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'Arranged Love': Modern Romance

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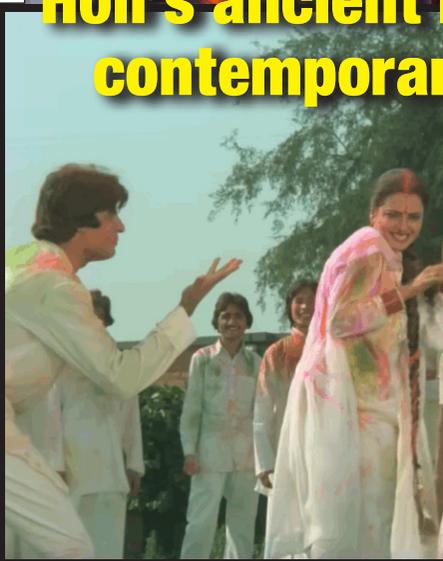
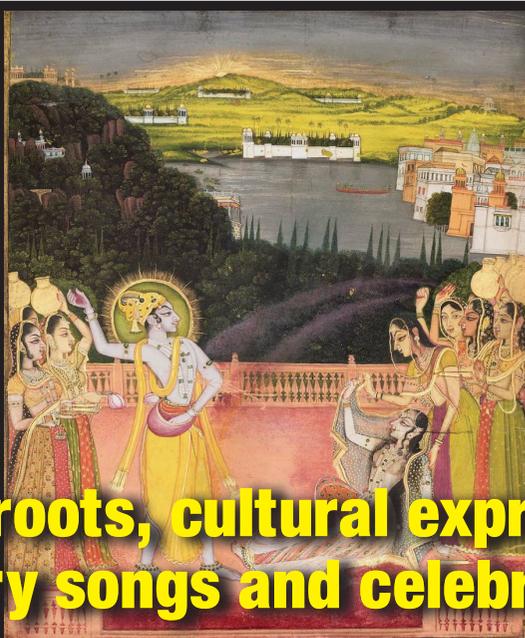
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Holi's ancient roots, cultural expressions, contemporary songs and celebrations



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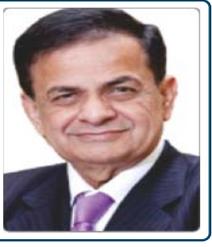
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Joy of Sharing

Project 'Life's 118th School Dedicated at Vasai, Jamnagar Dr. Nalini Vassa (USA) Strengthens Rural Education in Gujarat

Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh, Chairman, Life Global, NJ, USA

True nation-building begins when education reaches the grassroots and transforms gratitude into lasting institutions. When villages invest in education, they invest in the destiny of the nation. In a proud milestone for rural Gujarat, the 118th school developed under Project 'Life' was dedicated at Vasai village, Jamnagar District on January 24, 2026. The newly inaugurated Dr. Nalini Prafullkant Vasanji Primary School reflects a powerful commitment to grassroots education and long-term community development. He emphasized that philanthropy must build systems, not symbols - ensuring sustainable impact for generations of rural children.



Primary education is the vital foundation for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship, yet many rural schools still lack safe infrastructure and modern learning resources. Since 2000, Life Education Centre, through Project 'Life', has been transforming rural schools into inclusive, modern learning spaces that inspire enrolment and holistic child development. To date, 119 primary schools have been dedicated, with many more planned in the years ahead. The Vasai school, designed with improved classrooms and modern facilities, currently serves 225 students from Vasai and nearby villages. The initiative forms part of Project 'Life's broader mission to the infrastructure development of government primary schools across Saurashtra region, Gujarat.



Dr. Nalini Vassa

The Philosophy of Giving Back - Dr. Nalini Vassa

Dr. Nalini Vassa, a distinguished medical professional based in the United States and originally from Jamnagar, has consistently supported rural education initiatives in her homeland. Her contributions have enabled the development of 04 major educational infrastructures Smt. Shantaben Tulsidas Vassa Primary School, Jamnagar (January 28, 2007), Dr. Nalini Tulsidas Vassa Primary School, Jamnagar (November 30, 2013), Dr. Naliniben Shantaben Vassa Primary School, Vibhapar (February 25, 2017), Dr. Naliniben Prafullkant Vasanji Primary School, Vasai (January 24, 2026) in Jamnagar district, strengthening access to quality infrastructure and inclusive learning environments.

Sincere gratitude is extended to the global supporters and government officials whose encouragement and active participation strengthened this initiative, including Drs. Aparna & Vipul Mankad, Neeta & Jitendra Koticha, Rupande & Jaymal Ruparell, Kari Chan, Vikram Rathore, and well-wishers from USA, Canada, UK, and Australia. Appreciation is also warmly conveyed to Raghavjibhai Patel, Hullasba Jadeja, Digvijaysinh Jadeja, Nayana Parmar, Pradip Bhatt, Shashikant Koticha, Kirit Vassa, Meetal Koticha Shah, and Rushikesh Pandya, whose shared vision continues to ensure that philanthropy is transformed into sustainable institutions across Gujarat.



Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Project 'Life's 124th School - Smt. Kusumben Harishbhai Mehta Primary School, Village Latuda on November 29, 2025



Dedication Ceremony of Project 'Life's 118th School - Dr. Naliniben Prafullkant Vasanji Primary School, Village Vasai on January 24, 2026

A Strong Message for the Future

"When villages invest in education, they invest in the destiny of the nation." The dedication of the Dr. Naliniben Prafullkant Vasanji Primary School at Vasai reaffirms that inclusive education remains the strongest foundation for social progress. This milestone inspires communities worldwide to place education at the center of development, ensuring every child learns with dignity, grows with confidence, and contributes meaningfully to India's future.

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Exploring The Ancient Roots Of The Holi Festival

By ARCHANA ADALJA

Holi is known as a spring festival, ending winter and ushering in new years in its wake for many regions in India. It is also a festival with religious significance of the burning of Holika and saving of Prahlad by Vishnu in his Nrusinh avatar. However, Holi is best known as a festival of colors representing the love of Radha and Krishna.

Modern Holi celebrations have evolved into a conglomeration of old rituals and new traditions and cultural festivities in diverse regions of India.

But, Holi is one of the oldest Hindu festivals, with mentions in several ancient scriptures, ranging from Puranas to early Sutras and classical Sanskrit literature. The festival, which celebrates the triumph of good over evil and the arrival of spring, is described in all with its core rituals, Holika Dahan and the divine love story of Radha and Krishna.

References to Holi are found by researchers in the Atharva Veda Parishishta, the Puranas, an Upapurana, Sutras, and classic literature. All of them mention three main legends associated with the festival of Holi.

1. Prahlad and Holika - Prahlad, a devotee of Vishnu was saved by him from a fire that burned his evil aunt Holika.

2. Radha-Krishna - Their playful love with Krishna coloring Radha and the gopis, starting the tradition of playing with colors.

3. Shiva and Kamadeva - Shiva disturbed from deep meditation burned Kamadeva, the god of love, to ashes with his third eye and later revived him.

In Hindu sacred literature, the Vedas contain hymns, philosophy and rituals that form the foundation of Hindu belief and practice. Puranas, as commentaries on the Vedas, feature mythology and legends and contain stories of deities, folk tales and philosophy, according to Encyclopedia Britannica. Sutras which were written much later are like concise summaries of the core teachings.

ATHARVAVEDA (PARISHISHTA): Holi is mentioned in the addendums of Atharvaveda. The reference is to Holaka () or Holi as it later came to be known, being observed on the full-moon night of the Phalguna month, signifying the burning of evil and the arrival of spring.

The Atharvaveda Parishishta mentions Holaka (18.12.1), indicating it was a recognized, potentially royal, festival in ancient times, involving the burning of wood or cow dung, often referred to as the "evening of bonfires". The festival is also linked to the fertility of the earth and the celebration of love, often associated with Kama, the god of desire.

NARADA PURANA: Narada Purana is one



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Radha and Krishna play holi.
Kishangarh style. 1750s.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Nihal Chand (atr)

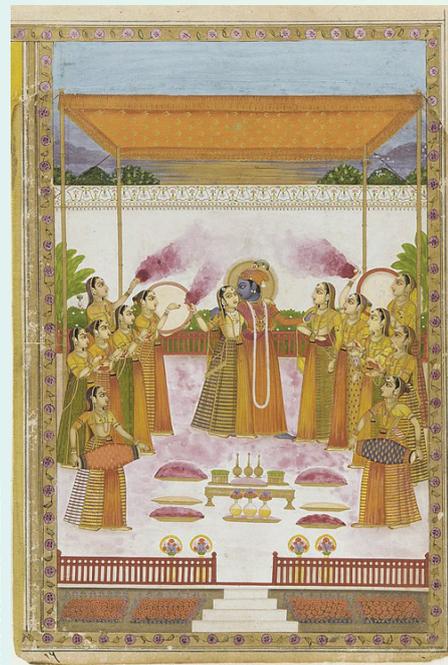


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Radha and Krishna play Holi.

of the ancient scriptures that describes the demon king Hiranyakashipu asking his sister Holika to sit in the fire with his son Prahlad in her lap because Prahlad worshipped Vishnu. Holika burned in the fire although she had a boon of immunity from fire while it did not harm Prahlad. The text details the story of Holika Dahan symbolizing the triumph of faith and virtue over evil.

The event seems to establish the practice of lighting a bonfire on the full moon day of Holi.

BHAVISHYA PURANA: It describes the origins of Holi, linking the festival to the destruction of the ogress Dhundha, who troubled people during King Raghu's reign. In it, the sacred bonfire ritual is described as a method of purification, transformation, and a celebration of the

triumph of virtue over vice.

Researchers mention Bhavishya Purana and other texts to have validated the ancient roots of the Holi festival in the Prahlad-Holika story, with specific mention of the annihilation of Dhundha.

VISHNU PURANA: While the Vishnu Purana primarily focuses on the Prahlad-Narasimha narrative, the festival also connects with the divine love of Radha and Krishna in other scriptures.

As described here, Holi commemorates Vishnu saving his devotee Prahlad from the fire, celebrating the victory of good over evil.

BHAGVAT PURANA: The 7th Chapter contains the legend of Prahlad, Hiranyakashipu, and Holika, which forms the theological basis for Holika Dahan and the triumph of good over evil. It details how the devotee Prahlada was saved from a fire by Lord Vishnu while the demoness Holika burned.

Scholars have found reference to Radha in a specific verse describing a special gopi of Krishna. The text relates Krishna's playful color-throwing with the gopis, providing the basis for the colorful, playful aspect of the festival, often associated with the Radha-Krishna legend of playing with colors with Radha and the gopis in Vrindavan.

GARG SAMHITA: Garga Samhita is recognized as the first literary work to provide the earliest detailed romantic description of Radha and Krishna playing Holi in the Braj region. The text describes the divine couple Radha and Krishna, along with the gopis, playfully applying colors and flower pollen, marking it as a foundational text for the Holi tradition.

Canto 4, Madhurya-khanda, Chapter 12, describes Radha abandoning her jealous anger to celebrate the festival with her friends. It portrays the scene with red powders, yellow garments, singing, and laughter with descriptions in the text of Krishna wearing yellow garments, a crown like the rising sun, and engaging in the festivities with joyful intoxication.

The Garga Samhita serves as a primary source for the devotional (bhakti) tradition of Holi, focusing on the intimate, loving play between Radha, Krishna, and the gopis.

KATHAKA-GRHYA-SUTRAS: It contains some of the earliest textual references to rituals resembling Holi, highlighting its ancient roots as a spring festival, sometimes called "Holika" or "Holikotsava".

Along with the Jaminis Purvamimamsa Sutras, the Kathaka-Grhya-Sutras are cited as providing foundational descriptions of the Holi festival's practices, pre-dating the Puranic stories of Prahlad and Holika.

Both the texts describe the festival as a rite of passage for welcoming spring, associated with the burning of evil spirits, or an ogress. Also mentioned are a set of rites performed by married women

for the wellbeing of their families and to welcome the full moon Raka.

JAIMINI'S PURVA MIMAMSA SUTRAS: Jaimini's Purva Mimamsa Sutras, an ancient foundational text on Hindu rituals and philosophy, is cited as one of the early scriptures that mentions the festival of Holi, originally known as 'Holika'.

Alongside the Kathaka-Grhya-Sutras, the Purva Mimamsa Sutras are noted as holding some of the earliest textual references to the celebration of Holi, indicating its existence several centuries before the common era.

The festival as mentioned in both texts was often associated with specific, ordained rites. References are found highlighting the festival as a time for offering, a rite performed for the prosperity, well-being, and happiness of families.

RATNAVALI, A DRAMA BY KING HARSHVARDHAN: The 7th-century Sanskrit drama Ratnavali written by King Harsha contains one of the earliest, most detailed literary descriptions of the Holi festival.

The play in four acts describes the festival of colors as holikotsav. In a dialogue, the King and his court humorist (Vidushaka) describe the festive gaiety in the city of Kaushambi. The text mentions people covering each other in red powder (abeer), scattering red powder, and spraying colored water.

Ratnavali is often cited by historians alongside works like the Dashakumara-charita by Dandin as a primary source for the early, detailed depiction of the festival of colors.

MALVIKAGNIMITRAM OF KALIDASA: The renowned Sanskrit poet and playwright Kalidasa (4th-5th centuries CE) makes references in his works to spring festivals that are precursors of the modern Holi festival.

Kalidasa's drama Malavikagnimitram and poem Kumarasambhava are part of the early historical evidence indicating that the "festival of colors" existed and was celebrated during the Gupta period. These texts describe spring festivals, sometimes referred to as Madanotsav, a festival dedicated to the god of love or as Holikotsav which involved the spraying of colored water and powders.

KAM SUTRA BY VATSAYANA: The Kamasutra by Vatsyayana, composed around the 3rd or 4th century CE, mentions an ancient version of the Holi festival described as a spring festival associated with pleasure and romance, and honoring Kama, the deity of love.

The festival is depicted as a time for social gathering, romantic love, and the symbolic use of colors or powders. The celebration is sometimes referred to as Holaka, associated with the Vasantotsava (spring festival), proving that historically, the festival was heavily centered around honoring Kama, the god of love and desire.



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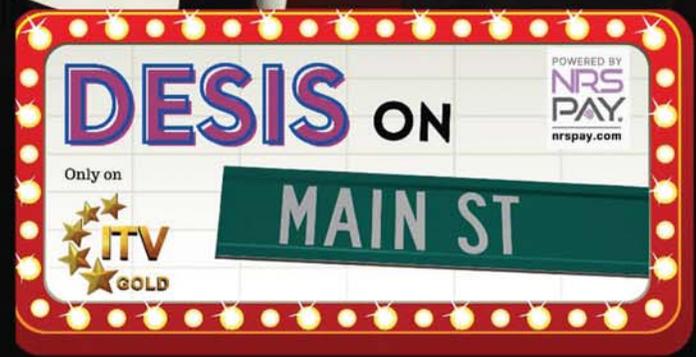
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Cultural Expressions Of Holi

BY ARCHANA ADALJA

Holi is a widely celebrated festival in India. While in some regions, emphasis is on the religious aspect, in some, it transcends the religious references with appeal to people of all ages and cultures.

Celebrations in the north are generally more intense and wild with heavy color play and traditions of folk culture, sometimes drawing on the religious legend of the rescue of Prahlad and the burning of Holika, but mostly celebrating the love of Krishna and Radha. In the south, the festival is often more muted, focused on religious and temple rites and on the legend of meditating Shiva burning Kamadev. Some Holi celebrations are rooted in folk art and culture and traditions which are also religious.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS:

The Braj region in Uttar Pradesh including Mathura, Vrindavan and Barsana is considered the cultural heart of Holi, where festivities start weeks in advance and feature unique rituals like priests showering devotees with flower petals.

Lathmar Holi at the Radha Rani Temple in Barsana has women hitting men who throw color on them with sticks to the accompaniment of singing of folk songs. Vrindavans Holi is a celebration of sixteen days with special Pooja for Radha and Krishna. Special features include the Matki Phod and Holi played with flowers at the Banke Bihari Temple.

Kumaoni Holi is celebrated for a month from Basant Panchami day. Baithaki Holi is a celebration of the classical ragas with raga Peelu, Bhimpalasi and Sarang performed in the noon and Kalyan, Shyamkalyan and Yaman in the evening. Khadi Holi features singing and dancing in traditional costumes, while Mahila Holi is a women's celebration. Festivities also include celebrating the Cheer Bandhan fifteen days before Holi.

RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS:

In West Bengal and Odisha, Holi celebrations have a deeply religious connotation, centering around tales of Krishna and Radha. Tripura, Manipur and Assam also have similar religious and cultural celebrations. Street processions of images of Krishna and Radha on a swing are an essential part of Holi celebrations in these states.

West Bengal and Odishas Dol Jatra and Dola Purnima are celebrated with street processions, color-play and traditional music and dance. Processions celebrate the love of Radha and Krishna, with a procession, color-play and music and dance. In a unique tradition in Odisha, images from other temples are taken out to visit the images of Radha and Krishna, and first mangoes of the season are offered to the deities.

Assam celebrates Holi or Phakuwa as three-to-five days of Douul Utsav (or Deul). Deeply rooted in the state's Vaishnavite tradition, Holi is celebrated at the historic Barpeta Satra, a Vaishnavite monastery, with colors and is a religious event worshipping Krishna and his wife Rukmini, featuring a street procession, devotional songs about Krishna and dance performances. A special feature is that of devotees of Maa Lakshmi blocking Krishna's return to the temple with bamboo sticks which have to be broken to enter the temple.

Tripura's two or three day Dol Jatra is a distinct celebration of Bengali traditions centering on the love of Radha and Krishna and unique indigenous rituals and color-play. Holi is also celebrated in Manipur's Krishna temple in Imphal with singing of bhajans and dance and color-play.

RELIGIOUS AND FOLK TRADITIONS:

Maharashtra retains some of its own cultural tradi-

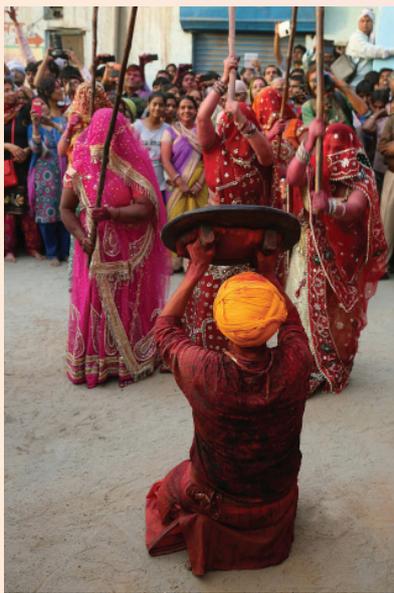


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Women playfully attack with sticks men who throw color at them. Alok Avinah @commons.wikimedia.org licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 4.0 International license.



Dola Jatra in Odisha waiting to begin. Dash Nistha @commons.wikimedia.org licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 3.0 International license.



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A public party in Delhi with a tree decorated in colored fabric. Karen Sandhu @commons.wikimedia.org licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 2.0 generic license.

tions with the breaking of a pot filled with yogurt hung high and broken by a team of young people singing "Govinda aala re aala". Bonfires are held the previous evening in societies and temples with women praying to them for safety of their children.

In Konkan region of Maharashtra, Holi, known as Shimga, is celebrated for a month, with the young collecting firewood and money for the bonfire. Traditional-



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Pooja of palkhi at Shimga Mahotsava in Dapoli, Maharashtra. Arya Joshi @commons.wikimedia.org licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 4.0 International license.

ly, Shimga is believed to end all evil, all conflicts and confrontations, forging forgiveness on the day after Holi. Color-play or Rang Panchami is celebrated five days later.

The Holi bonfire has remained a tradition Gujaratis in Gujarat have loved and indulged in. The bonfire is much revered and women and newly married couples perform a ritualistic pooja of the fire symbolic of Holika dahan and harvest. A pot filled with wheat or other grains is placed in the center of the bonfire and the cooked grains are distributed as prasad. Color-play is limited to few hours in the morning.

Holi, known as Shigmo in Goa, is a two-week to one-month long celebration. Shigmotsava marks the arrival of spring, the beginning of harvest season and the homecoming of local warriors who left their families at the end of Dussheera to fight invaders. The celebrations feature colorful street parades with legendary floats depicting scenes from Ramayana and Mahabharata. Traditional folk dances are accompanied by traditional Goan musical beats of dhol, tasha, ghumat and kasale. Dances range from the horse dance Ghodemodni and Fugdi to Dhalo and Romtamel.

Punjab celebrates Holi with Luhatak a week before Holi when people begin to play with colors and a bonfire on the day of Holi. In rural Punjab, house walls are decorated with paintings or Chowk-poorana as it is known with drawings of trees, flowers, creepers and plants, peacocks and palanquins. Celebrations include Nautanki or folk drama performances, and melas or fairs.

Holi in Haryana is famous for mock battles between family members. Devar – Bhabhi Mock-Battles feature married women (bhabhis) playfully take revenge for mischief by beating their younger brothers-in-law (devars) with rolled-up saris or sticks. However, in urban areas like Gurugram and Faridabad, modern Holi celebrations feature DJs, rain dances, and culinary bazaars.

In Bihar and Jharkhand, Holi is a two-day festival, with a bonfire, color-play, dance and music of Dholak and bhang, an intoxicating drink made with cannabis, milk and spices. There is a Holi Milan on the evening of the second day, visiting each other to apply dry color on faces.

Karnataka in Southern India celebrates Holi with a tradition based on the burning of Kamadeva or Kamadahana by Shiva. Sirsi in Karnataka celebrates a five-day Holi with folk dance and music. In some parts of Karnataka, street processions are held of images of Kamanna (Kamdeva) and Rati, his wife. In some others, huge effigies of Kamadeva are burnt. In Navalgund, Holi is also celebrated as Ramalinga Kamanna (Kamdeva) Utsava at the Ramalingeshwara Temple which is believed to grant wishes to have children.

Metropolitan cities like Delhi and Mumbai celebrate urban Holi, featuring modern music festivals and organized DJ parties alongside traditional rituals.

In Delhi, Holi is a vibrant two-day celebration that blends ancient religious rituals with massive modern festivals. Delhi celebrations are a mix of public gatherings, private parties, and cultural festivals with people of all backgrounds participating.

The first day, known as Chhoti Holi, is celebrated with bonfires. The second day is celebrated with color-play and a drink of Thandai. There are mega music festivals, modern rooftop parties and eco-friendly parties with organic colors and folk music.

Whichever way Holi is celebrated, whether in homes, public places or temples, some aspect of the religious importance is kept alive even as modern celebrations are becoming more common.

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Holi Fever Grips Jaipur Markets As Artisans Bring Tradition Alive With 'Rajwadi Gulal Gota'

With the festival of colours just around the corner, the markets of Jaipur are already abuzz with Holi festivities.

Amid the growing enthusiasm among buyers, the 'Rajwadi Gulal Gota' is being sold in abundance across the Manihar Street.

With their vibrant hues, the gulal gota appear beautiful and are used with dry colours on Holi. People often purchase them as a tradition, as well as a hobby.

Speaking about the same, Nusrat Jahan, a Gulal Gota artisan told ANI, "They are originated from the royal families and now common people play Holi with the Gulal Gota. They are very soft and don't hurt anyone while playing."

Creating these Gulal Gotas includes a methodical step-by-step process where lac shells are created by heating the lacquer used in bangles. These shells are filled with dry gulal and carefully sealed.

The entire process is done by hand. Each Gulal Gota is lightweight to avoid hurting anyone while playing Holi.

According to Jaipur artisans, only a limited number of Gulal Gota can be made in a day, so the pressure increases as demand increases before Holi.

As Holi approaches, the demand for Gulal Gota increases exponentially.



PHOTOS: ANI



Shopkeepers shared customers have already booked their orders for Gulal Gota. Due to the high demand, preparations begin about two months in advance. These

Gulal Gota are being specially packaged and shipped not only to Jaipur but to many other states across the country, and are even exported abroad.

Mohammad Sabir, an artisan shared how playing Holi with Gulal Gota have been passed on from their ancestors.

"The Gulal Gotas are nearly 280-year old and were only made for the kings and royal families. Over the past 10-15 years, they have become famous among the common people," he told ANI.

A part of the traditional Holi celebrations, they also stand as a symbol of mutual brotherhood and shared culture.

Gulal Gota created by Muslim artisans, adds color to Hindu festivals. This tradition is becoming a beautiful example of Jaipur's Ganga-Jamuni culture.

With high demands in India and abroad, a Muslim family in Jaipur has been making the 'Rajwadi Gulal Gota' for seven generations, bringing colour to Hindu festivals. The tradition also serves as a beautiful example of Jaipur's Ganga-Jamuni culture.

-ANI

Playlist: Five Songs That Set The Perfect Mood For Holi 2026

With Holi 2026 just around the corner, the festival of colors is once again calling for loud speakers, open terraces and a playlist that can instantly lift the mood. If you're stuck between too many options, here are five Bollywood songs that never fail to bring the Holi energy alive perfect for dancing, laughing and getting drenched in color.

RANG BARSE

No Holi playlist is complete without this evergreen classic. Amitabh Bachchan's playful vocals and the song's cheeky lyrics make 'Rang Barse' from the 1981 Hindi film 'Silsila' must-play year after year. Whether it's playing in the background during family gatherings or blasting during a full-on colour fight, this song instantly signals that Holi celebrations have officially begun.

BALAM PICHKARI

If you want to add youthful energy to your Holi party, this Ranbir Kapoor-Deepika Padukone hit does the job effortlessly. With its fast beats and vibrant visuals, "Balam Pichkari" is ideal for group dances and late-morning madness. It's the kind of song that gets everyone, even the shy ones, onto the dance floor.

HOLI KE DIN

There's something timeless about celebrating Holi with "Holi Ke Din" from the 1975 blockbuster 'Sholay'. This classic brings nostalgia,



PHOTO: SOURCE: YOUTUBE/@VRF

Rang Barse

warmth and joy all in one. It works beautifully when you want to slow things down a bit, sing along with family, or simply enjoy the festival's old-school charm while sipping thandai.

DO ME A FAVOUR LET'S PLAY HOLI

Loud, energetic and unapologetically festive, this song is perfect when the celebration



PHOTO: SOURCE: YOUTUBE/SERIES

Balam Pichkari



PHOTO: SOURCE: YOUTUBE

Holi Ke Din

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

EARLY VOTING FOR THE MARCH 17, 2026 PRIMARY ELECTION

VOTACIÓN TEMPRANA PARA LA ELECCIÓN PRIMARIA DEL 17 DE MARZO DE 2026 2026年3月17日初選的提前投票

17 मार्च, 2026 प्राथमिक चुनाव के लिए प्रारम्भिक मतदान



2026 Early Voting Sites and Hours



March 2 through March 17

Weekdays:	9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Saturday:	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday:	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Election Day:	6:00 am - 7:00 pm (March 17)

2026 lugares y horarios de Votación Temprana
2 de marzo al 17 de marzo
 Días laborables: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
 Sábado: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
 Domingo: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
 Día de Elección: 6:00 am – 7:00 pm (17 de marzo)

2026 年提前投票地點及時間
 3月2日至3月17日
 星期一至星期五：上午 9:00 時至下午 6:00 時
 星期六：上午 9:00 時至下午 5:00 時
 星期日：上午 10:00 時至下午 4:00 時
 選舉日：上午 6:00 時至下午 7:00 時 (3月17日)

2026 के प्रारम्भिक मतदान के लिए स्थल और समय
2 मार्च से 17 मार्च तक
 सोमवार से शुक्रवार: सुबह 9:00 बजे से - शाम 6:00 बजे तक
 शनिवार: सुबह 9:00 बजे से - शाम 5:00 बजे तक
 रविवार: सुबह 10:00 बजे से - शाम 4:00 बजे तक
 चुनाव के दिन: सुबह 6:00 बजे से - शाम 7:00 बजे तक (17 मार्च)

Voter registration services (new voters, name changes and address updates) will be provided at all Early Voting sites.
 Los servicios de registro de votantes (nuevos votantes, cambios de nombre y actualizaciones de dirección) se proporcionarán en los lugares de Votación Temprana.
 所有提前投票地點將會提供選民登記服務 (新選民、更改姓名及更新地址)。
 सभी प्रारम्भिक मतदान स्थलों पर मतदान पंजीकरण (नए मतदाता, नाम या पते में परिवर्तन) जैसी सेवाएं, प्रदान की जाएंगी।

Ward Distrito 區 वाई	Location Lugar 地點 स्थान	Address Dirección 地址 पता
1	Goldblatts Building	1615 W. Chicago Ave.
2	Near North Library	310 W. Division St.
3	Dawson Technical Institute	3901 S. State St.
4	Dr. Martin Luther King Center	4314 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
5	Southside YMCA	6330 S. Stony Island Ave.
6	Whitney Young Library	415 E. 79th St.
7	Trumbull Park	2400 E. 105th St.
8	Olive Harvey College	10001 S. Woodlawn Ave.
9	Palmer Park	201 E. 111th St.
10	Vodak- East Side Library	3710 E. 106th St.
11	McGuane Park	2901 S. Poplar Ave.
12	McKinley Park Library	1915 W. 35th St.
13	Clearing Library	6423 W. 63rd Pl.
14	Archer Heights Library	5055 S. Archer Ave.
15	Brighton Park Community Campus (Park No. 596)	4830 S. Western Ave.
16	Lindblom Park	6054 S. Damen Ave.
17	Thurgood Marshall Library	7506 S. Racine Ave.
18	Wrightwood Ashburn Library	8530 S. Kedzie Ave.
19	Mt Greenwood Park	3721 W. 111th St.
20	Bessie Coleman Library	731 E. 63rd St.
21	West Pullman Library	830 W. 119th St.
22	Toman Library	2708 S. Pulaski Rd.
23	Hall-St Faustina Kowalska Parish	5157 S. McVicker Ave.
24	St Agatha Catholic Parish	3151 W. Douglas Bv.
25	Rudy Lozano Library	1805 S. Loomis St.
26	Humboldt Park Library	1605 N. Troy St.
27	Union Park	1501 W. Randolph St.
28	Malcom X College – West Campus	4624 W. Madison St.
29	Amundsen Park	6200 W. Bloomingdale Ave.
30	Kilbourn Park	3501 N. Kilbourn Ave.

Ward Distrito 區 वाई	Location Lugar 地點 स्थान	Address Dirección 地址 पता
31	Portage Cragin Library	5108 W. Belmont Ave.
32	Bucktown-Wicker Park Library	1701 N. Milwaukee Ave.
33	American Indian Center	3401 W. Ainslie St.
34	UIC Student Center	750 S. Halsted St.
35	Northeastern IL University El Centro	3390 N. Avondale Ave.
36	West Belmont Library	3104 N. Narragansett Ave.
37	West Chicago Library	4856 W. Chicago Ave.
38	Hiawatha Park	8029 W. Forest Preserve Dr.
39	North Park Village Admin Bldg	5801 N. Pulaski Rd.
40	Budlong Woods Library	5630 N. Lincoln Ave.
41	Roden Library	6083 N. Northwest Hw.
42	Historic Lawson House	803 N. Dearborn St.
43	Lincoln Park Library	1150 W. Fullerton Ave.
44	Advocate IL Masonic MD Center	814 W. Nelson St.
45	Kolping Society of Chicago	5826 N. Elston Ave.
46	Truman College	1145 W. Wilson Ave.
47	Welles Park	2333 W. Sunnyside Ave.
48	Broadway Armory	5917 N. Broadway St.
49	Willye B White Park	1610 W. Howard St.
50	Northtown Library	6800 N. Western Ave.
51 *	Chicago Board of Elections	69 W. Washington, 6th Flr.
52 *	NEW Supersite	State & Adams – 137 S. State St.

**Subject to extended/different hours, go to chicagoelections.gov.*

These university sites for Early Voting will be open
March 11 through March 13 - 10:00am to 5:00pm
 Estos sedes universitarias para la Votacion Temprana estarán abiertas del 11 de marzo al 13 de marzo - 10:00am a 5:00pm
 這些位於大學校園的提前投票站於3月11日至3月13日 - 上午 10 時至下午 5 時開放
 प्रारम्भिक मतदान के लिए विश्वविद्यालय के ये स्थल 11 मार्च से 13 मार्च तक सुबह 10:00 बजे से शाम 5:00 बजे तक खुले रहेंगे।

Chicago State University	9501 S. King Dr.
Northeastern Illinois University	5500 N. St. Louis Ave.
University Of Chicago - Reynolds Club	5706 S. University Ave.

Holi-Special Drinks For Your House Party



Thandai



Aam Panna drink



Coconut and Pineapple Cooler



Masala Chhas

In recent years, Holi celebrations have become quite intimate, family-focused gatherings rather than large outdoor bashes. When hosting your friends and family for a homely Holi party, a special drink menu can elevate it further, blending tradition with refreshing twists. Here are five drinks that will add flavour to your celebrations.

THANDAI

Holi celebrations are incomplete with this classic Holi favourite. A traditional North Indian drink, it is made with milk, nuts, saffron and aromatic spices. For adults, you can also prepare an infused version, making it suitable for everyone.

ROSE AND CARDAMOM LASSI

Creamy in texture and with a coolant effect, lassi is a crowd-please. The addition of rose and cardamom will bring a festive pink hue, perfectly synching with the festival's vibrant theme. You can serve the drink with



Rose and Cardamom Lassi

savouries like gujiya and kachori.

AAM PANNA DRINK

If you're celebrating Holi during the warm afternoons, aam panna is a must-have. It is made with raw mango pulp, mint and roasted cumin, which offers a perfect mix of tangy flavour and hydration.

COCONUT AND PINEAPPLE COOLER

A coconut and pineapple cooler will add freshness and flair. The drink blends coconut water with pineapple juice and a splash of lime. You can serve it chilled with mint leaves.

MASALA CHHAS

A glass of spiced buttermilk is light, digestive, and comforting. It will help soothe the stomach after indulging into heavy festive treats.

-ANI

Playlist: Five Songs That Set The Perfect Mood For Holi 2026



Do Me A Favour Let's Play Holi



Badri Ki Dulhania

-CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

peaks. Akshay Kumar and Priyanka Chopra's high-energy number from their 2005 film 'Waqt' is all about throwing inhibitions out the win-

dow. It's best saved for the moment when everyone is already covered in colour and ready to go all out.

BADRI KI DULHANIA

For a modern Holi vibe with desi roots, this Varun

Dhawan-Alia Bhatt track is a crowd favourite. Its dhol-heavy beats and catchy hook make it ideal for outdoor celebrations and dance circles. It's fun, loud and instantly festive, exactly what a Holi playlist needs.

-ANI

Asian American Coalition Of Chicago Hosts 43rd Annual Lunar New Year Celebration

By A Staff Writer

The Asian American Coalition of Chicago marked its 43rd Annual Lunar New Year Celebration on Feb. 28, 2026, drawing more than 1,000 guests to the Marriott Marquis Chicago for what is recognized as the state's largest Lunar New Year event.

Attendees included community leaders, business executives, elected officials, judges, artists and members of Chicago's diverse Asian American communities. The evening featured a VIP reception, Political Candidates Forum, networking opportunities, cultural performances, traditional lion dances, honor awards and dinner.

Former Chicago broadcaster Nancy Loo and NBC correspondent Brian Cheung served as emcees.

The annual celebration highlights more than four decades of AACC's work honoring leadership, service and cultural excellence across the region's Asian American communities. Each year, one of AACC's 10 member communities hosts the event. In 2026, Chicago's Chinese community led the celebration, welcoming the Year of the Horse, which symbolizes strength, resilience and momentum.

The Punjabi Cultural Society of Chicago, a longtime participant in AACC events, has supported the celebration for four decades and previously hosted it in 2020.



PHOTO: ORGANIZERS

Leaders and honorees gather on stage during the Asian American Coalition of Chicago 43rd Annual Lunar New Year Celebration on Feb. 28, 2026, at the Marriott Marquis Chicago, recognized as Illinois' largest Lunar New Year event.

Apinder Singh, also known as Vic Singh, a certified Illinois assessing officer and permanent board of review member for Lake County, received the Indian Exemplary Community Service Award for his integrity, leadership and decades of public service. Singh is a past president and current board of governors member of the Punjabi Cultural Society of Chicago.

Ten individuals, one from each member community, were recognized as Exemplary Community Service Award recipients for their lifelong dedication and impact on the Asian American commu-

nity. The Youth Who Excel Awards honored emerging leaders, including Ava Kaur Silverstein, recipient of the 2026 Indian Community Youth Who Excel Award.

The program began at 4:30 p.m. with a VIP reception and candidate forum, followed by dinner and live entertainment. Guests enjoyed cultural performances and a featured appearance by internationally acclaimed magician Shin Lim, winner of America's Got Talent.

Speakers included U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs and Chicago Mayor Bran-

don Johnson, who congratulated Asian American communities for their contributions to the city and state.

Deputy Consul General of India in Chicago Kriti Das Thokchom represented the Indian Consulate.

This year's theme, "Asian + American," commemorated the 250th anniversary of the United States and celebrated the contributions of Asian Americans to the nation's history and future.

The evening included the presentation of AACC's highest honors. The Pan Asian American Ping Tom Memorial Award was presented to Dr. Manjeet Singh Chawla for his career in medicine and philanthropy. The Grand Asian American Sandra Otaka Memorial Award was given to the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights for its leadership in advancing immigrant and refugee rights across Illinois.

The event was organized by co-chairs Anne Shaw and Dr. Karen Eng, along with board members Darryl Tom and Grace McKibben, and supported by dozens of volunteers, performers, technicians and sponsors.

As Illinois' oldest and largest pan-Asian American organization, the Asian American Coalition of Chicago said it remains committed to fostering unity, celebrating diversity and strengthening connections among Chicago's Asian American communities.



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Important Illinois Paper Gives Ringing Endorsement To Rep. Krishnamoorthi's Run For Us Senate Primary

BY A STAFF WRITER

The Daily Herald, one of the significant media outlets in Illinois, endorsed Indian American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi for the US Senate, in his bid for the Democratic Party's support in the March 17, 2026 primaries.

The March 1 endorsement follows Herald's Editorial Board's meetings with all candidates in the heated race to fill the seat being vacated by veteran Senator Dick Durbin.

"An interesting pool of candidates has formed in the wake of Dick Durbin's decision to resign from the U.S. Senate. All have qualities to recommend them, but one stands out for commitment, energy, integrity and leadership. We recommend Raja Krishnamoorthi," the paper's Editorial Board said.

Referring to one of Krishnamoorthi's Democratic rivals Juliana Stratton, the paper said, "Among the final three, we are impressed by Stratton's strident articulation of issues, but question whether an incomplete term in the Illinois House and two terms as lieutenant governor truly prepare her for a role in the Senate."

The Board went on to say, "Krishnamoorthi, on the other hand, checks all the boxes for us for this nomination," "As a congressman, he has earned a reputation for hard work and creative legislating. He is outspoken on matters ranging from Israeli excesses in the Mideast war to compassion for immigrants and a sound, fair national health policy. And on top of all this, he is recognized as one of the most bi-partisan representatives in Congress."

Reaching nearly 90 local communities across suburban Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, and McHenry counties, the Daily Herald is one of the influential news organizations in Illinois.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY RAJAFORIL.COM



Illinois paper the Daily Herald's endorsement.

"The endorsement underscores Raja's unstoppable momentum and broad support across the suburban communities that will play a decisive role in this election," Krishnamoorthi's campaign said in a press release.

His campaign has to-date received support from some labor groups, local leaders, members of Congress, industry voices, and grassroots advocates.

"With 14 labor unions and counting, including AFGE and Teamsters Joint Council 25, dozens of mayors from every corner of the state, more than 100 downstate leaders, and hundreds of community advocates and elected officials, Raja has built one of the broadest coalitions in Illinois politics," his campaign claims.

His support also includes 32 current and former members of the U.S. House of Representatives — among them Ami Bera, Joaquin Castro, and Marcy Kaptur — alongside

a statewide coalition of 30+ Illinois industry leaders. National organizations like Defend the Vote and Healthcare for Action have also lined up behind Krishnamoorthi.



Rep. Krishnamoorthi at a rally.

a statewide coalition of 30+ Illinois industry leaders. National organizations like Defend the Vote and Healthcare for Action have also lined up behind Krishnamoorthi.

Community In Grief As Pioneer Leaves Behind Enduring Legacy

BY A STAFF WRITER

The community is mourning the loss of Ashraf Ali, a respected leader, entrepreneur and longtime advocate, who passed away Sunday morning, Jan. 25, 2026. He leaves behind a legacy of service, innovation and dedication that shaped institutions and touched countless lives across the Chicago area.

Ali served as President of the Development Corporation of America, based in Des Plaines. The company operates primarily in the real estate sector, specializing in subdivision and development projects. An engineer by training, Ali was also part of the team at the internationally renowned architectural firm Skidmore that helped construct the iconic Sears Tower — now known as Willis Tower. Over the course of his career, he contributed his expertise to numerous architectural projects throughout Chicago.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ali devoted more than three decades to serving the Asian community through nonprofit work. He was the longest-serving member of the Board of Directors at AHS Family Health Center and made history as the organization's first Board Chairperson when it became a Federally Qualified Health Center in the early 2000s. He also served as Board Treasurer.

Ali's background in construction and development proved instrumental in the health center's growth. His leadership helped guide the expansion of AHS Family Health Center to four locations, and he played a key role in completing its headquarters at 6301 N. Western Ave.

News of his passing has prompted an outpouring of condolences from colleagues and community members.

"Mr. Ashraf Ali, a long-term Board Director and the first AHS Family Health Center Board Chair, influenced



Ashraf Ali

every strategic decision and growth of our organization for more than two decades with his unmatched enthusiasm," said Dr. Muhammad Paracha, CEO of AHS Family Health Center. "He served the Asian community well and will be remembered for all the impactful work he has done for the Asian and Bangladeshi communities."

James Luciano, current Board Chair of AHS Family

Health Center, said, "Mr. Ali's contributions were very impactful and too many to count. He has truly made each one of us better, and now it's our responsibility to carry on with that passion and integrity."

Dr. Larry Williams, Board Vice Chair, described Ali as "a great person and mentor" who "will be missed."

Board Treasurer Mahmood Khan added, "Mr. Ali was an integral part of our community, and his presence will be deeply missed. He treated everyone with respect. My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time."

Dr. Ayesha Hussain, Chief Medical Officer, noted that Ali was involved with AHS Family Health Center from its inception. "His dedication and unwavering commitment to serving underserved communities was exceptional. His passing represents a significant loss to our organization and to the communities we serve."

Dr. Lisa Beaudette-Nguyen, Chief Dental Officer, called him "a strong supporter of our clinic," adding that the organization "will always be grateful for his impact on our health center and community."

Paul Nagpal, Chief Financial Officer, described Ali as "an inspirational leader" whose legacy should be celebrated.

Members of the AHS Family Health Center Board and staff expressed their sorrow, including board members Fe Cabrera, Mariam Hassan, Elsadig Elmehdi, Marivic Guitierrez, Anabelle Cortes and Dr. Rohitkumar Vasa, along with staff members Khalid Sabzwari, Emina Celik, Mosharraf Khandaker, Ranjana Khan and former board member Abha Pandya.

Ali is survived by his wife, son, daughter and grandchildren. Family members said they will cherish his memory and continue to celebrate the legacy of a man whose vision and service strengthened both his profession and his community.

ASTROLOGY



This week for you

E-mail: psharma@premaastrologer.com Contact No - 01147033152/40532026

ARIES: Property-related updates may work in your favour this week. Hosting or planning a celebration keeps you joyfully busy. Co-workers turn to you for guidance on professional challenges. Loved ones ensure your comfort through thoughtful gestures. A strong, self-reliant attitude may test romantic harmony. Discipline and determination support overall well-being.

TAURUS: A wave of positivity keeps you motivated throughout the week. Career matters benefit from consolidation and careful planning. Time spent with close ones feels relaxing and cheerful. Higher authorities expect quicker responses from you. Emotional matters may feel slightly unsettled. Staying alert about health habits proves beneficial.

GEMINI: Excitement rises with the thought of travel or leisure plans. Family bonds grow stronger through unconditional affection. Love sparks easily through communication. Workplace opportunities appear but may be overlooked due to minor distractions. Studies demand better focus to avoid setbacks. Financial thoughts turn toward improving an old property.

CANCER: Balanced food choices help maintain stamina. Elder advice becomes valuable in protecting a sensitive relationship. Work expenses remain under observation, so transparency matters. Careless handling of office matters can create complications. Routine domestic duties may feel dull. Freelancers attract rewarding professional offers.

LEO: A pleasant surprise from an admirer lift spirit. Academic chances open up for deserving individuals. Patience plays a vital role before a major breakthrough. Strong finances support desired purchases. Travel plans promise excitement. Family cooperation reduces domestic pressure.

VIRGO: Family interactions bring warmth and shared memories. Neglecting health warnings may cause trouble. Professional abilities earn recognition. Complex assignments are handled smoothly. Unex-

pected romantic encounters add happiness. Financial prospects look promising for investments.

LIBRA: Thoughts of marriage or commitment gain clarity. Office issues may be resolved faster than expected. Social conflicts are handled gracefully. Monetary comfort encourages indulgence. Privacy regarding plans protects your interests. New friendships feel easy and natural.

SCORPIO: Initiating tasks may feel challenging initially. Team coordination improves through mutual understanding. Social influence grows as you attract support. Romance needs creativity to restore excitement. Expressing emotions openly improves bonds.

SAGITTARIUS: Assistance from a colleague lightens workload. Investment returns boost confidence. Academic progress remains steady. A business journey brings profitable outcomes. Family celebrates your success. Recreational travel refreshes the mind. Love brings emotional satisfaction.

CAPRICORN: Educational matters demand attention. Seniors appear encouraging at work. Energy levels rise as productivity improves. Financial advice offers new perspectives. Attractive deals on luxury goods are possible. Romantic bonding strengthens through shared time.

AQUARIUS: Focused students achieve commendable results. Promotion prospects look hopeful. Wise investments support financial recovery. Parental guidance offers clarity. Friends stand firmly by your side. Digestive care becomes necessary. Homemakers may feel tired due to continuous domestic changes.

PISCES: Work goals face delays due to sudden challenges. Financial mood remains slightly low. Travel-related health issues need caution. Love seekers must stay persistent. Emotional bonds deepen with quality time. Weekend plans outside town bring relief.

National Retail Solutions Partners With El Especialito on 'Where's Paco?' Contest With \$1,000 Prize



By A Staff Writer

NEWARK, N.J. — National Retail Solutions has partnered with El Especialito to launch the "Where's Paco?" ("¿Dónde Está Paco?") community print contest, an interactive initiative aimed at celebrating local journalism, encouraging family engagement and rewarding readers with a \$1,000 grand prize.

The contest invites readers to explore the physical newspaper each week to find Paco the Puma, the official mascot of National Retail Solutions. To participate, readers must locate the hidden illustration of Paco inside the printed weekly edition of El Especialito, take a clear photograph of the full newspaper page where the character appears and upload the photo through the official contest page. Participants who successfully find Paco in at least four separate weekly editions and submit qualifying entries will be entered into a random drawing for the \$1,000 prize.

weekly editions from Feb. 20 through April 10. The final deadline for submissions is April 15 at 12 a.m. EST.

National Retail Solutions said sponsoring the \$1,000 prize expands the reach of an initiative designed to connect families, support small businesses and strengthen local neighborhoods.

"El Especialito has always believed that our role goes beyond publishing entertainment and news," said Anthony Ibarria, general manager of El Especialito. "Where's Paco?" gives our readers a reason to interact with the paper in a hands-on way each week. With NRS's continued partnership, we are able to create something that is fun, engaging and meaningful for our community."

National Retail Solutions, a subsidiary of IDT Corporation, operates a point-of-sale system and NRS Pay payment processing services for thousands of independent retailers across the United States and Canada. The company provides store management and checkout systems for small and midsize businesses.

El Especialito, described as the largest Spanish-language weekly newspaper in the United States, provides news, entertainment and community coverage for Hispanic neighborhoods nationwide.

Paco the Puma serves as the official mascot of National Retail Solutions, symbolizing the strength and resilience of independent bodega owners and their communities.

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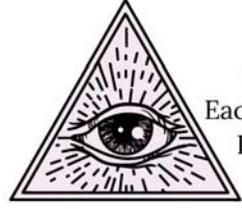
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US Assistant AG Dhillon Claims H-1B Visas Taking Away American Jobs; Wants To “Root Out” Problem

BY A STAFF WRITER

Indian American Harmeet Dhillon, the US Assistant Attorney General is claiming that H-1B visas of which Indian high-skilled immigrants are the greatest beneficiaries, are taking away American jobs.

In an X post video, Dhillon, said it was ‘deeply problematic’ that federal funding flows to institutions that disproportionately hire H-1B visa workers over American workers.

Dhillon, who heads the Civil Rights Division, asserted, “@TheJusticeDept will continue to root out this problem and protect the employment @CivilRights of Americans!”

In the interview posted along with some statements, Dhillon said, “The idea that we’re allowing our federal funding to go to institutions that disproportionately hire H-1 B visa and other legal Visa categories when there are Americans who can fill



Asst. AG Harmeet Dhillon speaking in a video posted on X @AAGDhillon Feb. 25, 2026.

those jobs is also problematic.”

She went on to say, “I’m an immigrant, and, you know, I’m grateful that my family was able to come to the country. My dad was a doctor and provided medical services to rural areas for most of his career. and that’s an important role because frankly, American medical schools are not pumping out enough doctors to serve all of our institutions. So why aren’t they?” she questioned.

“We should be solving that problem so that the foreign medical graduates, the foreign engineer, the foreign CEO is an exception and not a significant swathe of the populace,” she said. that needs to be solved by society and the demand needs to be changed, she opined.

“We can do certain things at the DOJ, and we can inflict pain on institutions that are completely violating federal law,” Dhillon conceded, “ but there are so many more pieces to this puzzle that need to be solved outside the Department of Justice.”

Royal Inn Owner Of Indian Origin Sentenced

BY A STAFF WRITER

A California woman, Varsha Patel, 57, of Chino Hills, owner of a motel, was sentenced on Feb. 4, 2026, by U.S. District Judge Susan M. Brnovich to five years of probation, forfeiture of the Royal Inn motel, forfeiture of \$744,000, and a \$5,000 fine.

Patel previously pleaded guilty to “Using a Facility of Interstate Commerce in Aid of Racketeering Enterprises,” a February 17, press release from the U.S. Attorney Timothy Courchaine’s Office, District of Arizona, said, noting that the motel was “known for serving as a hub for prostitution and drug activities.”

“When federal and local law enforcement team up it’s a force multiplier. In this case, the Phoenix Police Department, FBI and U.S. Marshals joined forces to shut down the Royal Inn, making an immediate and significant impact on public safety,” Courchaine said.

“This sentencing is the culmination of several years



of hard work by both the FBI and the Phoenix Police Department. The defendant knowingly and willingly operated the Royal Inn to facilitate the sexual exploitation of people and the sale of drugs,” said FBI Phoenix Special Agent in Charge, Heith Janke.

“Our partnerships with federal agencies are critical in dismantling organizations that allow criminal behavior to affect the quality of life of our community members,” said Phoenix Police Chief Matt Giordano.

A search warrant was executed in September 2024 at the Royal Inn, located at 2510 W. Palo Verde Drive in Phoenix, Arizona, following an extensive investigation by the Phoenix Police Department and the FBI.

“The high volume of criminal activity at the Royal Inn was well known in the community where residents, business owners, and two schools, witnessed around-the-clock prostitution and drug dealing,” the press release said.

Following the execution of a search and seizure warrant, the U.S. Marshals Service shuttered and fenced off the premises.

The Phoenix Police Department, FBI Phoenix, and the U.S. Marshals Service conducted the investigation. The U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of Arizona, Phoenix, handled the prosecution.

Businessman Gupta Refused Permission To Appeal In Trafigura Nickel Fraud Lawsuit

Indian businessman Prateek Gupta was refused permission by London’s High Court on Thursday to appeal against a ruling that he defrauded commodities trader Trafigura over fake nickel cargoes.

Geneva-based Trafigura alleged Gupta was the mastermind of a fraudulent “Ponzi scheme” in which he and his companies agreed to provide high-quality 99.8% pure nickel but delivered low-value or even worthless materials instead.

Gupta accepted he did not deliver high-grade nickel cargoes but says Trafigura staff devised the scheme, something Trafigura’s former head nickel trader Sokratis Oikonomou denied.

Judge Pushpinder Saini ruled last month that Trafigura was induced to enter into contracts “by false and fraudulent representations” made by Gupta and his companies.

The judge also said Trafigura’s former employees, including Oikonomou, were “wholly innocent of any wrongdoing”.

Gupta sought permission to appeal that ruling and was refused, but can still apply directly to the Court of Appeal.

Trafigura’s lawyer Nathan Pillow said at Thursday’s brief hearing that Trafigura was owed around \$640 million in total, including \$140 million in interest.

Gupta is subject to a worldwide freezing order over his assets and agreed to limit his living expenses under that

order to 5,000 pounds (\$6,763.50) a month, from 20,000 pounds a month.

Last year’s trial, which concluded in December, was the culmination of events that began in November 2022, when Trafigura first received complaints about cargoes it had sold.

The discovery prompted Trafigura to carry out further inspections, book a \$590 million charge and then sue Gupta and his companies in February 2023 for what it then described as “systematic fraud”.

-REUTERS

I'm A Doctor. Here's What Opened My Mind About The Future Of Medical Care

By ASHISH K. JHA

As a researcher, public health professional and practicing physician, I've been watching the rise of artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT with both cautious optimism and healthy skepticism.

The public is rightly wary about this new technology in health care. Its misuse can have serious consequences for patients, for example, by inappropriately denying care, hallucinating incorrect information or overlooking pertinent patient information. Clear guardrails and direct patient contact with medical professionals is crucial.

Still, for time-pressed doctors, a tool that both confirms judgments and broadens diagnostic thinking can be invaluable. When used properly, it can help combat the tunnel vision that often takes hold in busy clinics and hospitals.

Much of the promise of AI in medicine is its ability to free doctors from paperwork, reduce mistakes and allow for more time with patients. All great benefits. But I wondered, could it actually help me be a better doctor? I decided to find out.

During hospital rounds at the hospital where I work, I ran a small experiment. After each patient encounter, I entered a brief, de-identified summary into ChatGPT that included age, symptoms, labs and treatment plan. No names. No personal information. Then I asked: What else should I be considering?

I expected ChatGPT to echo what I already knew about potential diagnoses and care options. Instead, it pushed me to think more broadly about what approaches to take. (The Post has a content partnership with OpenAI, the creator of ChatGPT.)

Take an elderly man with osteomyelitis, a serious bone infection in his foot. Bloodwork showed a staph infec-

tion, so our care team's plan was to prescribe antibiotics and surgically remove the infected bone. Straightforward enough. But ChatGPT suggested an echocardiogram, an ultrasound of the patient's heart. It cited recommendations from the Infectious Diseases Society of America outlining how sometimes staph infections can also infect the heart valves, a complication with serious consequences.

We ordered the test. Thankfully, the heart valves were clear. We may have ordered it eventually on our own, but on a busy day, it could easily have been missed or delayed. That prompt underscored the potential of AI to ensure critical interventions aren't overlooked. Of course, AI can also hallucinate or suggest the wrong test, which is why judgment remains essential.

Another example involved a patient with a common drug rash. The hospital pharmacy didn't carry the treatment I usually prescribe, only an alternative I had never used. In less than a minute, ChatGPT produced a side-by-side comparison, including studies and outcomes, allowing me to prescribe with confidence.

Other times it resolved debates in real time. One patient's blood test raised the question of whether his respiratory acidosis, a condition where the lungs are not adequately able to clear carbon dioxide, was acute or chronic. In this patient, the evidence wasn't clear. ChatGPT laid out the physiology step by step, giving us a common framework and reference to think from. The team reached consensus and avoided a clinical misstep in diagnoses.

ChatGPT even changed how I teach. When an intern and I disagreed on the definition of unstable angina - a type of chest pain caused by reduced blood flow to the heart - we asked ChatGPT together. It pulled from reliable sources, laying out the definition from the American College of Cardiology and the European Society of Cardiology. What could have been a top-down correction became an active learning moment.

These experiences convinced me that future clinicians should be training on how to use AI effectively, including what information to enter, how to frame questions and how to filter outputs. My medical experience helps me know which questions to ask, which answers to trust and which suggestions to dismiss. We need to ensure that other clinicians - not just doctors but also nurses, pharmacists and community health workers who already carry so much of the clinical load - can do the same with AI tools.

As these tools improve, they must be made trustworthy, safe and responsive to human needs. Privacy and security are paramount. "Hallucinations" - confident but wrong answers - can occur, and AI companies must do more to reduce them. Physicians, too, can take specific steps to minimize errors. My primary strategy is to ask ChatGPT for references for each of its recommendations. For any information that is consequential to my decision, I then look at the original source. This can be a bit tedious, but it dramatically reduces the likelihood of an AI-enabled error.

Some people argue that ChatGPT will eventually replace physicians altogether. At some point in the future, maybe that will be true. But right now, what I know is ChatGPT did not replace my training or judgment. It undoubtedly enhanced both.



PHOTO: TIM WASHINGTON POST

Ashish K. Jha, the former dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, was White House COVID-19 response coordinator from 2022 to 2023..

-SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Cancer Risk Is Lower For Vegetarians But Not Vegans, Study Finds

By ASHLEIGH FURLONG

Vegetarian diets are linked with a lower risk of several cancers including pancreatic, breast and prostate, according to a study that found no similar benefit - and even a higher chance of colon cancer - among vegans.

Researchers found people on vegetarian diets had a lower risk of five cancers compared with their meat-eating counterparts - though vegetarians had nearly double the risk of a cancer in the esophagus called squamous cell carcinoma. The pioneering study, published Friday in the British Journal of Cancer, looked at pooled data from more than 1.8 million people across three continents.

The findings come at a time of renewed focus on diet after President Donald Trump's administration updated US nutrition guidelines with an emphasis on animal-based protein. Concerns around the impact of ultra-processed foods - which the study did not look at - are also growing in the US and globally.

Though the study didn't probe the cause of a higher or lower risk of certain cancers, researchers hypothesized that diets higher in fruit, vegetables, fiber and without processed meat could lower risks. The lack of meat is likely to be the reason for the different risk, according to Tim Key, emeritus professor of epidemiology at Oxford Population Health and co-investigator of the study.



PHOTO: ANGEL GARCIA/BLOOMBERG

Vegetarians in the study had lower risk of cancers including pancreatic, breast and prostate.

Perhaps the biggest surprise was the finding for vegans. Red meat intake has long been associated with bowel cancer, yet vegans - who eat no meat or dairy - had a higher risk of this cancer in the study.

That may have been because many of the meat eaters in the study only ate moderate amounts of processed meat, according to the researchers. There were also relatively few overall cases of colon cancer among the vegans.

Still, the researchers said dairy might hold the key. "We are postulating that it could be because vegans have no dairy intake," said Yashvee Dunneram, first author of the study. "Their calcium intake are really low in this consor-

tium."

The reduction in key vitamins and minerals might also be in play when it comes to the significantly higher risk among vegetarians of squamous cell carcinoma. "It may be related with a low intake of riboflavin," said Aurora Perez Cornago, principal investigator of the study, while stressing that this was just a hypothesis. Riboflavin, also known as vitamin B2, is found in foods such as beef liver, eggs, fortified cereals, and milk.

Vegetarians in the study did have a lower risk of pancreatic, breast, prostate, kidney and multiple myeloma. One possible factor is weight. The vegetarians in the study had a lower body mass index, and while the researchers adjusted for this in the results, they hypothesized that this weight difference could still be behind the lower risk of breast cancer, for example.

People on pescatarian diets, meaning they eat seafood and dairy but don't eat meat, also showed a lower risk of colon, breast and kidney cancer in the study.

One thing missing from the study was a comparison to a diet based on guidelines from the UK's National Health Service, where meat and fish are consumed but only in moderation.

That provides important nutrients and may be the optimum diet for reducing the risk of diet-associated cancer, according to Jules Griffin, director of the Rowett Institute at the University of Aberdeen, who wasn't involved in the study.

-BLOOMBERG

USCIS Proposes Major Changes to the H-1B Registration Selection Process for FY 2027

By David H. Nachman, Esq

IN MEMORIAM



Michael Phulwani



David Nachman



Ludka Zimovcak



Snehal Batra

USCIS has announced proposed revisions to the H-1B cap registration system that could significantly change how beneficiaries are selected for FY 2027.

If implemented, the changes would move the H-1B lottery away from a purely random selection model and toward a weighted system tied to wage levels.

For employers, this represents a meaningful shift in strategy and planning.

What Is Changing?

Under the proposal, USCIS would continue requiring electronic registrations during the designated registration period. However, when the number of registrations exceeds the annual cap, selection would no longer be fully random.

Instead, USCIS would:

1. Assign each unique beneficiary to the lowest applicable OEWS wage level among all registrations submitted for that individual; and
2. Enter the beneficiary into the selection pool multiple times based on that wage level.

The weighting structure would operate as follows:

- Wage Level IV → entered 4 times
- Wage Level III → entered 3 times
- Wage Level II → entered 2 times
- Wage Level I → entered 1 time

This effectively increases the statistical likelihood of selection for higher wage offers.

Why This Matters

For several years, the H-1B cap selection process has been fully randomized among properly submitted registrations. The proposed model changes that.

If adopted:

- Higher-paid positions may have improved selection odds.
- Entry-level wage roles could face comparatively lower odds.
- Salary planning may become strategically important at the registration stage.

This would shift part of the competitive advantage from volume of filings to compensation structure.

Wage Level Selection Requirements

The proposed registration system would require registrants to:

- Identify the highest OEWS wage level that the proffered wage equals or exceeds.
- Select the lowest applicable wage level if multiple work locations or roles are involved.
- Use Department of Labor guidance if OEWS wage data is unavailable.
- Base wage level selection on the lowest wage in a stated salary range.

These details are important because they directly affect how many times a beneficiary enters the selection pool.

Other Notable Elements

The proposal maintains several existing safeguards:

- Only one registration per beneficiary per fiscal year.
- Duplicate registrations will invalidate all submissions for that beneficiary.
- Registrants may submit up to 250 registrations per submission batch.
- Payment must successfully clear or the registration becomes invalid.

The annual registration period will last at least 14 days and begin at least 14 days before H-1B petitions may be filed for that fiscal year.

Strategic Considerations for Employers

If finalized, employers should evaluate:

- Whether wage levels align with business compensation policies.
- Budget planning for H-1B-dependent roles.
- Early coordination between HR, payroll, and immigration counsel.
- Documentation of prevailing wage methodology.

Employers may also need to reassess whether certain roles are better positioned under alternative visa classifications.

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Comparison: Current vs. Proposed Selection System

Feature	Current System	Proposed FY 2027 System
Selection Method	Fully random	Weighted by wage level
Wage Impact	No effect on selection odds	Higher wages increase selection entries
Multiple Locations	No weighting impact	Lowest wage level controls weighting
Duplicate Registrations	Invalid	Invalid
Registration Cap	Annual numerical cap	Annual numerical cap

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the weighted lottery final?

No. USCIS has issued this as a proposed change. It must complete the rulemaking process before implementation.

Would this apply to advanced degree cap cases?

Yes. A similar weighted process would apply to those eligible for the advanced degree exemption.

Does this mean Level I wages will not be selected?

No. Level I registrations would still be entered into the pool – but fewer times than higher wage levels.

Should employers increase wages solely to improve lottery chances?

Compensation decisions should be based on legitimate business needs and compliance requirements, not solely lottery strategy.

Final Thoughts

The proposed weighted selection system represents one of the most significant structural shifts to the H-1B cap process in years.

If implemented, wage strategy and workforce planning will become even more important during registration season.

Employers should monitor developments closely and begin internal discussions now in anticipation of FY 2027 registration.

Contact Information

If you or your family members have any questions about how immigration and nationality laws in the United States may affect you, or if you want to access additional information about immigration and nationality laws in the United States or Canada, please do not hesitate to contact the immigration and nationality lawyers at NPZ Law Group. You can reach us by emailing info@visaserve.com or by calling us at 201-670-0006 extension 104. We also invite you to visit our website at www.visaserve.com for more information.

Arranged Love Explores Modern Romance Through The Lens Of Tradition

By A Staff Writer

A new romantic drama, Arranged Love, produced and directed by Sanjane Koneshamoorthy and distributed worldwide by World Cinema Partners, offers audiences a heartfelt and culturally nuanced exploration of love in the modern age.

At its core, Arranged Love examines the delicate balance between tradition and personal choice. Set within the framework of an arranged marriage, the film thoughtfully navigates themes of autonomy, family expectations, emotional vulnerability, and the evolving definition of partnership. Through restrained performances and authentic storytelling, the narrative presents a refreshing departure from conventional romantic dramas.

The story follows Merunasri, a young woman caught between an arranged match supported by her family and

an unexpected emotional connection that challenges her understanding of love. As she navigates these parallel paths, the film gently unfolds a universal message: love is not always instantaneous — sometimes, it is cultivated through patience, mutual respect, and understanding.

With its culturally rooted yet globally relatable narrative, Arranged Love resonates beyond borders. The film speaks to audiences who understand the complexities of honoring tradition while seeking personal fulfillment — a theme increasingly relevant in today's interconnected world.

The official trailer is now available on youtube.

About the Filmmaker

Sanjane Koneshamoorthy is known for character-driven storytelling that highlights emotional authenticity and cultural depth. With Arranged Love, the filmmaker continues to explore intimate human relationships through a globally resonant cinematic lens.



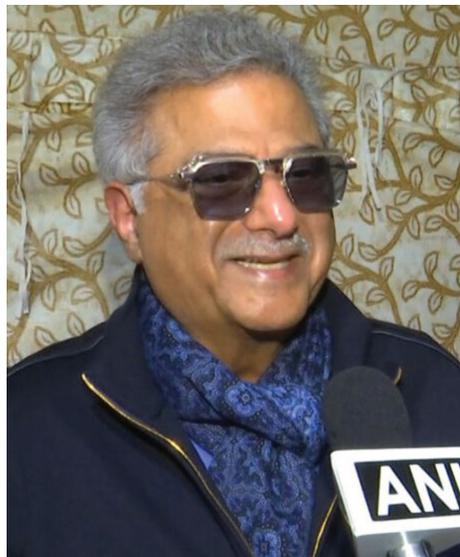
New International Film City Inaugurates With 'Mom 2' Shooting: Producer Boney Kapoor

Producer Boney Kapoor has expressed his excitement for the upcoming sequel of Sridevi starrer 'Mom', which has already gone on floors as the inaugural film to be shot in the new International Film City along the Yamuna Expressway near Greater Noida.

While talking to ANI, Boney Kapoor shared the details of the project, saying that the film is directed by Girish Kohli and also stars Bengali actor Jishu and Karishma Tanna in the lead role.

"The shooting of Mom 2 is going on here. The director is Girish Kohli, who was the writer of Mom I. The producer is me and my partner, Akshai Puri. The action director is Vijayan from the South. He is among the most accomplished action directors. We have technicians from different places. We have an actor from Bengal, Jishu. We have a television and a movie actor, Karishma Tanna, who is also playing a very important part in the film," said Boney Kapoor.

The upcoming film Mom 2 is the first movie to be shot at the new International



Film City along the Yamuna Expressway on Sunday.

"Our effort is to make sure it (Film City) is different and is elaborate in every given

sense. Besides Film City, this would have a theme park. This would have lots of entertainment sections. Which probably will surprise many. All kinds of films, OTT, drama, television, serial. We will make podcast sets. Everything. There will also be a media centre here. So everything that is related to entertainment and media will have a base here," said Boney Kapoor while talking to the media.

At the press conference of the inauguration of the International Film City, Boney Kapoor also announced that the shooting of OTT projects will be done free of cost on the sets, which are currently placed at Film City.

When asked about the free-of-cost OTT projects at the film city, the producer said, "Yes, but only on this set. It is because this set is a good luck. It is an incentive for other producers to come and for us, the more people who can benefit from this, the more people will come, and the more discussions will be about this film city. Everyone will know that the film city has started here."

The producer also expressed his gratitude to Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allowing him to build the film city.

"I am thankful to God, I am thankful to Yogi ji, I am thankful to Modi ji, that they gave me this opportunity that I should be able to give something. And I have to make this thing (International Film City) bigger," said Boney Kapoor.

According to the press note, the International Film City is a historic step toward making Uttar Pradesh a national and international film production hub.

It will not only create jobs and attract investment but also promote the state's cultural heritage. For film lovers and youth, this project will be more than just a job opportunity; it will be a platform to fulfil their dreams. This project is expected to create about 500,000 direct and indirect jobs.

The film 'Mom' was released in 2017. Along with Sridevi, the movie also starred Pakistani actress Sajal Aly in the lead role. .

-ANI

Arijit Singh Drops First Independent Track After Playback Retirement, Fans Say "Legend Is Back"

Fans of singer Arijit Singh were left heartbroken when he announced his retirement from playback singing. However, there's now good news that has already brought smiles back on millions of faces.

It seems the singer is now focusing on independent music, and his latest release shows that his musical journey is entering a new phase.

Arijit Singh recently released a new song titled "Raina", which has already caught the attention of listeners. The song was composed by Shekhar Ravjiani, with lyrics written by Priya Saraiya.

Arijit and Shekhar took to their Instagram accounts

to announce the release. The song is a romantic track that explores themes of love and emotion. Arijit has lent his voice to the song, while Shekhar handled the music composition.

Soon after the song dropped, fans flooded the comment section with messages of love and excitement. "This legend never stops amazing us. Don't know what iconic projects he will work on next. So excited," wrote one fan. "Finally, happy tears hearing his voice again," wrote another. A third fan added, "The LEGEND is back."

Earlier this year, Arijit Singh announced that he would stop taking new playback singing assignments. He shared

the news through an Instagram post, thanking listeners for their years of support. Arijit called his journey as a playback singer "wonderful" and said he was ready to move on from that chapter. "I want to thank you for giving me so much love all these years as listeners. I am happy to announce that I will not be taking any new assignments as a playback vocalist from now on," the singer wrote.

Fans can listen to the track and watch its official video on the Garuuda Music YouTube channel.

-ANI

The Washington Post

By Andrea Sachs

There's a better way to visit crowded national parks

When Will Pattiz learned that Yosemite was eliminating its timed-entry system, he experienced a flashback to 2023.

That year, the California national park had halted the reservation system it had implemented in 2020 to control crowds. During their visit, Pattiz and his wife spent more than 2½ hours in a line of cars, creeping toward the entrance. Once in the park, they watched sandaled visitors dangerously slip-and-slide at Lower Yosemite Falls. Nearby, a law enforcement ranger administered a Breathalyzer to a young parkgoer in possession of a beer. A procession of cars beeped with glee at the "Cops" scene.

"Yosemite was pandemonium," said Pattiz, a filmmaker and public lands advocate who co-founded More Than Just Parks with his brother Jim. When he returned the following year, after Yosemite had reinstated the protocol, he said, he could feel the park "breathing again."

This summer, national park insiders warn that visitors could face overcrowding because of a rollback of reservation systems at some of the country's most popular public lands. Mount Rainier National Park in Washington state dropped the requirement in January. Yosemite, Glacier National Park in Montana and Arches National Park in Utah recently announced their decision to drop them. The reservation systems had been a seasonal solution activated during peak visitation months and for special natural spectacles, such as Yosemite's Firefall.

In a Feb. 18 news release, the National Park Service explained the reversal of the years-old measures as a means to increase access to public lands "while maintaining safe and responsible management during peak visitation." The announcement includes Rocky Mountain National Park, though the Colorado park confirmed that it will use the same system as last year, from May 22 through mid-October.

"We're expanding access where conditions allow and using targeted tools only where necessary to protect visitor safety, maintain emergency access and preserve these extraordinary places for future generations," Kevin Lilly, acting assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks, said in the statement.

As part of its 2026 plan, Yosemite said it will rely on "active parking management" in Yosemite Valley, home of El Capitan, and post additional staff at key intersections during busy periods. Arches said it may temporarily restrict access to certain locations when parking areas top out. Starting July 1, Glacier will limit parking at Logan Pass to three hours. It will also test a Going-to-the-Sun Road express shuttle to Logan Pass - tickets required.

Supporters of the reservation system, however, said the benefits outweigh the inconveniences. Staggering visitors, they say, helps shorten lines at entrance gates, ease pressure on parking spots by trail heads and turnouts, loosen gridlock on scenic drives, safeguard flora and fauna, and improve the overall guest experience.

"Why vilify these reservation systems when all they were meant to do was not restrict access but make access better and the experience better?" said Linda Mazzu, a former superintendent of Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah and a board member at the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks. "You don't want to come to a national park and drive around looking for a parking space like you're in a Walmart."

Diapers on the roadside, garlands of toilet paper

Crowding isn't a new issue. Don Neubacher, a former superintendent at Yosemite, said the park has been grappling with congestion for at least half a century.

Concerns started to really escalate in 2020, when people seeking to social-distance outside their four walls converged on the national parks. Even after the threat of the coronavirus waned, people kept coming - nearly 331.9 million in 2024, which broke the 2016 record, according to the NPS.

Park staff and advocates say the reservation system isn't a perfect antidote, but it has helped temper some of the chaos.

"When 4-plus million people use the park yearly, there's bound to be a trace left behind," said a union representative at Yosemite, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of a fear of retaliation. "It's just much harder to hide that trace when there is unrestricted access."

In 2023, the union steward's first year at Yosemite, they witnessed a perp's lineup of bad behaviors: fights over parking spots, diapers and beer bottles tossed on roadsides, cars parked in turnouts and meadows, toilet paper strewn like garlands, feces smeared on bathroom walls.

The intervening years were slightly more manageable, they said, but the most recent Presidents' Day weekend might have been a summer preview.

During the first weekend of Firefall, when the setting sun transforms Horsetail Falls into a fiery curtain of molten lava, park authorities issued an alert that parking in Yosemite Valley was full and visitors should avoid entering the area. The warning didn't stop the deluge.

"People frankly showed up here for Firefall and damned if they're going to let anyone get in their way," the union steward said.

The parks' challenges could be compounded by staff shortages. The NPS laid off nearly 25 percent of its workforce last year as part of a broader downsizing of the federal government. The union representative said many employees are working the jobs of two or three people and tackling longer to-do lists.

For instance, in addition to collecting fees and distributing maps, staff members stationed in the entrance booths at select parks must also now ask visitors for their country of residence. As of Jan. 1, international travelers must pay \$100 each on top

of the per-vehicle entry fee at nearly a dozen destinations, including Glacier and Yosemite. It is unclear how this will impact summer crowds.

Pros and cons of the reservations system

Jeff Mow, superintendent of Glacier from 2013 to 2021, said the state of Montana originally requested a reservation system in 2021. Cars entering the park, the majority bound for Going-to-the-Sun Road, were backing up onto the state highway, creating a hazard. The reservation system wasn't static, though. It evolved to reflect changes in visitors' habits.

"It's not just how the park manages visitation at that particular entrance station or checkpoint, but it's also how visitors change their thinking and adapt to those changes," Mow said. "It's a very fluid dynamic." One of the biggest adjustments for vacationers, especially ones who follow their whims instead of a fixed itinerary, has been planning ahead. A park's reservation system typically opens weeks in advance, and spots can fill quickly. Rocky Mountain, for instance, releases its July passes on June 1, in addition to a second batch the night before one's arrival date. At Acadia National Park in Maine, 30 percent of its Cadillac Summit Road permits become available 90 days before the reservation date; the remainder go online 48 hours in advance.

Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) condemned the advance reservation system as a burden on visitors. "Utah's parks belong to the people and experiencing them shouldn't require months of planning," Lee, chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, said in a statement on the day Arches announced the end of its timed-entry passes. In its Traffic and Travel Tips section online, Arches advises visitors arriving during the busiest periods (spring through fall) to prepare for extended waits at entrance gates, packed trailhead parking lots before 8 a.m. and restricted access that could stretch for up to five hours. The park encourages people to stock up on snacks and drinks and use the restrooms before queuing up.

Photo: Canva



Check traffic webcams and ride the shuttle

To duck the crowds, be strategic. Avoid the most popular times, such as summer weekends, holidays and peak hours. "Here's the trick for Arches: Go before sunrise," said Jim Pattiz, co-founder of More Than Just Parks. "I would say 5 a.m. is the new 8 a.m."

Mikah Meyer, who set a record by traveling to 419 NPS sites in a single journey, recommends visiting between Aug. 15 through Sept. 15, when parkgoers can still enjoy summer access and conditions but may see fewer families because of return-to-school activities. Before setting out, check the live traffic webcams on the national park's website, and choose a different entrance, scenic route or hiking trail based on the report. At Glacier, Meyer prefers the quieter east entrance over the more commercial west side. In Yosemite, he recommends Tuolumne Meadows, which afford views of Half Dome without the crush of people in the valley. If the national parks are really slammed, the Pattiz brothers say to consider substitutes, such as Montana's Flathead National Forest instead of Glacier or Bridger-Teton National Forest in place of Grand Teton National Park. If you have your passport on hand, Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta, Canada, abuts Glacier and forms one half of the transboundary Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. Meyer is a fan of national monuments, a designation that is often the final step to becoming a national park. He suggests Natural Bridges National Monument in Utah as a swap for Arches, Cedar Breaks National Monument for Bryce and Dinosaur National Monument in Colorado and Utah.

"There's like never anybody there, no tour buses, no crowds," Meyer said - just 1,500 dinosaur bones. To reduce drive time and avoid traffic snarls, stay inside the park, in a lodge or campground. Or use the park's shuttle system. The free Yosemite Valley Shuttle System runs two daily routes. There are also seasonal options, such as the Mariposa Grove shuttle and the Badger Pass shuttle, which bounces between Yosemite Valley and the ski area. "These are places of wonder. These are places of respite. These are places where families want to enjoy some incredibly beautiful scenery," former Bryce superintendent Mazzu said. "To not be able to do that when you're so close, because you're stuck in your car, is just really sad."

Cricket-Samson Guides India To T20 World Cup Semis In Nervy Win Over West Indies

India reached the semi-finals of the Twenty20 World Cup with a five-wicket win over West Indies in Sunday's decisive Super Eights match, as Sanju Samson's unbeaten knock of 97 helped them chase down a target of 196 with four balls to spare.

Defending champions India, who will play in the semis for the third straight time, will face England in Mumbai on Thursday (March 5), a day after South Africa take on New Zealand (March 4) in the first semi-final.

"It means the whole world to me. Right from the day I started playing, started dreaming to play for the country, I think this is the day I was waiting for," said player-of-the-match Samson, whose 50-ball knock included four sixes and 12 boundaries.

Put in to bat first, the West Indies openers cautiously scored 45 runs in the powerplay, after Abhishek Sharma dropped Roston Chase at cover. Shai Hope (32) failed to judge Varun Chakaravathy's googly and got bowled in the ninth over.

Shimron Hetmyer, in at three, scored a quick 27 but Jasprit Bumrah (2-36) got him caught behind, before dismissing Chase (40) two balls later, with Suryakumar Yadav diving at a difficult angle to take an airborne catch.

When Sherfane Rutherford fell in the 15th over, West Indies were at 119-4, but Rovman Powell hit Arshdeep Singh for two sixes and a four to score 24 runs in the next over, regaining the momentum.

Powell (34) and Jason Holder (37) put



Cricket - ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 - Super 8 - India v West Indies - Eden Gardens, Kolkata, India - March 1, 2026 India's Sanju Samson celebrates after the match.



Cricket - ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 - Super 8 - India v West Indies - Eden Gardens, Kolkata, India - March 1, 2026 West Indies' Rovman Powell and Jason Holder celebrate at the end of the innings.

up a rapid 76-run partnership for the fifth wicket to reach 195-4, far above the highest successful run chase in a T20 international at Eden Gardens, which India pulled off in 2022 when West Indies set a target of 158.

SAMSON STEERS SHAKY INDIA TO VICTORY

In reply, India lost opener Sharma early to Akeal Hosein, the spinner who had replaced West Indies opener Brandon King. Ishan Kishan fell to Holder nine balls later, leaving them at 41-2.

With the required run rate at double digits, Samson kept the runs flowing,

hitting three sixes and four boundaries to complete his half-century in 28 balls.

India shrugged off the loss of captain Suryakumar (18), as Tilak Varma hit Shamar Joseph for three successive fours and belted Chase down long on to get them within 60 runs of victory with six overs left.

Varma (27) and Hardik Pandya (17) fell as the game neared a nervy finish, before Shivam Dube hit Joseph for two quick boundaries to leave India just seven runs to get in the last over to pull off the highest successful run chase in

the tournament.

Samson hit Romario Shepherd for six over square leg and hit a four down mid-on to bring up the winning runs, getting the highest individual score by an Indian in a T20 World Cup chase, surpassing Virat Kohli's knocks of 82 against Australia and Pakistan.

"All his hard work, what he's been doing behind the doors when he hasn't been playing, he's got the fruits for it at the perfect stage," said Suryakumar about Samson.

-REUTERS

Badminton-India's Sindhu Returns Home From Dubai Ordeal, Withdraws From All England Open

P V Sindhu has returned to India after being stranded at Dubai airport on her way to the All England Open, with the Badminton World Federation (BWF) saying on Tuesday (March 3) the former world champion had withdrawn from the tournament.

Global air travel remained heavily disrupted on Sunday as war in Iran kept major Middle Eastern airports including Dubai, the world's busiest international hub, closed for a second day in one of the sharpest aviation shocks in recent years.

Dubai Airports said flights partially resumed on Monday, mainly to repatriate stranded passengers.

"Back home in Bangalore and safe. The last few days have been intense and uncertain, but I'm truly grateful to be back to my house," Sindhu wrote on X.



Paris 2024 Olympics - Badminton - Women's Singles Group play stage - Porte de La Chapelle Arena, Paris, France - July 31, 2024. V. Sindhu Pusarla of India thanks the crowd after winning the Group M match against Kristin Kuuba of Estonia.

Sindhu, a double Olympics medallist, had been scheduled to face Thailand's Supanida Katethong in the first round but has now been replaced by Taiwan's Hsu Wen-chi.

The BWF said Thai third seeds Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Supissara Paewsampran were also forced to withdraw from the mixed doubles.

Sindhu also thanked the authorities in Dubai before adding: "For now, it's time to rest, reset, and figure out the next steps."

Israel broadened its campaign with new strikes on Iran and Hezbollah, while Tehran launched missiles and drones toward Israel, several Gulf states and a British air base in Cyprus, raising concerns of a prolonged conflict.

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ఈ ఎన్నికలు మన సమాజ భవిష్యత్తుకు అత్యంత కీలకం. మనం ఇప్పటికే చూసింది ఏమిటంటే —

మన విలువలపై దాడులు జరిగాయి. మన భద్రతకు ముప్పు ఏర్పడింది.

నీల ఖోట్ ఈ అనుభవాలను స్వయంగా ఎదుర్కొన్న వ్యక్తి. అందుకే మన కుటుంబాల గౌరవం, భద్రత మరియు అవకాశాల కోసం ఆయన దృఢంగా నిలబడతారు.

మన సమాజ స్వరం బలంగా వినిపించాలంటే, మార్చి 17న ముందస్తు ఓటు వేయండి లేదా ఎన్నికల రోజున తప్పకుండా పాల్గొనండి.

આ ચૂંટણી આપણા સમુદાય માટે મહત્વપૂર્ણ છે. આપણે જોયું છે કે:

આપણા મૂલ્યો પર હુમલો થયો આપણી સલામતી જોખમાઈ નીલ ખોટ સમજે છે કારણ કે તે આ વાર્તા જીવી ચૂક્યો છે. તે આપણી ગરિમા અને સુરક્ષા માટે અથાક લડત લડશે. કૃપા કરીને વહેલા મતદાન કરીને અથવા ચૂંટણીના દિવસે, 17 માર્ચે મતદાન કરીને નીલ ખોટને ટેકો આપો.

இந்தத் தேர்தல் நமது சமுதாயத்திற்கு மிகவும் அத்தியாவசியமானது. இதுவரை நாம் கண்டுள்ளவை:

- நமது மதிப்பும் மரியாதையும் தாக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.
- நமது பாதுகாப்பு அச்சுறுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

நீல் கோட் இந்த அனுபவங்களைத் தன்னுடைய வாழ்க்கையில் நேரடியாக எதிர்கொண்டவர்; அதனால் நமது நிலையை அவர் நன்றாகப் புரிந்துள்ளார். நமது கண்ணியத்தையும் பாதுகாப்பையும் காக்க அவர் அயராது பாடுபடுவார்.

மார்ச் 17 அன்று நடைபெறும் தேர்தலில் முன்சூட்டியே வாக்களித்து, நீல் கோட்டை வெற்றிப்பெற அன்புடன் கேட்டுக்கொள்கிறோம்.

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