2014. (Photo courtesy: MR Rangaswami)

Rajesh Mehta

In this exclusive interview with *South Asian Herald*, Founder of Indiaspora, CEF and Sand Hill Group M.R. Rangaswami discusses growth of Indian Diaspora, philanthropy, AI and people-to-people relations.

RISING DIASPORA, RISING INDIA

When Rangaswami founded Indiaspora fifteen years ago, the Indian American community numbered roughly three million people. Today, that number stands at around five million. Yet, he argues, the real transformation goes far beyond population growth.

Indian Americans have become increasingly visible in technology, medicine, finance, academia, entrepreneurship, and public service. Similar trends are evident in other countries with large Indian-origin populations, including Canada, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates.

“At the same time that the diaspora was gaining prominence, India itself was undergoing a dramatic transformation,” Rangaswami says. “The world no longer sees India simply as an outsourcing destination. It is increasingly recognized as a center of innovation, entrepreneurship, digital infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and space technology.”

He believes these developments are deeply connected. The success of Indian-origin professionals around the world has strengthened India’s global reputation, while India’s growing influence has given diaspora communities a renewed sense of pride and confidence. “The diaspora and India are not

separate stories,” he says. “They are rising together.”

THE PHILANTHROPIC AWAKENING OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA

One of the most significant changes Rangaswami has observed is the growth of philanthropy among Indian Americans.

The first generation of immigrants arrived primarily as students and professionals seeking opportunity. Their early years were focused on building careers, raising families, and creating financial stability. Giving on a large scale was rarely possible. Over time, however, success created new opportunities for impact.

“Many Indian Americans now see philanthropy as an important part of their legacy,” Rangaswami explains. “As the community became more prosperous, its commitment to giving also expanded.” This generosity flows in two directions. The first is toward India, where donations support schools, healthcare programs, community development initiatives, and social services. For many donors, these contributions represent a way of remaining connected to the country that shaped them.

“Indian Americans consistently volunteer at rates well above the national average. Their contribution is not only financial—it is also measured in time, expertise, and community engagement.”

AT THE HEART OF THE AI REVOLUTION

Having spent more than four decades in Silicon Valley, Rangaswami has experienced

multiple technology revolutions, including personal computers, the internet, mobile technology, and cloud computing. He believes artificial intelligence may surpass them all in its impact. “Every technological wave changes society, but AI has the potential to transform almost every industry simultaneously,” he says.

Indian-origin professionals are playing a major role in this transformation. While prominent leaders such as Sundar Pichai, Sanjay Mehrotra, and Vinod Khosla often attract attention, Rangaswami emphasizes that the broader contribution is even more significant.

“Indian Americans are deeply represented among founders, engineers, researchers, and product leaders across the AI ecosystem,” he says. “Their influence extends throughout

the industry.” He also points to the growing exchange of knowledge between Silicon Valley and India. As major technology companies maintain extensive operations in India, ideas, talent, and expertise move continuously between the two countries.

“This flow of knowledge is helping accelerate India’s own development in artificial intelligence,” Rangaswami explains. “The diaspora is not merely participating in the AI revolution—it is helping build it.”

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM - INDIANS IN AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE

Political representation has been another area of extraordinary progress. Rangaswami re-

calls that when Indiaspora hosted the first Indian community presidential inaugural ball in Washington, D.C., in 2013, it served as both a celebration and a declaration that Indian Americans intended to play a larger role in public life.

At the time, Indian Americans had achieved considerable success in business and professional fields but remained underrepresented in politics.

At the same time, increasing numbers have entered government service through federal agencies and policy positions. “A new generation is choosing public service as a way to contribute,” Rangaswami says. “That reflects a deeper sense of belonging and responsibility.”

THE NEXT GENERATION - ROOTED HERE, CONNECTED THERE

As the diaspora continues to grow, Rangaswami believes one of the most important challenges is maintaining meaningful connections between younger generations and India. “The first generation carried India with them,” he says. “Their children grew up in America, and their experience is naturally different.”

“A community that remains connected across generations and across borders becomes stronger,” Rangaswami says. “And ultimately, it becomes an asset to both countries it calls home.” For him, the future of the diaspora will be defined not only by its success but also by its ability to serve as a bridge between India and the world.

(The author is a contributing editor at South Asian Herald)



In Conversation with
Rajesh Mehta
South Asian Herald

Global Tax Ledger

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Project Office in India: When Temporary Presence Turns Taxable

A non-resident opening a Project Office in India may view it as a temporary business setup, but from India's tax perspective, it can quickly become a taxable presence.

Now the question arises, what is a project office?

"Project Office" means a place of business in India to represent the interests of the foreign company executing a project in India, but excludes a Liaison Office.

The tax implications begin to emerge when the Project Office starts actively carrying out business functions in India.

The moment your Project Office in India starts executing contracts, managing local operations, providing services, or generating revenue, Indian tax authorities may examine whether the foreign company has created any business connection in India or a "Permanent Establishment" (PE) under the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).

And once that happens, then that project office will be treated as constituting a taxable presence in India and accordingly, profits attributable to Indian operations may become taxable in India.

A project office is generally treated as a foreign company as per the Indian income tax law. Accordingly, the tax rates applicable to foreign companies in India will generally apply to the Project Office, i.e., 35% plus the surcharge rate depending on the total income of the Assessee plus cess.

Let's take an example:

A U.S. company set up a Project Office in India to implement a 12-month infrastructure project. The office actively supervises, manages and conducts the core project operations in India, which may result in the establishment of a business connection or Permanent Establishment under tax laws and the DTAA. Consequently, profits from Indian operations may be taxable in India.

Now, because you are a U.S. tax resident, this profit shall also be reportable in your U.S. return of income. However, under US tax provisions, taxes paid in India may generally be claimed as a credit in the U.S., reducing double taxation, subject to U.S. tax rules and limitations.

But timing matters.

If the U.S. taxes the income first and U.S. filing timelines differ, you may face temporary cash flow pressure, additional disclosures, and exchange rate complexities.

But what's the bigger lesson?

Your Project Office is not taxed simply because it exists—it is taxed based on the nature and substance of activities performed in India.

So, the real question is not: "Do I have a project in India?"

It is: "Does this project create a taxable business presence in India?"

Because in international taxation, global expansion may create opportunity—but without careful structuring, treaty planning, and compliance discipline, that opportunity can quickly become a two-country tax challenge.

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

The Billions Keeping Nepal Afloat

R. Suryamurthy

Nepal's economy is becoming increasingly dependent on money sent home by migrant workers, with remittance inflows projected to hit a record NPR 2.21 trillion (about US\$14.6 billion) in fiscal year 2025-26, according to a new report by CARE Ratings Nepal. The surge underscores both the strength and vulnerability of an economy heavily reliant on overseas employment.

Remittances reached an all-time high of NPR 1.72 trillion (about US\$11.4 billion) in FY25 and had already touched NPR 1.66 trillion (about US\$11 billion) during the first nine months of FY26. The report projects the figure will climb to NPR 2.21 trillion, equivalent to nearly US\$14.6 billion, by the end of the fiscal year.

The inflows have become a cornerstone of Nepal's economy, accounting for a substantial share of foreign exchange earnings and helping sustain external sector stability despite the country's limited export base. The remittance-to-GDP ratio has risen sharply in the post-pandemic period, reflecting both robust overseas earnings and relatively subdued domestic economic growth.

The report shows that the Middle East continues to dominate as a destination for Nepali migrant workers. The United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia remain among the largest

employers of Nepali labor, while Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, Romania and Cyprus have also emerged as important destinations.

India, which allows Nepali citizens to work without visas under a longstanding bilateral arrangement, remains a crucial source of remittances. According to the report, India accounted for 13.84% of Nepal's total international remittance receipts in FY23, making it the single largest source country. The 2021 census recorded more than 554,000 Nepalis working in India.

CARE Ratings Nepal said remittances serve as a critical economic shock absorber at the macro level. They help finance Nepal's large trade deficit, bolster foreign exchange reserves and support the balance of payments. During the first nine months of FY26, remittances accounted for nearly 70% of current account inflows, contributing to a current account surplus of NPR 618.68 billion (around US\$4.1 billion).

At the household level, remittances have transformed living standards across the country. The proportion of households receiving remittance income increased from 23.4% in 1995-96 to 76.8% in FY23, while average annual remittance receipts per household rose from NPR 15,160 (about US\$100) to NPR 145,093 (about US\$960) over the same period.

The inflows have also played a major role in reducing poverty. Nepal's poverty rate fell from 42% in 1995-96 to 20.3% in

FY23, as remittance-supported households increased spending on education, healthcare, housing and other long-term investments in human capital.

However, the report warns that Nepal's growing dependence on remittances carries significant long-term risks. Heavy migration of young and skilled workers has contributed to a "brain drain," weakening the domestic labor force. At the same time, much of the income is spent on consumption and imported goods rather than productive investments, limiting its contribution to industrial development and job creation.

CARE Ratings Nepal said policymakers should focus on channeling remittance inflows into productive sectors through instruments such as diaspora bonds, entrepreneurship programs and financial literacy initiatives. The agency also called for reforms aimed at improving the business climate and creating domestic employment opportunities, while helping returning migrants use their skills and savings to establish businesses at home.

The findings highlight a central paradox facing Nepal: remittances have become one of the country's most powerful tools for poverty reduction and economic stability, yet their growing dominance also exposes the economy to the risks of excessive dependence on labor migration and external income flows.

Business Round Up

Growth Strategy

Reliance Retail plans to expand beyond its core retail operations into manufacturing and exports as it seeks to deepen its presence in India's fast-moving consumer goods sector, Chairman Mukesh Ambani said at Reliance Industries' annual general meeting. The company will establish dedicated manufacturing and export platforms for products ranging from beverages and daily essentials to fresh food, leveraging its sourcing, cold-chain and distribution network. The move marks Reliance Retail's latest growth initiative as it seeks to build a scalable consumer goods business and tap overseas markets. The company reported a net profit of 35.74 billion rupees (\$416 million) for the quarter ended March, while revenue rose 1% sequentially to 984.57 billion rupees (\$11.5 billion).

Separately, Reliance Industries approved the filing of draft documents for the initial public offering of Reliance Jio Infocomm, its telecom and digital services arm, in what is expected to be one of India's most closely watched listings. The IPO, which could raise about \$3.8 billion, will comprise a fresh issue of up to 270 million shares, with proceeds primarily earmarked for debt reduction and general corporate purposes. Ambani said the listing would help unlock shareholder

value while underscoring India's ability to build technology companies with global scale and competitiveness. (UNI)

Market Debut

The National Stock Exchange has filed draft papers for an initial public offering valued at about 300 billion rupees (\$3.5 billion), potentially making it one of India's largest stock market listings in recent years. The issue will be structured entirely as an offer for sale, with existing shareholders selling roughly 6% of the exchange.

State Bank of India is expected to be the largest selling shareholder, while several institutional investors, including insurance companies and foreign funds, will also reduce stakes. Because no new shares will be issued, the proceeds will go to selling shareholders rather than the exchange itself.

The filing marks a significant step toward a long-awaited public debut for India's largest stock exchange. Market participants expect the IPO to attract strong investor interest and further deepen India's capital markets as domestic equity participation continues to expand. (UNI)

Auto Steel

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India has launched Zagnelis Protect, a premium zinc-aluminum-magnesium coated steel product designed for automotive applications, becoming the first manufacturer in India to offer the technology domestically. The product has been widely used in Europe and is aimed at improving corrosion resistance, dura-

bility and manufacturing efficiency for automakers.

The launch is expected to reduce India's dependence on imported high-grade automotive steel, a segment that currently accounts for an estimated 8% to 10% of critical automotive steel demand. With India producing more than 30 million vehicles annually and automakers seeking lighter, more durable materials, industry executives say local production of advanced coated steel could support the sector's next phase of growth and exports. (UNI)

July Pact

The long-awaited free trade agreement between India and the United Kingdom is scheduled to take effect on July 15, opening a new chapter in bilateral trade and investment ties. The pact will eliminate tariffs on 99% of Indian exports to the UK, benefiting sectors such as textiles, engineering goods, marine products, pharmaceuticals, leather and footwear.

The agreement is expected to boost exports and create new opportunities for Indian manufacturers, farmers, startups and small businesses. India has also agreed to lower tariffs on products including Scotch whisky and select automobile imports, while securing protections for most of its steel exports. Analysts expect the deal to strengthen supply-chain integration and accelerate trade growth between the world's fifth- and sixth-largest economies. (UNI)

How Titan Conquered the Clock

Rajiv Vijayakar

Time stops for no one. That can well be the tagline of this fascinating series on one of India's greatest consumer triumphs!

Made in India—A Titan Story is based on Vinay Kamath's book *Titan: Inside India's Most Successful Consumer Brand*, and details the rise of Titan, India's prestigious and now one of the world's leading watch brands, and the visionaries who achieved this feat.

It details how Xerxes Desai, who served as the first managing director of the Titan Company, played the key role in the company after joining the Tata Administrative Services. He founded Titan as a joint venture with J.R.D. Tata (Naseeruddin Shah here) in 1986, after bureaucratic hassles long struggles, setbacks and challenges.

The story is detailed, sans villains or acts of God, though naturally such a monumental achievement comes only after convincing detractors of all kinds, right from Tata's Board of Directors to foreign watch-making magnates who never believed in India's capacity to compete with the world market in quality.

Xerxes, etched magnificently by Jim Sarbh in his career-finest performance, is a first-rate daredevil, completely confident of himself and his team, comprising of good friend Akash Dixit (Vaibhav Tatwawadi), loyalists Gaurav Dhar (Lakshvir Singh Saran), Megha Mhatre (Kaveri Seth) and S.K.



(Photo courtesy: Trailer Video Grab)

Gopalan (Joy Sengupta) and his acquisitions from rival company GMT, Pooja (Shilpa Iyer), A.J. Kumar (Satyen Chaturvedi) and Sameer Reddy (Ankith Madhav).

Xerxes gets steadfast encouragement and life's guidance from wife Rajni (Namita Dubey), Gaurav and Megha find love in each other, JRD remains solidly behind Xerxes even if doubts assail him, and there is tacit support from designer Ravindra Naik (Paresh Ganatra in a splendid dual role, also playing his twin Devendra who issues Xerxes the bank loan).

Intricacies and tiny nuances of designing, making and marketing are shown in fine detail without overpowering the viewer and there is the right mix of anticipation and resignation in the final battle that Xerxes and his devoted

team face. There are real hiccups factually shown, of technical and seemingly impossible hurdles in the quest for excellence, the overconfidence of Xerxes at places, as well as the temporary spat between Akash and him.

With real footage interspersed at multiple junctures, the series gets a rare level of credibility, and we also get rare insights—how the brand was named, how it got its first tagline and own shop, how the signature tune came about and what happened to exacerbate and then allay the fears of the formative team.

The script is plain fantastic, low-key and placid yet lucid and riveting, and writers Kandarp Shroff, Karan Vyas and Niraj Dasa deserve full marks for the writing, with razor-sharp yet real dialogues

and a great understanding of a challenging subject. Technically outstanding with fabulous production design and sets, it has outstanding cinematography by Aditya Kapur, while Akash Bundhoo and Nibedya Samal make sure that their edit is immaculate. Co-produced by T-Series Films, its background score by Abhishek Nailwal is exemplary, with superbly judicious use of film songs throughout, and to the credit of T-Series, the tracks' rights are also with other music companies but the sentiments are perfect in most cases. As for director Robbie Grewal, this is simply his best work and he must now deal with the pressures of heightened expectations after average and slightly above average work over the last two decades.

Naseeruddin Shah delivers his second humdinger this month besides *Main Vaapas Aaunga*. Vaibhav Tatwawadi, Lakshvir Singh Saran, Kaveri Seth and in a role against his type, Joy Sengupta are all uniformly superlative. Namita Dubey as Rajni Desai is absolutely tops, while Ashwath Bhatt (as Shankar Manoharan, another key figure), Viraf Patel as marketing head Murli Shankar Dalmia and Paresh Ganatra are all first-rate.

Mention must be also made of the actors who play the main detractors on the board of directors, while Rupali Arte as Pinks, JRD's secretary, Beila Gupta as JRD's wife Thelma and Rahul Dev as Mastaan Bhai, the don, and the three ex-GMT employees—Shilpa Iyer, Satyen Chaturvedi and Ankith Madhav acquit themselves very well. Prateeksha Lonkar as Megha's mother is great.

This is T-Series Films' entry into the web space and we hope they maintain this high standard in their work to come.

Rating: *****

Almighty Motion Pictures' & T-Series Films' Made in India—A Titan Story Produced by: Prabhleen Sandhu, Bhushan Kumar & Krishan Kumar Directed by: Robbie Grewal Written by: Vikas Kamath, Kandarp Shroff, Karan Vyas and Niraj Dasa Music: Abhishek Nailwal Starring: Naseeruddin Shah, Jim Sarbh, Namita Dubey, Vaibhav Tatwawadi, Lakshvir Singh Saran, Kaveri Seth, Joy Sengupta, Ashwath Bhatt, Paresh Ganatra, Viraf Patel, Prateeksha Lonkar, Shilpa Iyer, Satyen Chaturvedi, Rupali Arte, Ankith Madhav, Beila Gupta, Rahul Dev & others

Indian Embassy...

(Contd. from page 1)

"Indian diaspora has been an enthusiastic participant in everything Indian. They are not just participants; they are actually huge supporters. They are actually a pillar of strength of everything that we as Embassy try to do here in promoting Indian interest, in promoting our bilateral relations," he said.

The Ambassador added, "Today is no exception. They have turned up in very, very large numbers here, which is a matter of great joy for us."

Among the attendees was former Lok Sabha Member of Parliament and BJP OBC Morcha National General Secretary, Sangam Lal Gupta.

Gupta told *South Asian Herald* "I am pleased to participate in the event and would like to express my appreciation for the success and growth of the Indian American community in the United States."

The yoga session was led by Jay Kalathil, founder of Mukhi Yoga, whose organization focuses on helping individuals achieve "physical, mental, and spiritual well-being."

Kelle Jacobs, a young entrepreneur and yoga instructor, also conducted a session during the program.

Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of India, Namgya C. Khampa along with other Embassy officials also participated in the event.

Concluding the event, First Secretary (Press, Information & Culture) and SA to the Ambassador, Neha Singh, expressed gratitude to the sponsors on behalf of the Embassy.

Sponsors included Michael McCabe and Vikrum Mathur of the TATA team, Vivek Kumar Singh of the State Bank of India, Rahul Singh of HCL, and ICICI Bank.

Entertainment Round Up

Box Office Surge

India's film industry is looking ahead to a potentially strong late-summer box office run with the release of two major titles — Toxic and Mirzapur: The Movie — arriving within days of each other. While Yash-starrer Toxic is scheduled to hit theatres on August 26, Mirzapur: The Movie, based on one of India's most popular streaming franchises, will follow on September 4.

The back-to-back releases come during a period that is traditionally considered quieter for theatres before the festive Dussehra and Diwali season. Industry observers believe the films could help sustain audience footfall through August and September, with both projects carrying substantial fan followings and strong pre-release buzz. Theatre owners are expected to benefit from the momentum generated by the two high-profile releases, potentially turning a typically slow phase into a profitable stretch for exhibitors.

Nostalgia Reimagined

Marking World Music Day, a refreshed version of the popular song Teri Umeed has been released as Teri Umeed... Aaj Bhi, blending nostalgia with a contemporary musical treatment. Featuring

Yasser Desai and Shruti Sharma, the track revisits themes of love, longing and cherished memories while seeking to connect with both longtime fans and younger listeners.

The song has been reimagined by composer duo Javed-Mohsin, with vocals by Neeti Mohan and Yasser Desai. Speaking about the release, Desai described the song as a project close to his heart and said the team worked to preserve its innocence while giving it a fresh sound. Mohsin Shaikh noted that reinterpreting a beloved track was both challenging and rewarding, with the aim of introducing its emotional essence to a new generation of listeners.

Prabhas Buzz

A brief appearance by Telugu superstar Prabhas in a viral video has triggered a fresh wave of speculation among fans about his upcoming films Kalki 2 and Spirit. Social media users closely examined a wallpaper visible on the actor's phone, with some suggesting it could be linked to his character Karna from Kalki 2898 AD and its anticipated sequel.

Adding to the excitement, filmmaker Sandeep Reddy Vanga recently shared a minimalist poster for Spirit featuring

silhouettes of himself and Prabhas. Though no details were revealed, the image quickly gained traction online. Industry reports suggest that shooting for Spirit may begin soon, with some portions potentially being filmed at Hyderabad's Chanchalguda prison complex. Prabhas' upcoming slate also includes Fauji, making him one of the most closely watched stars in Indian cinema.

Global Collaboration

Priyanka Chopra has revealed that she is set to work with Hollywood star Angelina Jolie on an upcoming project, though details remain under wraps. In an interview with Fortune India, Chopra named Jolie among the women who inspire her and disclosed that the two would soon be sharing screen space.

The announcement comes during a particularly busy phase in Chopra's career. She is currently completing work on S.S. Rajamouli's ambitious action-adventure film Varanasi, which also stars Mahesh Babu and Prithviraj Sukumaran and is scheduled for release in April 2027. Chopra's upcoming slate also includes Amri, directed by Mira Nair, and the ensemble comedy Judgment Day, alongside Will Ferrell and Zac Efron, underscoring her growing presence across both Indian and international cinema.



Weekly Horoscope

JUNE 26 - JULY 02

BY ASTROLOGER MANISHA KUSHIK

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ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

Aries natives may feel motivated to move ahead confidently with important plans this week. Financial investments made with long-term goals in mind may support future stability and growth. Romantic relationships may deepen through emotional understanding and meaningful conversations. Health may remain supportive, though solo travel plans may feel tiring and emotionally draining.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 20)

Taurus natives may come across promising opportunities this week. Confidence and calm communication may help you handle important meetings and professional situations effectively. Financially, new ideas and careful planning may strengthen long-term stability. Romantic relationships may improve through honest conversations, while property matters may finally move toward resolution.

GEMINI (May 21-Jun 21)

Gemini natives may enjoy a favorable and productive week overall. Innovative ideas at work may impress seniors and help you stay ahead professionally. Romantic relationships may grow stronger through trust and emotional understanding, while financial decisions may require caution and practicality. Health and energy levels may remain strong, though travel and property matters may demand extra attention.

CANCER (Jun 22-Jul 22)

Cancerians may experience encouraging progress in several areas this week. Professional appreciation may boost confidence and motivate you to perform even better. Financial opportunities may appear promising and support long-term security. Family relationships may improve steadily, while travel plans and fitness activities may bring positivity and renewed energy.

LEO (Jul 23-Aug 23)

Leo natives may encounter pleasant surprises and new responsibilities this week. Workplace

duties may highlight your abilities and strengthen your professional image. Romantic relationships may require patience and calm communication to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. Property investments may bring encouraging returns if approached carefully and with proper planning.

VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)

Virgo natives may benefit from embracing change and fresh opportunities this week. Professional uncertainty may require patience, but persistence may eventually bring positive outcomes. Financial growth may improve through multiple income sources, while romantic relationships may move toward stronger commitment and understanding. Property investments may prove beneficial if handled wisely and honestly.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)

Libra natives may experience unexpected opportunities and important developments this week. Family harmony may require compromise and collective support from loved ones. Romantic relationships may feel passionate and emotionally fulfilling, while finances may demand caution and disciplined decisions. Travel plans may inspire excitement, though property matters could remain slow and complicated.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

Scorpios may face challenges that ultimately lead to valuable opportunities this week. Professional situations may encourage innovative thinking and practical decision-making. Romance may flourish through greater emotional attention and quality time with your partner. Property investments may appear favorable, while spiritual travel and disciplined academic efforts may bring satisfying results.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

Sagittarius natives may need flexibility as sudden changes unfold during the week. Career goals may demand sincere effort and stronger discipline for success. Financially, extra income opportunities may prove beneficial, while romantic matters may encourage honest emotional expression.

Travel abroad and property investments may bring promising long-term advantages.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 21)

Capricorn natives may experience a week filled with varied responsibilities and opportunities. Professional matters may feel demanding, especially when dealing with staffing or support issues. Financial pressure may require postponing major expenses or investments for now. Family relationships may improve through patience and

flexibility, while property investments may appear increasingly profitable.

AQUARIUS (Jan 22-Feb 19)

Aquarius natives may experience an unpredictable yet insightful week. Professional efforts may take time to receive proper recognition, making patience essential. Romantic relationships may bring pleasant surprises, while financial stability may depend on avoiding careless spending. Travel plans may feel refreshing, and

thoughtful property decisions may help prevent future confusion.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

Pisces natives may feel motivated to take bold and meaningful action this week. Professional contributions may earn appreciation and strengthen career growth. Romantic relationships may remain fulfilling through quality time and emotional connection. Financial opportunities may appear favorable, while travel and property matters may require practical thinking and careful planning.



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Beauty Basics with
Shahnaz Husain

Tips For Healthy and Beautiful Nails in The Summer

Just like your skin, your nails and cuticles are more vulnerable during the summer months. Sun exposure, chlorine, sea salt, sand and increased sweating can lead to dryness, discoloration, brittleness and chipping. Heat, air conditioning and prolonged exposure to the sun strip moisture from the keratin layers of the nail plate, making nails more prone to cracking and breakage.

Whether you prefer gel, lacquer or natural nails, maintaining healthy nails during hot weather requires more than a professional manicure.

A simple care routine can help keep them strong, healthy and attractive throughout the season.

HYDRATE INSIDE AND OUT

Hydration is essential for healthy nails. Excessive exposure to water and sun can weaken nails, making them more susceptible to peeling and breakage.

Drink plenty of water and include water-rich fruits and vegetables in your diet, such as cucumbers, watermelon, lettuce, peaches and strawberries. Since nails reflect overall health, proper hydration supports stronger nail growth.

Regularly apply a moisturizing hand cream or cuticle oil to keep nails and surrounding skin nourished. Cuticle oil helps improve circulation around the nail bed, supports healthy growth and enhances the appearance of both natural nails and nail polish.

EXFOLIATE FOR SMOOTHER NAILS

Just as skin benefits from exfoliation, nails and cuticles can benefit as well. Gentle exfoliation helps remove dead skin cells, surface buildup and rough patches, creating a smoother nail surface.

Use a soft nail brush or mild

exfoliating scrub around the nails and cuticles. This can improve blood circulation and help maintain stronger, healthier nails. Exfoliation also helps loosen attached cuticles and smooth ridges, providing an ideal base for nail polish and a shinier, more polished appearance.

GIVE NAIL POLISH A BREAK

While brightly painted nails are a summer favorite, occasional breaks from nail polish are important for maintaining nail health.

Leaving polish on continuously can dry out the nail surface and contribute to peeling, ridges, discoloration and brittleness. Although nails receive oxygen and nutrients through the bloodstream rather than the air, prolonged polish wear can lead to keratin granulation — rough, white patches that develop on the nail surface.

Allowing nails to remain polish-free for short periods between manicures helps restore moisture and maintain their natural strength and appearance.

NOURISH NAILS THROUGH DIET

Healthy nails begin with good nutrition. Nails are primarily composed of keratin, a protein that requires adequate nutrients to remain strong.

Include foods rich in protein, biotin, iron, zinc and vitamin C in your diet. Iron deficiency can contribute to brittle nails, while inadequate protein intake may lead to ridges and weakness.

Dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale and broccoli provide essential vitamins and minerals that support nail growth. Beans, legumes, tofu and nuts are excellent sources of plant-based protein and nutrients that help keep nails strong, resilient and beautiful.

Beautiful nails are not just about appearance. They are often a reflection of overall health, proper nutrition and consistent care. With a few simple habits, you can keep your nails healthy, strong and summer-ready all season long.

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



Soul Talk

Chhavi Upadhyay

Life Coach and Mentor

The Woman Who Ate First

She woke up before the rest of the house, the way she always did. Made tea, rolled out parathas, set the table, packed the lunchboxes. But on this particular morning, before anyone came to the kitchen, she did something different. She put a paratha on a plate, poured herself a cup of tea at the temperature she liked, and sat down to eat. Quietly. Unhurriedly. Before anyone else had been served.

It was, by any measure, an ordinary act. A woman is eating breakfast in her own home.

And yet, if you have grown up in a household where the woman of the house eats last — after the children, the husband, the in-laws, the guests — you will understand that this small moment was anything but ordinary. She ate first. And in many homes, that sentence alone would be enough to shift the air in the room.

Nobody would say it directly, perhaps. But the word would hover, unspoken, in a glance or a joke made later to a relative. Selfish. Not as an accusation. Just as a quiet verdict, delivered so softly that even she might start to believe it.

When did we start using “selfish” to describe a woman who keeps something for herself? Not someone who takes from others or withholds love. Simply a woman who, before pouring into everyone else, pauses long enough to pour into herself first.

Somewhere across generations, a quiet definition of goodness took shape: a good woman gives first, eats last, needs least. Her value is measured not by what she keeps but by what she gives away. The mother who never sat down at the table. The grandmother who never bought anything for herself. That standard was passed down, quietly, plate by plate. And so, when a

woman breaks it — even in the smallest way — something in the room tightens. Not because she has done anything wrong. But because her small act of self-preservation disrupts a pattern everyone around her has come to depend on.

Here is the distinction I believe is worth making, because the language around it has become muddled.

Self-care has become a fashionable word, but it is often reduced to indulgences — a spa day, a holiday, a face mask. These are pleasant. They are not the point. Self-respect is something far quieter and far more foundational. It is the steady belief that your needs are not an afterthought. That your hunger matters as much as anyone else's at the table. That rest is not a reward you earn through exhaustion but something you deserve simply because you are a person in the house, not just a function of it.

Because the woman who always eats last does not just lose a meal. Over the years, she loses something harder to name — her preferences, her



(Photo courtesy: Chhavi Upadhyay)

desires, sometimes her own voice. The selflessness that was supposed to make her admirable slowly makes her invisible, first to the people around her, then to herself.

The woman who ate first did not love her family any less that morning. She simply loved herself enough to stop being last.

That is not selfishness. It is the smallest, bravest act of self-respect — choosing to believe that she, too, deserves a warm plate.

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Roots & Rights



Sonam Chandwani
Managing Partner,
KS Legal & Associates

When Student Visas Are Denied

International students intending to pursue a Master's degree in the United States are generally required to obtain an F-1 non-immigrant student visa, which remains the principal visa classification for individuals enrolled in full-time academic programs at accredited universities and institutions. The process ordinarily begins with securing admission from a recognized educational institution, following which the institution issues Form I-20, certifying the student's acceptance and eligibility.

The applicant is thereafter required to pay the SEVIS fee, complete Form DS-160, schedule a consular interview, and satisfy the consular officer that the purpose of travel is genuinely educational, that adequate financial resources are available to meet tuition and living expenses, and that the applicant intends to comply with the temporary nature of the visa category. Demonstrating strong academic credentials and maintaining consistency in the information furnished during the application process are also essential considerations.

A refusal of a student visa does not automatically extinguish the offer of admission granted by the university. In practice, educational institutions generally adopt a pragmatic approach in dealing with such situations. The first and most appropriate course of action is for the student to promptly notify the admissions office or the designated international student services department regarding the refusal and provide relevant details. Universities often possess the administrative flexibility to defer admission to a subsequent semester or academic year, thereby preserving the student's enrollment without requiring a fresh application. Such deferrals are particularly appropriate where the refusal is procedural in nature or where the student intends to reapply after addressing the concerns raised by the consular authorities.

From an institutional perspective, universities should ensure that communication channels remain open with affected students and that reasonable accommodations are extended wherever permissible under their policies. Reissuing an updated Form I-20 for a future intake, granting deferment requests, and advising students regarding timelines and documentation requirements constitute sound administrative practices.

In my view, institutions should refrain from treating a visa refusal as an abandonment of the academic relationship, since visa adjudication is a sovereign function of the host country and does not necessarily reflect upon the merit or suitability of the candidate. An automatic cancellation of admission without allowing deferment or reconsideration may operate harshly against students who have already invested considerable time and resources in securing admission.

Q What is the appropriate visa classification for international students pursuing a Master's degree in the United States, and what are the primary procedural requirements?

A International students pursuing a Master's degree in the U.S. typically require an F-1 visa. The process involves getting accepted by a certified university to receive a Form I-20, paying the SEVIS fee, completing the DS-160 visa application, and attending an interview at a U.S. embassy or consulate. During your interview, you must provide your I-20, proof of financial support, and documents demonstrating your intent to return home after your studies.

Q If a prospective student receives an offer of admission but subsequently faces a visa refusal, what are the recommended institutional protocols or administrative steps to address the status of academic enrollment?

A If your visa is denied, contact your university's International Student Office immediately to report the situation and discuss your options. They can guide you on whether you are eligible to defer your enrollment to a future semester or if you need to formally withdraw your application. If you choose to reapply for a visa, coordinate with them to obtain an updated Form I-20, and be sure to review the university's policies regarding tuition deposit refunds to see if you qualify for a return of those funds.

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Flurys and Lingering Memories

SP Singh

Some memories arrive fully formed, like a familiar scent that opens a door to another time.

For me, that scent belongs to Flurys — the Swiss confectionery that arrived on Park Street in Kolkata in 1969 and became the epicenter of Sunday mornings, conversation and small celebrations.

I remember walking through its doors at the urging of my cousin, Sarabjeet Singh, and discovering a world of pastries and chocolates that felt both elegant and welcoming.

Those mornings became a ritual: the hush of the café, the clink of teaspoons against fine crockery and the unhurried pleasure of a sweet bite that seemed to slow time itself.

At the time, Delhi lagged in confectionery specialties.

Across towns and cities, tastes and offerings varied widely, and Kolkata's fine patisseries were something to marvel at.

Flurys symbolized that difference — a slice of European refinement on Park Street, where the standards of baking and presentation set a benchmark for others to follow.

For me, and for many others, those Sunday visits were not merely about food. They were social anchors — places to meet family, compare notes on the week and participate in the small rituals that stitch ordinary lives into something richer.

The menu left lasting impressions.

Delicate sponge cakes layered with cream, glistening fruit tarts and buttery croissants that flaked at the touch — each item seemed designed to delight both the eye and the palate. Tea and coffee arrived steaming, though I preferred cold coffee with ice cream. Often, we lingered over conversation long after the plates had been cleared.

Flurys taught us to appreciate the artistry of confectionery. It also offered a gentle lesson: taking time for simple pleasures is essential.

Decades later, in a place where I least expected to find that familiar



(Photo courtesy: SP Singh)

comfort, I arrived at Kazi Nazrul Islam Airport in Durgapur.

There, much to my delight, I discovered flavors that brought back those Park Street mornings.

One bite transported me to Sarabjeet's encouragement, to the soft afternoon light filtering through the café and to the convivial atmosphere of those Sunday rituals.

It was a small but surprising bridge between past and present — a reminder that tastes can follow us, reappearing when least expected.

Memory and taste are intimate companions.

Flurys represents not merely a brand or a bakery, but a period when certain places defined a city's culinary identity.

For those of us who grew up watching Delhi catch up to the confectionery standards set in Kolkata,

the story of Flurys is also part of a larger narrative about how Indian cities evolved — embracing new tastes, establishing their own traditions and ultimately expanding the country's gastronomic landscape.

At 79, I find such moments of reconnection deeply satisfying.

They are proof that pleasures once confined to particular streets or eras can resurface in airports, cafés and unexpected corners of life, ready to be enjoyed all over again.

My Sunday morning memories of Park Street remain vivid. Now, however, they sit alongside fresh discoveries that continue to satisfy old cravings and kindle the same warm, gentle joy.

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Kimchi Noodle Debut

SAH Staff Reporter

South Korean food giant Nongshim Co., Ltd. has strengthened its push into India with the launch of Shin Ramyun Kimchi Stir Fry, an online-exclusive noodle product aimed at capitalizing on the country's growing appetite for Korean cuisine and global food trends.

The product was unveiled at an event in Gurugram and will initially be available through quick-commerce platform Blinkit, reflecting the company's strategy to reach younger consumers who

increasingly discover and purchase food through digital channels.

The launch comes as Nongshim accelerates its international expansion amid a maturing domestic instant noodle market in South Korea. The company recently outlined its "Global Agility & Growth" strategy, which prioritizes overseas markets as a key driver of future growth.

Nongshim reported annual global revenue of about 3.5 trillion Korean won (\$2.5 billion) and aims to more than double sales to 7.3 trillion won by 2030 through international expansion.

"India is one of the most exciting markets for Nongshim globally," said President and Chief Executive Officer Jo Yong-chul, citing rising consumer interest in Korean food and changing consumption habits. He said India could become the company's fastest-growing market within the next five years.

India's instant noodle market, estimated at more than \$2.1 billion, has seen increasing demand for international flavors, driven by the popularity of Korean pop culture among younger consumers.

Nongshim products are exported to more than 100 countries, while its flagship Shin Ramyun brand is sold across more than 200 countries and regions worldwide.

The Stories Behind the Shirts

Deepak Sapra

The 2026 World Cup is the biggest ever: 48 nations, 1248 players, and as many stories as there are jerseys on the pitch.

There are the last dances. Messi, Ronaldo, Modrić, Son, De Bruyne.

The first-timers. Jordan, Uzbekistan, Cape Verde, Curaçao.

The long-awaited returns. Haiti, Congo, Iraq, Turkey, Scotland, Norway.

And then there are the quieter arcs. Diaspora kids. Refugees. Boys who played barefoot. Men who chose a country of heritage over birth, or birth over heritage. One who was born in the “wrong” country because an airline refused a pregnant woman passage home.

Every number carries a life behind it.

For a few weeks, this becomes the closest thing the world has to a shared ceremony- where the entire spectrum of being human takes the field at once.

Here are some.

SOUTH AFRICA'S PERCY TAU

In 2010, South Africa hosted the World Cup. Vuvuzelas roared. Waka Waka echoed everywhere. They opened against Mexico.

Sixteen years later, in 2026, Mexico hosted, and opened against South Africa.

Football rarely does symmetry like this. Life, almost never.

Percy Tau was on the pitch for that second circle. He had waited his entire life for it.

He grew up in Witbank, a mining town, raised by a single mother who wanted him to find a “real job.” He studied anyway- matric with distinction, a B.Com by 24- while choosing football with passion.

In 2017, his brother died in a car crash. Percy kept playing.

Some players carry expectations. Some carry memory.

Percy carries both- and then walks out under floodlights as if it's weightless.

NEW ZEALAND'S SARPREET SINGH

New Zealand's great sporting story is rugby. And cricket. Football lives in the margins.

And in that margin stands Sarpreet Singh. The first Sikh to play at a World Cup.

His roots trace to Jalandhar. His childhood to South Auckland, to meals of roti and evenings of Bollywood with his grandparents. His father nudged him toward futsal because it felt safer than rugby.

From there: Wellington Phoenix. Then Bayern Munich's system. Then injuries. Then the long, quiet rebuild back home.

On 16 June 2026, in Los Angeles, he started against Iran. The match ended 2-2.

The result will fade. The image will not. A Sikh footballer, kara on



(Photo courtesy: X@FIFAWorldCup)

his wrist, steady in belief, opening a door that didn't exist before he walked through it.

USA'S FOLARIN BALOGUN

Folarin Balogun's story begins with a refusal.

His mother, seven months pregnant, travelled from London to New York. On the return, the airline wouldn't let her board. She stayed. He was born in Brooklyn.

Folarin became American by accident.

He grew up in London, wore Arsenal colors, represented England at youth level. Then the United States called.

He said yes.

Black by color. Nigerian by heritage. American by birth. British by upbringing. European by profession.

Four identities, reconciled into one choice.

At a home World Cup, he is not just finishing moves inside the box. He is finishing a quieter journey- of choosing who you are when you could have been many things.

BRAZIL'S ENDRICK

Endrick Felipe Moreira de Sousa's

story is almost too cinematic to be fiction.

Born in Taguatinga, on the edges of Brasília, where poverty is not an abstraction but a daily negotiation. His father laid bricks, sold coffee. His mother cleaned houses. Sometimes, Endrick was sent to an orphanage- not for abandonment, but for food.

He played anywhere, on anything.

His father filmed his goals and uploaded them online- not just with pride, but because they couldn't afford bus fare to take him to trials.

The videos travelled. Palmeiras came. They gave the family a house, his father a job.

Years later, Real Madrid paid €35 million and waited for him to turn 18.

People talk about the weight of Brazil on his shoulders.

But weight is relative.

When you've carried hunger, expectation feels lighter.

CANADA'S ISMAËL KONÉ

At 17, Ismaël Koné was almost invisible.

An immigrant from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, living in Montreal, playing amateur football, working

part-time, unknown to scouts and systems.

Then a trial in 2021.

Within 18 months, MLS starter. World Cup squad. The youngest Canadian to play in Qatar 2022.

He is not loud. He is quiet, religious, grounded.

His first pay-check went home- to clear his mother's debts.

Now he anchors a midfield at a World Cup hosted in part by the country that gave him his second life.

Sometimes, football doesn't just discover talent. It rescues timing.

AUSTRALIA'S GARANG KUOL

Garang Kuol was born in a refugee camp.

From South Sudan to Egypt to Australia, through a UN resettlement program, his childhood was stitched across borders.

Football began barefoot, with other Sudanese kids. Barcelona played on a cracked phone screen in the background.

Club fees were unaffordable. His mother made a deal. She would wash the team's kits every week. In exchange, her sons could play. His father took extra shifts, milking cows before factory work.

At 18, Garang became Australia's youngest World Cup player. Almost scored against Argentina.

He says he plays for his family- and for every South Sudanese child who has been told that dreaming like this is unrealistic.

He plays anyway.

HAITI'S DUCKENS NAZON

Duckens Nazon was born in Paris.

He had never lived in Haiti when he chose to represent it.

Rejected early, he worked his way through France's lower leagues, built a career in clubs across Turkey, Scotland, India, Iran.

And when he pulls on Haiti's jersey, he says he becomes something else. Stronger, bigger than himself.

Haiti has known earthquakes, instability, violence. Home matches are played in the Dominican Republic. In Port-au-Prince, they say gangs pause during games.

While playing in Tehran, as the Israel-Iran conflict escalated, Nazon needed to travel for his World Cup visa. Airports shut. Flights cancelled. He took the road. Hours toward the Azerbaijan border, explosions in the distance.

He made it.

This isn't about goals. It's about what a person will endure for belonging.

IRAN'S ALIREZA BEIRANVAND

Alireza was born into a nomadic shepherd family. His life seemed prescribed: follow the flock.

He chose otherwise.

As a teenager, he ran away to Tehran. The city was brutal. He slept rough, swept streets, washed cars. He stayed near Azadi Stadium. Not inside, just close enough to feel it.

Imagine that hunger. To live beside a dream that may never include you, and still refuse to let go of it.

Then came 2018. Iran vs Portugal. Ronaldo from the penalty spot.

Alireza waited. Ronaldo struck.

Alireza saved.

For a brief second, the world tilted- because a boy who once had nothing looked greatness in the eye and said: not today.

Alireza can throw a football over 60 meters. A Guinness-world record.

But really, he has always been doing that- going farther than anyone expects.

Because that's what these stories are.

Not of tactics. Not of systems.

But of people carrying more than a ball onto the pitch- and still finding a way to play the game they love. (UNI)