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OF LOK SABHA**

**UTTAR
PRADESH AND
OTHER STATE
ELECTIONS**

**LACK OF
JOBS AND
RISING
INFLATION**

**CABINET AND
BUREAUCRACY
RESHUFFLE**

**DONATION
THEFT AT
RAM
TEMPLE**

**REVAMPING
EDUCATION
AND WINNING
BACK
GEN Z**

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THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

**BESIDES THE STORM OVER NEET, PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI
WILL BE TESTED ON KEY POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

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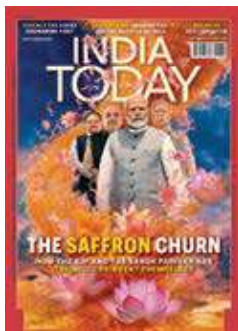
FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For the past 12 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has occupied a hallowed realm very few leaders in democratic politics ever reach. Crises have not pierced his aura or left any visible marks of damage. He seemed teflon-coated. A pandemic shock ended in nationwide vaccination. A loss of single-party majority in 2024 led to a string of assembly victories, each more worthy of awe than the preceding one. On the long arc, his political graph seemed immune to the law of gravity. But the spontaneous Gen Z upsurge of July 2026 is different in a way he has recognised. In fact, in the entire state response, it is Modi the politician who has read the mood most accurately. If one part of the state apparatus unleashed a harder edge on the protesters, it was the PM who decided to be soft, to reach out, to listen and be responsive. He gave in on the demand for a Union minister's resignation. A stringent law against exam paper leaks was moved within the week. He has personally taken to Instagram and is directing all of government outreach to follow him onto the platform that Gen Z calls home. These are not the instincts of a leader who thinks this will blow over.

The political arithmetic explains the urgency. The entirety of that 371 million demographic, Indians presently aged between 15 and 29, will be of voting age in 2029. They have already arrived as political actors. Their influence is proven. If Jantar Mantar is any sample, they span the full socioeconomic spectrum, including large numbers from the urban middle class that has until now been among the BJP's most reliable constituencies. The party's traditional playbook of inducement, punishment and division will not work here. It will accelerate the alienation it is trying to reverse. What is required is persuasion, and persuasion of a kind that cannot be managed through perception management alone. It has to be driven by demonstrable outcomes. That is a considerably harder ask. The exam controversy that triggered the protests reveals one dysfunctional cog in a much larger broken wheel. Equally formidable tasks are arrayed on the electoral, legislative and governance fronts.

Prime Minister Modi has made a tactically astute beginning by appointing the Nandan Nilekani committee to fix question paper leaks. It has a respected face, accepted across the board, and we can expect it to deliver a genuinely workable model. But that will only treat a symptom, not the cause, which is the gross mismatch between education, skills and employment. That disconnect has been building for years, which no single committee can resolve. What is needed is a full system reboot, with all facets acting in concert to produce one result: remodelling India's growth engine so that it can tug the entire train. The youth need to see India's 7 per cent growth translating into jobs, opportunities and broad-based prosperity. The challenge is that

headline growth figures hide a feeble core. Private investment has stayed weak for a decade. Net FDI has slumped from about \$27-28 billion in FY23 to under \$7 billion in FY26, as multinationals repatriate profits and Indian firms invest abroad instead of at home. Nothing is moving the needle on manufacturing, whose share of GDP seems permanently stuck at 16-17 per cent. The only substantial capex is state-led. That goes towards infrastructure, not new factory jobs. On this dismal baseline, the West Asia war has added an oil shock which is reverberating through the system, pushing inflation back over 4 per cent and slowing growth. The rupee at record lows is visible to everyone, even if its implications are interpreted in simplified ways. The balance of payments may mean nothing to an average Indian. The price of essentials means everything. Despite various efforts to reform, the heavy hand of bureaucracy still stifles the animal spirits.



▲ Sept. 16, 2024

The political calendar compounds the pressure. UP is voting within nine months. Six other assembly polls will keep 2027 hot, including high-stakes ones like Punjab, Manipur and Gujarat. Rebuilding public consent around saffron politics may not be so straightforward after the moral setback of the Ayodhya temple theft, especially since the restless youth seem less responsive to Hindutva as a mobilising force than previous generations. Within Parliament, women's reservation commands support across the aisle, but the delimitation bill does not. Even if the BJP musters a coalition of the willing large enough to push it through, it won't be exactly lessening the gap in consensus. Through 2027-28, the population census will also be in the headlines, with the caste question aggravating emotions. Nothing suggests a smooth, predictable path.

In our cover story this week, Senior Deputy Editor Anilesh S. Mahajan surveys this complex landscape of challenges that confronts PM Modi in his historic third term. Modi has demonstrated repeatedly, and against considerable odds, an ability to spring back from setbacks that would have finished lesser leaders. That capacity remains his greatest asset. He may choose to sharpen his armoury, and that perhaps entails a fresh cabinet with young faces and fresh ideas, as well as a bureaucratic reshuffle. But the challenge he faces now is qualitatively different from anything that came before. The youth are not the kind of dissenters who can be waited out or who make a political compromise. They have no fear like many others in India and have little to lose. They are a big chunk of the electorate of 2029. And they are waiting and watching.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Aroon Purie'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Aroon Purie)

CONTENTS

**UPFRONT: NO AZADI IN PAKISTAN-
OCCUPIED J&K PG 10**

**STATESCAN: GEN Z GLOSS FOR BRAND
THACKERAY IN MAHARASHTRA PG 16**

COVER
STORY
36



REUTERS

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

BESIDES THE STORM OVER NEET, PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI WILL BE TESTED ON KEY POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

► REAL ESTATE

50 The Affordable Home Shortfall

Despite a shortage of nearly 10 million affordable homes in urban India, private developers are fast exiting the segment as they no longer find it lucrative



HARDIK CHHABRA



MAVUR BHATT

► GUJARAT

58 A New Growth Model

Gujarat's new industrial policy shifts from labour-intensive manufacturing to high-tech sectors, betting on semiconductors, green energy and aerospace while aiming to create enough quality jobs

► SOCIETY & TRENDS

70 Now, Men Bling It On

Urban Indian men are embracing jewellery beyond ceremonial wear, with celebrity adoption and dedicated product lines helping the segment grow to 10-15 per cent of the overall jewellery market



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► LEAD ESSAY

76 In the Big League

India's best universities
owe their success to
a pedagogy that is in
tune with the times,
preparing students for
tomorrow's challenges,
not just today's jobs

► GENERAL (GOVT)

82 Gearing for the AI Era

The **University of
Delhi** is betting on
research, Artificial
Intelligence and
entrepreneurship
to fuel its global
ambitions

► GENERAL (PVT)

88 Out of the Box Pedagogy

The multifaceted
approach to expanding
its students' horizons
has made **Symbiosis
International, Pune**,
a leading institution
in private education



INDIA'S BEST UNIVERSITIES

► MEDICAL

94 Clinical Perfection

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and a wide range
of exposure to
postgraduates, **AIIMS
Delhi** is opening up
new areas of study

► TECHNICAL

100 Reinvention Laboratory

Building on its legacy,
IIT Delhi is making
learning more
flexible, research
more collaborative
and innovation
more relevant

► LAW

106 A Case for Excellence

Having retained its
top spot, **NLSIU,
Bengaluru**, aims for
an infrastructural
overhaul and
AI-forward
curriculum

► INDEX

114 The Full Listing

The complete
rankings of all
government and
private universities
as well as across the
medical, technical
and law streams

► LEISURE

138 Ties That Bind

Mathematician and novelist **Manil Suri**
writes a memoir about parents, property and
the battle between duty and selfhood



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GLASSHOUSE: THE 'JINXED' EDUCATION PORTFOLIO PG 12

ECO WATCH: A PROBLEM OF PLENTY PG 14

FOR THE PEOPLE

Protests during a strike called by the JAAC in PoJK's Neelum Valley, Jun. 21



REUTERS

VIEWPOINT

NO AZADI IN PAK OCCUPIED J&K

Pakistan responds to protests in POJK demanding economic and political justice with an iron fist. India, in a measured reaction, calls out the brutality and reiterates its claim over the region



BY SHARAT SABHARWAL

Pakistan's Punjabi establishment is getting singed by the intensifying fires of defiance and violence in Balochistan, the tribal belt and of late in the so-called 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)' or what India terms Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJK). With violent protests breaking out days before the AJK assembly election scheduled for July 27, the fraught security situation forced the Pakistan government to split it into three phases, ending now on August 10.

While Rawalakot has remained the protest epicentre, large parts of the territory have witnessed sit-ins, protest marches and shutter-down strikes by the Jammu and Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC). The JAAC is an umbrella group of civil rights groups of lawyers, traders, transporters and students who came together in 2023 to push, inter alia, for governance reforms, accountability, cheaper electricity and wheat, as well as elimination of perks and privileges for the elite. The government responded with an iron fist approach.

In the run up to the assembly polls, government

forces resorted to firing on protesters, arrest of JKAAC leaders for sedition, internet bans and closure of main roads. Sketchy information coming out suggests multiple casualties among civilians and security forces. A JAAC leader has claimed that 25 civilians were killed in police firing on July 27 and 28 after it announced a protest march on Muzaffarabad. There is no end in sight to the agitation.

Ever since Pakistan constituted the areas of Jammu and Kashmir illegally occupied in 1947 into two units, AJK and the

control over all critical governance issues, including the natural resources of the territory that have been exploited with little benefit to the local people. Top AJK functionaries have to express loyalty to Pakistan and the accession of J&K to it. Pakistan has all along employed a heavy-handed approach, entailing gross human rights violations to sustain its stranglehold over AJK.

Agitation by the people for their constitutional rights and better governance has not been unknown in AJK. But the sustained protests spear-

to the widespread unrest and allegations of rigging, the election will carry little credibility.

The public ire at Pakistan does not necessarily imply love for India. Social media footage of sporadic appeals for help to India by some local activists does not establish this. Governance reforms remain the core agitation agenda. JAAC leaders have rejected the Pakistani allegation of their links to India.

In a measured reaction, India has reiterated its claim over PoJK, rejected Pakistan's allegation of its involvement in the turmoil, taken note of the police brutality and expressed the hope that the international community would hold Pakistan accountable for its misdeeds. India has also described the ongoing election as a cosmetic exercise to camouflage Pakistan's illegal occupation and grave human rights violations.

India's cautious approach is understandable in view of the evolving situation. However, there is a case for India to at the very least leverage the ongoing AJK events forcefully at international forums to expose the utter hypocrisy of Pakistan's dubious Kashmir agenda. ■

Sharat Sabharwal is a former high commissioner to Pakistan and author of *India's Pakistan Conundrum: Managing a Complex Relationship*

PUBLIC IRE AGAINST PAKISTAN IN AJK DOES NOT IMPLY LOVE FOR INDIA. JAAC LEADERS HAVE REJECTED THE PAKISTANI ALLEGATION OF THEIR LINKS TO INDIA. GOVERNANCE REFORMS REMAIN THE CORE DEMAND OF PROTESTS

so-called Gilgit-Baltistan, both have been governed like virtual colonies. AJK was given a veneer of constitutional governance with a parliamentary system only in 1974. However, elections to its 53-member legislative assembly have been rigged all along. Twelve seats, reserved for the refugees from J&K on the Indian side, have been used by the Pakistani establishment to manipulate numbers in the assembly. One of the demands of the JAAC before the assembly polls was to abolish these 12 'refugee' seats.

The AJK Council, headed by the prime minister of Pakistan, exercises

headed by JAAC in the past three years to press for its demands have been the most serious in recent memory. The trigger for the latest round of agitation was the death of a trader in Rawalakot in confrontation with security forces and the banning of the JAAC in early June.

With Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) headed by the jailed former prime minister, Imran Khan, boycotting the polls in sympathy with the people, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan's People's Party (PPP)—both allies of the army—are the main contenders. However, due

▼ GLASSHOUSE



THE NEW FACE OF EMPATHY

The Jantar Mantar protests have given the Samajwadi Party a new political mascot: **Dimple Yadav**, wife of party chief Akhilesh Yadav. Videos showing the Mainpuri MP kneeling beside an injured protester, tending to another unconscious student, confronting police and so on, had gone viral in Uttar Pradesh. Analysts say it has recast the soft-spoken Yadav *bahu* as a “compassionate yet assertive leader”. Party insiders say the moment was planned. Ahead of the Parliament session, the SP leadership chose Dimple, not Akhilesh, to lead the ‘*paidal* (walking) march’ from Parliament to the protest site. With unemployment, paper leaks and recruitment irregularities likely to dominate the 2027 UP election, the party is planning youth outreach programmes across the state. Dimple now could be at the centre of its campaign to win young voters.

Illustrations by **SIDDHANT JUMDE**

▼ COST OF VICTORY

SO, WHO'S PAYING?

Perhaps late in the day, but **Siddaramaiah**, who recently joined the league of former CMs, has realised how much electoral politics has changed. “Earlier, the people of the constituency would pool money to help us win,” the veteran Karnataka Congressman reminisced at an event near Mysuru on July 25. Today, he rued, the equation has reversed, with



candidates expected to pay the voters. The veteran leader, who will be 82 when Karnataka votes again in 2028, also reiterated that he would not contest another assembly election. For a leader whose career has spanned some five decades of Karnataka politics, the announcement was both a personal sign-off and a bleak commentary on the rising cost—and changing character—of elections.

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At Somaiya Vidyavihar University, boundaries between disciplines are deliberately porous. Engineering students may study philosophy or music, management students may explore sustainability, while humanities students work alongside technologists, designers, & entrepreneurs. Guided by ज्ञानादेव तु कैवल्यम् - **Knowledge Alone Liberates** - the University combines scholarship with research, entrepreneurship, creativity, & real-world engagement.

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"At Somaiya Vidyavihar University, I see this purpose come alive through an ecosystem where disciplines intersect, research drives innovation, classrooms extend into communities, and students are encouraged to pursue knowledge wherever it leads. It is this environment that prepares our graduates not only for professions, but for a future in which the ability to connect ideas may prove as valuable as expertise itself".

PROF. AJAY KAPOOR

Vice Chancellor, Somaiya Vidyavihar University



The Shimadzu-Somaiya Centre of Excellence supports advanced analytical research, while the **Centre for Computational Studies & Simulations** enables interdisciplinary research using high-performance computing. Together, these environments demonstrate that knowledge is not only inherited but created through inquiry & experimentation.

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Preparing Students for a World Without Boundaries:

Looking back, I find it remarkable that a philosophy centred on the liberating power of knowledge continues to find new expression with every generation. The disciplines have changed, the technologies have advanced, & the questions facing society have become more complex. Yet the purpose of education remains the same: to form character, strengthen the mind & increase the intellect.

JINXED CHAIR

Telangana **CM Revanth Reddy** had a pointed good luck message for the new Union education minister, saying he hoped Pralhad Joshi would be able to avoid the fate of his predecessors who had occupied the ministry since 2014. “Smriti Irani, Prakash Javadekar, Dharmendra Pradhan... *lagta hai jo bhi us kursi par baithta hai, uski political kismat kharab ho jaati hai* (looks like whoever occupies that chair, his political fortunes dip),” Revanth quipped last week. Indeed, it looks like Joshi may need all the good wishes he can get for his onward journey.



BROTHERS IN ARMS

For some time now, Lalu Yadav's sons **Tejashwi** and **Tej Pratap** have been on divergent paths, their public differences making any reconciliation seem unlikely. But Bihar's politics often produces unexpected turns. Returning to Patna on

July 26 after a long absence, Opposition leader and Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Tejashwi demanded the release of those arrested during the paper leak protests, which pointedly included “*mere bade bhai Tej Pratap*” (who had allegedly been inciting the protesters). The elder Yadav scion's adventures may have landed him in jail, but they also seem to have restored some fraternal warmth.



A GEN Z MOMENT

It was a classic family WhatsApp moment, only this one unfolded on Instagram. Archita Sachin Rahar, daughter of BJP MP from Bhubaneswar, **Aparajita Sarangi**, posted a celebratory reaction to the Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation over the NEET leak controversy, adding that she was sure someone would push her mother to get the post removed. “Don't bother. I won't delete it,” she wrote. Meanwhile, Sarangi praised Pradhan's ‘courage’ on X, while her office was busy defending Archita's right to speak, as part of “Gen Z”. Sources say top BJP leaders were least amused with the hullabaloo the social media chats created.



GIR LION ATTACKS A PROBLEM OF PLENTY

By **Jumana Shah**

Gujarat's conservation triumph with the Asiatic Lions is straining against its own success. Six deaths due to lion attacks in June and July have shaken up the Saurashtra peninsula. The most shocking of these was the death of an 11-year-old boy, dragged away while the family was climbing the steps to the temples atop

habitat pressure, thinning ungulate population.... “Furthermore, humans are moving into lion territory with illegal resorts and other activities in protected areas. This is a recipe for disaster,” says photographer Bhushan Pandya, a former member of the state wildlife board. Disease has sharpened the alarm. In May, eight lions died, offi-



Mount Girnar. The outrage is testing the foundations of the state's celebrated conservation model—of humans and lions sharing spaces and coexisting.

Such unprovoked attacks were unusual in the past. The 2025 census counted 891 Asiatic lions, up from 674 five years earlier. Only 384 live inside protected forests. The remaining 507, or 44.2 per cent, now range across the 30,000 sq. km Greater Gir landscape. Officials and experts point to several converging pressures—rising lion numbers,

especially of babesiosis. Reliable sources, though, claim some of them were infected with canine distemper virus (CDV), and that the toll was higher.

After the uproar, the forest department captured 30-plus lions and declared seven of them ‘maneaters’. But there are no easy solutions. The recent incidents have attracted international attention to Gir on the one hand, while on the other, leaders of the ruling party have clashed with the forest department for putting curbs on development work in the region.



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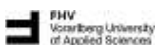
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▼ A LIFELINE
Uddhav, Raj
Thackeray and
others join the
students' protest,
Mumbai, June 26

► MAHARASHTRA

GEN Z GLOSS FOR BRAND THACKERAY

Uddhav was at the lowest ebb of his career, with a haemorrhaging party. Then the CJP moment turned the narrative. Can he cash in?

By **Dhaval S. Kulkarni**

A CURIOUS DYNAMIC HAS TAKEN HOLD OF THE leadership space in Maharashtra all of a sudden. Disparate events over the past month have converged to stir the genie in the bottle—even if nothing changes on the surface, it masks unpredictable twists in the undercurrents. Look at a quintessential Maharashtra quartet: no element is unaffected. Chief minister Devendra Fadnavis is suddenly being spoken of as a potential export to New Delhi. Predicated on that would be deputy chief minister Eknath Shinde's wish fulfilment. One of its enabling factors, octogenarian Sharad Pawar's shift to the ruling side, has been put on a last-minute fork in the road by Gen Z! That last one has also arrived just in time to perchance give a fresh lease of life to a beleaguered Uddhav Thackeray.

On July 26, when the Shiv Sena (UBT) chief appeared on stage at Shivaji Park in Mumbai, standing in front of thousands of cheering youth, he was coming off the lowest ebb in his political

career. His chief ministership had ended in 2022 in a dramatic moment of diminution that saw 41 MLAs and 13 of the original Sena's then 19 Lok Sabha MPs join Shinde's rebellion. The next year, he lost the rights to the Sena's name and symbol, hitherto synonymous with his family name. Doom stalked him: in June, as another split saw six of the nine Lok Sabha MPs of even his rump party cross over, everyone was out with the direct pronouncements. It seemed to be curtains for Brand Thackeray.

Yet, a month later, here he was—in a triumphal mood, with cousin Raj, a family entente that has survived the trench warfare that is Maharashtra politics. Also on stage were their sons, Aaditya and Amit, respectively—both just on the

of fear of state backlash and arrest. But then, the tide started turning.

DIPKE'S CERTIFICATE

On July 19, Dipke gave an interview in Marathi where he named Uddhav as the first leader to call him upon his June 6 return to India, saying he kept up an almost paternal contact all through the protest. Supriya Sule, Pawar's daughter and Lok Sabha MP of the NCP (SCP), too went to Jantar Mantar twice to offer support. But then, the party is also dealing with the dilemma of whether to join the NDA or not. Recent weeks have seen Sule oscillate between signals of willingness and denials—speculation heated up again after she met Union home minister Amit Shah on July 27.

By contrast, once the CJP won the moral argument nationally,



AFP

Takeaways

➤ **Gen Z protests offer fresh lease of life to Uddhav**

➤ **CJP's Abhijeet Dipke hailed UBT chief for support**

➤ **UBT was at its nadir, thinned by defections**

other side of the Gen Z age threshold, and Aaditya adept enough at voicing the concerns of the street. The accidents of politics are such that, of all Opposition leaders in the state, it was Uddhav who had managed to land on the right side of history with the lightest—hence, cleanest—slate.

One point the national media is apt to miss is that Abhijeet Dipke, the Boston-retained founder of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), is a Marathi—born to a middle-class Dalit family in erstwhile Aurangabad. So the CJP moment plays out a bit deeper in this neck of the woods. During the Jantar Mantar protests, Dipke's family had faced immense stress, received death threats, and briefly even left their home to take refuge in Konkan out

Uddhav was in a unique position to partake of that. "A month is a long time in politics," a senior UBT leader told INDIA TODAY. "The BJP, which looked invincible, is now on the backfoot. The turnouts in Mumbai were also aided by our cadre. Now, it is for the younger generation of leaders like Aaditya to seize this opportunity."

But if Uddhav has found an alternate source of energy, can he turn it into a renewable one? The stark reality was presented by a beaming Shinde on June 22, when he pronounced "Operation Tiger (is a) success". The Lok Sabha split had set off a haemorrhage—on June 30, a close Aaditya aide, too, had quit. The UBT's 20-MLA cohort is still vulnerable. Does he have the nous to stanch that? ■

► WEST BENGAL

Smart but Metered Move

CM Suwendu rolls out the contentious smart power meter scheme, but with consumer-friendly caution

By **Arkamoy Datta Majumdar**

IT'S EMITTING NOT A FEW SPARKS IN STATES that have already plugged into the technology, but India's ambitious transition to smart electricity metering has crossed a big threshold with West Bengal. The last major holdout among large states is now officially into a rollout—albeit coated with a sweetener for now. Mindful of the anxieties in the public, chief minister Suwendu Adhikari has sought to reassure domestic consumers that they will be persuaded, not compelled, to come on board.

Nationwide smart metering is part of the Centre's flagship power sector reforms under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), but its



◉ **PLUG-IN ANXIETIES**
The smart electricity meter

public reception has been marked by a series of grievances: a trebling or even a five-fold jump in bills emanating from an opaque, remote system; prepaid billing leading to abrupt supply cuts; data concerns; questions over extra maintenance charges. Adhikari's directions to officials at Vidyut Bhavan in Salt Lake on July 22 reflected the need to shore up public confidence. "You have to make people believe they will not be forced to pay extra if they instal smart meters. Set up a grievance cell. You should not instal smart meters for domestic consumers forcibly," he said.

LIVE-WIRE REFORM

The RDSS aims to cure India's notoriously leaky power distribution system by replacing conventional meters with nearly 250 million smart prepaid meters across India. It has already been sanctioned for 197.9 million consumers across 28 states and Union territories. By last December, about 39 million meters had been installed across India; recent estimates suggest the number has crossed 50 million. That still represents only about a fourth of the target, so Bengal's entry into the scheme can be expected to shore up the statistics.

In July, Union power minister Manohar Lal Khattar had announced that installations in Bengal would begin that month, eventually covering nearly 20 million consumers. The rollout is planned in phases, beginning with government offices and campuses before extending to industrial, commercial and eventually domestic consumers. Unlike many states that have adopted prepaid systems by default, Bengal has indicated consumers will be able to choose between prepaid and postpaid billing.

The issue, however, remains politically sensitive. The Trinamool Congress regime had initiated installation in government offices but stopped short of a wider rollout after stiff resistance from domestic consumers. The BJP regime has now revived the programme but appears keenly aware of public apprehensions surrounding the technology.

Officials say the idea is to instal postpaid meters for domestic consum-

METER DOWN CM Suvendu Adhikari



IANNS

Takeaways

➤ **West Bengal becomes the last major state to join the smart meter scheme**

➤ **Suvendu orders that domestic installations have to be voluntary, preceded by persuasion**

➤ **Part of a wider reform, smart meters have seen protests elsewhere**

ers with the existing monthly billing cycle, addressing one of the biggest concerns associated with prepaid smart meters—automatic disconnection once the prepaid balance is exhausted. "The government is focusing on convincing consumers that they would not have to pay extra with smart meters," says a senior official. The CM says misinformation fuels some of the resistance. "Some people, particularly from the Left, mislead people. So, convince the people before installation. When people realise they will not face any problem, they will instal smart meters," he said.

The CM simultaneously directed officials to crack down on electricity theft and improve bill recovery. "There should be zero tolerance for 'hooking'. Get illegal connections disconnected

immediately," he said, referring to the widespread practice of drawing electricity illegally before it reaches the meter. At the same time, he asked officials to proceed cautiously against households with outstanding dues, directing the department to hear consumers before disconnecting connections.

The financial context explains the urgency behind the reforms. Officials say aggressive recovery efforts against commercial consumers have already reduced outstanding dues from nearly Rs 500 crore to around Rs 80 crore after about 45,000 commercial connections were snapped over the past two months. However, government departments still owe about Rs 800 crore; arrears from domestic consumers stand at nearly Rs 1,000 crore. Making good on that will be the next major challenge.

The rollout coincides with another major change—the introduction of Time-of-Day (ToD) tariffs. Mandated by the Centre for smart-meter consumers, ToD pricing makes electricity cheaper during solar-rich daytime hours and expensive during evening peak demand. It's intended to encourage consumers to shift discretionary use to periods when renewable energy generation is abundant, reducing stress on the grid.

Maharashtra has projected the potential benefits of dynamic pricing, claiming over 7 million consumers collectively saved Rs 2,235 crore after ToD tariffs were introduced in July 2025 by shifting electricity consumption to off-peak hours. Supporters of smart meters say it improves billing accuracy, reduces theft and helps discoms lower losses.

Yet the reforms remain contentious. Consumer groups and Opposition parties in Bihar, UP, Rajasthan and Assam have alleged inflated bills, unexpected deductions, inadequate transparency in billing algorithms and remote disconnections. July saw complaints from parts of Mumbai hit the headlines. Protests demanding independent audits and the option to retain conventional meters have surfaced across states.

In West Bengal, the government's emphasis on voluntary adoption is an attempt to avoid a similar backlash. ■



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POLITICS RETURNS TO THE RELIGION SYLLABUS

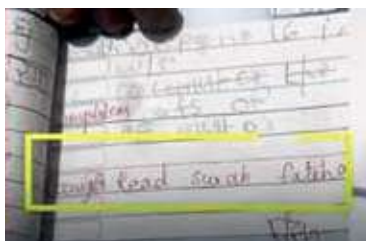
The BJP turns on the heat in Telangana with a new 'school jihad' narrative—viral episodes lend ammunition as election season nears

By Prasad Nichenametla

HOW COMPELLING IS THE IMAGE OF ISLAMIC proselytisers at large in Telangana in 2026—a region that counted a nearly 90 per cent Hindu population after 224 years of Nizam rule? That depends on the listeners, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is hoping there will soon be enough of those willing to be spooked by the spectre of 'school jihad'. A couple of incidents, amenable to such framing to differing degrees, have come its way in time for the Hyderabad civic elections due later this year. Toss in some trouble over religious slogans on the back of an autorickshaw, and it has enough to get going a campaign against what it portrays as the "anti-Hindu agenda" of the Congress government.

In another time and place, it may have been possible to see the first incident as an act of pedagogical value rather than an infraction: a Hindi teacher was found teaching Urdu to primary grade students at a private school. Huma Hania, the teacher in question, apparently deepened her crime by encouraging kids to greet each other with an "aadaab"! The matter was raised by parents of Hindu students who found Urdu words written in their wards' notebooks. That blew up.

BJP leaders and Hindutva activists held protests at Bharath Chandra School in Perkit, where it had happened. Nearby Armoor, a small town in north Telangana's Nizamabad district near, stayed tense for days. Police registered a case against the representatives of the school management, including A. Mallaiah and principal



Takeaways

► A Hyderabad school is in the eye of storm after a primary grade Hindu kid gets 'Islamic homework'

► BJP leaders also rake up a row over Urdu/Hindi in a Nizamabad school

► Incidents a "godsend" before civic body polls, says a BJP leader



▲ **WRONG NOTE** Police at the Success School; top left, the offending message from the Class 2 student's diary

Amir Khan. BJP town president Mandula Balu and others were also booked for allegedly assaulting Khan within the school premises during a confrontation over the matter.

QURAN FOR HOMEWORK

The bigger controversy came in mid-July in Hyderabad's Saidabad, which lies within the Malakpet assembly segment in the Old City, held by Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM). Here, family members complained that a teacher at Success School had prescribed Quranic verses as mandatory learning material to a primary grade Hindu pupil. The diary of a Class 2 Hindu student, who

happened to be the lone non-Muslim in class, contained generic assignments of Quran-based homework—like 'Read Kalma', 'Read Surah Fatiha'.

Supriya Goud, an aunt of the child, made a video statement confronting the school management. The video went viral, and the school management immediately terminated the services of the teacher, calling it a minor lapse. Supriya did not buy that entirely. "When questioned, the principal initially claimed religious teaching was mandatory for all the students. How can it be?" she asked, speaking to media. "Is Bhagavad Gita also taught to everyone?" She saw the teacher's actions as "attempts to brainwash" a young child.

BJP and Hindu activists barged into the school on July 16, demanding that its licence be cancelled.

Hyderabad police and education department officials are investigating the episode. But the controversy scaled up further as Union minister Bandi Sanjay and Telangana BJP chief Ramchander Rao jumped in, condemning it as a conversion mafia's attack on Hindu culture, enabled directly by the Congress regime's "minority appease-

ment" approach. "What we witnessed in Saidabad is not an isolated incident. These are the ways by which schools run by certain sections indulge in conversions," Rao told INDIA TODAY.

Neither the Congress nor the AIMIM leaders have reacted yet. The BJP has been gaining ground in Telangana in recent years—it holds eight out of its 17 Lok Sabha seats. In the 2020 polls to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, the saffron party's

tally had surged from four to 48 in a total of 150 wards. Capable of self-harm through internal squabbles, the 'school jihad' cases are a godsend for the party, a BJP leader tells INDIA TODAY. A city autorickshaw with a 'Jai Shri Ram' slogan, whose driver was allegedly assaulted, became part of the frame as Sanjay bought him a new auto—driving it himself for a few miles. Maybe the narrative will travel further: up to the assembly polls in 2028. ■



ALAMY

◀ **KALINGA**
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The new Tarpan
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coming up nearby

▶ **ODISHA**

ODISHA AWAKES ITS PAST

The homes of its progenitors, a Kalinga statue, a seaside Tagore nest—Odisha renews its heritage

By **Arkamoy Datta Majumdar**

I **N HIS FIFTH AND LAST TERM AS CHIEF MINISTER BEGINNING 2019,** Biju

Janata Dal supremo Naveen Patnaik had staked a lot of political capital on what seemed an unlikely project for him—an ambitious redevelopment of Odisha's temple ecosystem. Its flagship, the Puri heritage corridor, was in fact conceived in 2016—among the first in a rash of projects across India. Now, two years after coming to power on the plank of Odia pride, the BJP government is embossing its own stamp on heritage. Hundreds of crores of rupees are being poured into projects

designed to preserve historical memory, celebrate regional icons and strengthen Odia identity.

The most ambitious of these initiatives is the Baraputra Aitihya Gram Yojana, under which the state plans to develop the native villages, birthplaces and residences of eminent Odia personalities and historical figures—25 to begin with. With an allocation of Rs 15 crore for each site, the programme is expected to transform these locations into "living heritage spaces". The idea is "not simply conservation", says an official in the culture department. "We want people, especially

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▲ FACELIFT AWAITED The dilapidated 'Pather Puri', once associated with Tagore

He had visited Odisha as a state guest of Bishwanath Das, then prime minister of what was called Orissa province. Before leaving, Tagore expressed his desire to donate the property to the government. The building later served as a hostel for students of Puri's Samanta Chandra Sekhar College before gradually falling into disrepair.

"The building will be restored completely to what it once was," says Anil Kumar Dhir of INTACH. "We want visitors to experience the atmosphere that Tagore himself encountered during his stay in Puri. It will become a major cultural and tourist attraction. We are exploring ways to source and display artefacts connected to the poet, and the museum will include interactive exhibits and activities that allow visitors to engage with his life and work in meaningful ways."

Another project under consideration seeks to connect Odisha's ancient history with its contemporary identity. The government is planning to construct the Tarpan Sheela Stambh near Dhauli, overlooking the historic battlefield of the Kalinga war. The proposal originated from noted Odia author and academic Dr Pratibha Ray. Officials say the proposed pillar would be large enough to be visible from the Bhubaneswar-Puri national highway, much like the existing Peace Pagoda built with Japanese support. While emperor Ashoka is central to the narrative, the memorial is also expected to highlight Karuvaki, the Kalinga woman believed to have resisted Ashoka before later becoming his fourth wife. Two locations have been shortlisted.

The state has also enlisted IIT Kharagpur and the School of Planning and Architecture to provide technical expertise for preserving nearly 3,000 identified artefacts scattered across Odisha. Some officials in the culture department admit to the difficulty in finding organisations with the expertise needed to implement a project like Baraputra Aitihya Gram Yojana. Yet, with the BJP's cultural identity plank behind the endeavour, forward movement is likelier than not. ■

the youth, to engage with the lives and contributions of these personalities through museums, interpretation centres, cultural programmes and local economic activities."

The list of sites reflects Odisha's attempt to weave together multiple historical strands. To begin with, the native places of the 'Panchasakhas'. These are the five 16th-century poet-saints of Odisha, all contemporaries of Bhakti-era luminary Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who are seen as progenitors of the golden age of Odia literature: Balaram Das, Atibadi Jagannath Das, Mahapurusha Achyutananda Das, Jasobanta Das and Sishu Ananta Das. Then comes a diverse pantheon: literary giant Fakir Mohan Senapati, the first chief minister Dr Harekrushna Mahtab, playwright Nityananda Mahapatra, tribal leader Dharanidhar Bhuyan, Ol Chiki script creator Dr Raghunath Murmu, freedom fighter Laxmi Indira Panda and the legendary child martyr, Baji Rout.

Personalities associated with Odisha's resistance traditions, including the Paika Rebellion, the state's unification movement and India's freedom struggle are a special part of the list. Each site will feature open-air theatres and dedicated spaces for showcasing and selling local products, so as to create a live ambience, besides interpretation

Takeaways

➤ **Native villages of the Panchasakhas—16th c. poet-saints—to turn into 'living heritage spaces'**

➤ **A diverse modern Odia pantheon too on the list, as is Tagore's Pather Puri**

➤ **Warrior queen central to Kalinga memorial plan**

centres and museums that will attempt to lure in the crowds for a deeper dive. District collectors and the state archaeology department have been tasked with identifying land and initiating the tendering process.

A TAGOREAN DETOUR

In a parallel project, the state has approved Rs 12 crore for the restoration of Pather Puri, the historic seaside residence in Puri associated with Rabindranath Tagore. The project has been entrusted to the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). Tagore frequently stayed at the property during his visits to Odisha. During his final visit in April-May 1939, he wrote at least three poems—*Pravasi*, *Janmadin* and *Epare Opare*.



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DEEP END
Aerial photo
of submerged
areas in Jorhat
district, Jul. 22

► ASSAM

Early Warning Failure

Flash floods wreak havoc in the state with even normally safe Upper Assam districts inundated

By **Priyanka Saharia**

NEPALIKHUTI, A VILLAGE SOME 12 KM from Nazira town in Assam's Sivasagar district, has fallen silent.

For over a week now, hundreds of families have been living under tarpaulin sheets. Their houses are buried under mud, the air is filled with the stench of dead livestock, and the roads remain blocked in every direction.

Nepalikhuti is the last village in Assam along the Nagaland border. It received no warning before the flood arrived. Farmer Binod Sharma says that, on July 19, he had gone out to look at the swollen Dikhow river, but it didn't look too bad. "But, suddenly, the floodwaters rushed in. The water level rose so fast, I didn't know what to do," he says.

Assam faces floods every year, and the state has seen years with higher death tolls. What made this year's flood different was the areas it entered and the speed at which it arrived. Sivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat lie on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, on land long considered above 'normal flood level'. On July 23, the three neighbour-

ing Upper Assam districts accounted for 678,000 of the affected people, more than 94 per cent of the state's total. Seventy-eight people are dead, 40 still missing. Across Assam, nearly 49,000 hectares of cropland were submerged, more than 88,000 livestock affected with over 26,500 animals dead.

The immediate trigger came from outside Assam. Rajiv Lochan Deka, head of the department of agrometeorology at Assam Agricultural University, says, "The flash floods were caused by extreme rainfall in Nagaland's Mon, Wokha, Longleng and Mokokchung districts on July 18-20. It led to significant downstream run-off that surged into

STATE SCAN

Sivasagar, Jorhat and Charaideo." Assam, too, was getting heavy rain—Sonari town in Charaideo district got 190 mm on the night of July 18 alone. The catchment areas, saturated by pre-monsoon showers, were already in a condition where they would release water rather than absorb it. Among Deka's list of factors that made the situation worse: deforestation, loss of natural wetlands and road construction.

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma blamed it on the excess rainfall: 493 per cent above normal in Mokokchung and 436 per cent above normal in Charaideo, which prevented the swollen Brahmaputra's tributaries from draining their water. Pijush Hazarika, Assam's minister for agriculture, irrigation and parliamentary affairs, told the assembly on July 23 that these were the worst floods in eastern Assam in over 60 years.

LESSONS NOT LEARNT

Could the destruction have been prevented? Nayan Sharma, an adjunct professor at IIT Roorkee and a river engineer, feels the scale of destruction was perhaps avoidable. The main failure, he says, was in forecasting and issuing warnings. The country's satellite systems can now detect such weather systems hours and sometimes days in advance. But Assam's early warnings network was not connected well enough to use the information. Sharma proposes several practical measures: strengthening embankments with geosynthetics and articulated concrete blocks, building drainage sluices at natural low points, and clearing and channelising the heavily silted Bhogdoi. His most urgent recommendation: "100 per cent afforestation in watershed areas."

The recommendations are not new. The BJP came to power in Assam in 2016 with a promise to make the state flood-free. A scheme called 'Living with Floods' was introduced in the 1990s but later withdrawn following allegations of corruption. Experts say the larger problem lies in an approach that identifies high-risk flood zones and concentrates resources only in those areas. That leaves districts classified as low-risk unprepared when they suddenly face a major flood. ■

Takeaways

► **Upper Assam bore the brunt of floods this time; 678,000 people affected**

► **Extreme rain in bordering Nagaland districts may have led to big downstream runoff**

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► MADHYA PRADESH

E20 TWIST: RICE ON A ROUND TRIP

A new scam has been invented in the rice-ethanol pipeline. Broken grains meant for fuel come back to PDS

By **Rahul Noronha**

ETHANOL ISN'T GETTING GOOD PRESS OF LATE. IF THE DIVERSION OF RICE as an alternative source for the

E20 blend is a controversy within a controversy, Madhya Pradesh has managed to squeeze out a further subset of that—rice meant for ethanol manufacturing in distilleries being routed back to the public distribution system (PDS)! The Balaghat police have detected a scam that involves conniving distillery and rice mill owners, and possibly government officials, all of whom make a clean profit in each step of the transaction.

The plot started unspooling with three rice-laden trucks being seized at Sancheti Rice Mill in Waraseoni town, Balaghat district. The relevant permissions suggested the rice should have been bound for AVJ Agrico, an ethanol manufacturing company based in Chhindwara. It was part of a consignment from the Food Corporation of India (FCI), allocated specifically for ethanol. Instead, it had been sent to a rice mill which, in turn, would plough it back into the public distribution system (PDS).

POCKET THE DIFFERENCE

How would that make money? To begin with, the FCI released this batch of rice at a discounted Rs 23,200 per tonne. There are some 22 ethanol plants in Madhya Pradesh, which get their raw material from government agencies. The FCI is supposed to give damaged rice to

these plants. Instead, it gave good quality rice in this case, which the ethanol plant then transfers to the rice mill. The latter shows it as new custom-milled grain and sells it back to the FCI. The paddy the rice mill was separately allocated by the FCI for milling and producing PDS rice gets diverted to the open market, perhaps even to the export market.

Takeaways

► **Seizures of rice-laden trucks in Balaghat reveal mechanics of new scam**

► **Broken rice, released by FCI to ethanol makers, gets sold to mills—then to FCI!**

Local media and police claim it to be a scam worth “a thousand crore”. The FCI accepts that such leakage exists but has denied the scale. It says the rice seized is worth just Rs 5.5 lakh. Aditya Mishra, Superintendent of Police, Balaghat, has set up a 25-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the case as it involved multiple districts (the trail could even extend to Maharashtra). A total of four people have been arrested, and 13 people booked for fraud; 17 trucks con-

taining rice have been seized till now.

The FCI says a total of 2.98 lakh tonnes of rice was supplied to distilleries at Rs 22,500 per tonne in ethanol supply year 2024-25, and another 2.41 lakh tonnes at Rs 22,300 per tonne in 2025-26, till June 30. The local media, it says, wrongfully multiplied the total 5.39 lakh tonne supplied rice with its value to claim a scam of Rs 1,160 crore. It claims the distilleries had largely paid the due amounts. It agrees, however, that 24.25 tonnes of diverted rice—worth Rs 5.63 lakh—was detected by an FCI inspection team; an FIR was lodged against the distillery, its deposit impounded, and the state food department imposed a fine of Rs 44.12 lakh on the rice mill.

Since it's a newly minted scam, the picture is still evolving. One key missing link: a specified quantum of rice, and its output, cannot be shown in two different places. Rice meant for ethanol is round-tripped “from FCI to distillery to rice mill to FCI” and then disappears into the PDS network. But how does the distillery show the gap in the ethanol it was supposed to produce with the allocated rice? Sources say the distillery owner has to send an associated quantum of ethanol to the petroleum company and issue a certificate. Some questions are still unanswered. ■



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Simply put, by consciously looking past rigid Educational Models, Presidency University, is more focussed on equipping its Students to create a future and not to merely to make them job-worthy, though one dovetails into another. The University also acts as a one-stop-shop for higher education culminating its Program Portfolio with the **Ph. D Program**. Academic and Research oriented, the Ph. D Program of the University encompasses a wide array of domain-disciplines. Guided by highly accomplished members of the Teaching Fraternity with the right blend of research-inclination, as evidenced by the large number of papers published and books authored, the Ph. D Program is offered both, as full-time with Fellowship and part-time. Over the last eleven years since it commenced its academic operations, Presidency University has been bestowed with many Awards, Recognitions and also been ranked high amongst its Peers in the various Third Party-unbiased Surveys.





A person wearing a blue vest over a white shirt is seated at a table. In the foreground, there are yellow flowers. The background is a solid orange color.

COVER
STORY

THE BIG CHALLENGES AHEAD

**BEYOND NEET, THERE ARE SIX OTHER KEY
ISSUES ACROSS POLITICS, THE ECONOMY
AND GOVERNANCE THAT WILL TEST
PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI
AND HIS LEADERSHIP**

By **ANILESH S. MAHAJAN**

Photograph by **CHANDRADEEP KUMAR**

AT

At 10.40 on the morning of July 27, when Dharmendra Pradhan arrived at Parliament, MPs from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) gathered to receive him. They walked the former Union education minister in, chanting '*Dharmendra Pradhan zindabad*', and put a Maithili cap and a shawl on a man who had resigned 48 hours earlier under pressure from the street.

It was the kind of welcome a leader gets on his return from a win. But this was more a show for the BJP cadre than for the Opposition. Having a minister step down in the face of a major agitation is a situation the ruling BJP has never faced since 2014 when Narendra Modi led the party to a famous Lok Sabha victory. The rank and file, likely feeling let down when the prime minister asked Pradhan to resign as education minister, had to be assuaged—just as much as Gen Z had to be calmed after the widespread outrage over lapses in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET). The only comparable retreat was the withdrawal of the farm laws in November 2021, but that was after a year of sustained protests.

In addition to Pradhan's resignation, Modi passed a tough new law for exam malpractices in Parliament and also set up a high-level task force headed by Nandan Nilekani, the IT czar and architect of the Aadhaar project, to recommend reforms in examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), including NEET. But NEET is just one crisis for Modi. Looming ahead are several other formidable challenges in politics, the economy and governance—not least the task of rescuing the party image from the ignominy of the recent theft of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, culminating in the resignation of two prominent trustees.

1. WINNING BACK GEN Z

What must be troubling the prime minister is not that the NEET agitation exploded, but that he could not talk it down himself. No politician in India has worked harder at this constituency: Pariksha Pe Charcha every examination season, the appearances with sportspersons, the videos of a 75-year-old playing e-sports, the studied openness to new technology. But when Gen Z anger erupted over the lack of accountability in the NEET leaks and



PTI

AFTER FORCING PRADHAN'S RESIGNATION, PM MODI NOW HAS TO ASSUAGE THE PARTY CADRE WHILE ALSO WINNING OVER GEN Z

cancellation, it cut at the very core of his credibility.

Modi expects the announcement of the Nilekani-led task force to go a long way to assuage Gen Z's feelings. The proposed technology-led overhaul, the prime minister has assured the youth, will make the examination system trusted, transparent and error-proof while changing the structure of the agency that runs it. The task force includes former ISRO chairman S. Somanath, former Intelligence Bureau director Tapan Deka, IIT Madras director V. Kamakoti, former education secretary Anita Karwal and



POLITICAL THEATRE
Left, Dharmendra Pradhan being felicitated outside Parliament following his resignation, Jul. 27; Union ministers J.P. Nadda and Jitendra Singh meet CJP spokespersons, Jul. 25

PTI

THE BJP MAY HAVE TIDED OVER THE CURRENT NEET CRISIS FOR THE MOMENT, BUT THE WIDER ISSUE OF THE JOB-EDUCATION MISMATCH PERSISTS

logistics expert Amrit Lal Meena.

On the face of it, this appears to be a strong response to the NEET controversy. But there have been two detailed reform blueprints before—the K. Radhakrishnan Committee report of 2024 and the one by the Parliamentary Standing Committee the following year. Both identified weaknesses in the NTA and suggested specific ways to prevent examination leaks. Many of those recommendations remain unheeded.

The Radhakrishnan panel's proposals on question papers were remarkably specific. It called for a trusted pool of vetted experts, clear rules for selecting paper-setters and vetters, conflict-of-interest declarations and non-disclosure agreements. Setters were preferably not to work in their home cities. Separate teams were to prepare multiple papers, while language experts had to certify that no outsider had seen the content. The panel also wanted large question banks from which papers could be assembled close to the exam date through a secure and randomised process. This would break the direct link between an individual expert and the final paper.

These proposals addressed the very point at which the 2026 NEET leak allegedly occurred. According to the investigation detailed in the documents, some experts worked both as paper-setters and translators, giving a small group access to large parts of the examination. Had the recommended separation of roles, conflict checks, secure question banks and random selection been followed, the

alleged insiders might never have known which questions would appear and the leak could plausibly have been prevented.

Of the 101 recommendations proposed by the Radhakrishnan committee, the government has accepted all—but implemented only 57 so far. The measures delayed include multi-session testing for very large examinations, a multi-stage NEET-UG and a hybrid model in which encrypted papers travel digitally and are printed at

the examination centre. The reforms introduced for 2025 hardened the logistics chain but left the paper-setting stage largely untouched. That is exactly where the system broke in 2026. The new task force must therefore define the terms of reference for its work, audit why the earlier recommendations were not implemented and translate the Radhakrishnan committee's recommendations into an operational blueprint. Otherwise, its formation will appear as nothing more than a tactical move to quell the dissent on the streets.

To win Gen Z's trust, Modi will have to address not just the current NEET crisis but also the larger issue of mismatch between education and jobs. The numbers are unambiguous. The Periodic Labour Force Survey for June 2026 puts unemployment among 15- to 29-year-olds at 16.2 per cent against an overall rate of 5.5 per cent; the figure is higher (18.2 per cent) in urban India, and is above 25 per cent for young women. Annual data is even more dismal. Unemployment for those with secondary education and above was 6.5 per cent in 2025 against 0.3 per cent for the non-literate.

Modi's own initiatives to bridge the skill gap have yielded underwhelming results so far, its sharpest illustration being the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme. Across its first three pilot rounds, companies made about 186,000 offers. Just over 16,000 young people joined, roughly one and a half per cent of those who applied. From April this year, the scheme was thrown open to MSMEs, global capability centres and statutory bodies, and the monthly stipend was raised from Rs 5,000 to Rs 9,000. The government needs to come up with a radical revamp of the education system with a heavy emphasis on vocational skills and upgrades to ensure youth are gainfully employed. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has plenty of good intentions but must be implemented rapidly.

THE CASCADING EFFECT OF FUEL PRICE HIKES DUE TO THE WEST ASIA CRISIS HAS PUSHED UP RETAIL AS WELL AS FOOD INFLATION

2. BOOSTING THE ECONOMY

What has perplexed many is why an economy said to be growing at more than 7 per cent has failed to deliver a broader sense of prosperity. Private investment has remained sluggish despite the Centre's sustained push to kick-start the investment cycle through large-scale public spending. India has also struggled to harness its demographic dividend, failing to generate enough jobs for the roughly 12 million people who enter the workforce each year. Nor has it been able to move the needle on manufacturing, whose share of GDP has remained stubbornly stuck at a low 16-17 per cent for years.

Of course, the war in West Asia has been a big drag on the economy. India imports nearly half its crude oil, 60 per cent of its natural gas and 90 per cent of its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from the region. Two-thirds of the country's urea imports also originate there. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz during the US-Iran conflict had already choked supplies to India; the attacks by Houthi rebels on Saudi Arabian oil installations along the Red Sea coast have now affected shipping traffic through the alternative Bab el-Mandeb Strait. On July 23, Brent crude hit the \$100 a barrel mark for the first time since May. Most analysts forecast it remaining in the \$80-85 range this fiscal, as much as 15 per cent higher than the previous financial year.

The Centre had hiked fuel prices multiple times during the Iran war, leading to a cumulative Rs 7.50 per litre rise in both petrol and diesel, and with crude oil prices continuing to be volatile, it will be in no hurry to reverse the hikes. Higher fuel prices have a cascading impact on the economy, hiking input costs that subsequently make goods and services more expensive. Combined with higher food inflation, this has led to the sharpest rise in retail inflation in 18 months this June. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has forecast inflation to remain



PTI



BOILING POINT
People queue up to refill LPG cylinders, Faridabad, Mar. 22; (below) DMK MPs protest delimitation, Delhi, Mar. 19

ARUN KUMAR



ENACTING THE DELIMITATION BILL IS CRUCIAL FOR MODI TO STEER THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION AWAY FROM JANTAR MANTAR

above the 5 per cent mark in the current financial year.

The Gulf war had also been putting pressure on the rupee, which fell to nearly 97 to the dollar on May 20. The rising cost of India's imports during the war have widened the current account deficit (the difference in the value of the country's exports and imports) while falling net FDI and an increased outflow of foreign portfolio investments have impacted the capital account. The crisis on the balance of payments front became evident when PM Modi on May 10 exhorted citizens to curb spending on fuel, gold and foreign travel to curb the outflow of money. The RBI, meanwhile, drew heavily on its reserves to shore up the rupee, which caused the national forex stockpile to fall from an all-time high of \$728.5 billion in February 2026 to around \$676.2 billion by late July 2026.

According to experts, the government's priorities in the wake of the West Asia war should be agriculture, MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises), the environment and alternative energy. In agriculture, the focus must be on raising productivity, promoting value-added products, reducing wastage and boosting exports, while making the sector more resilient to the vagaries of climate change. For MSMEs, which create and absorb the maximum number of jobs, skill creation, say experts, must remain the foremost priority.

3. PASSING THE DELIMITATION BILL

This is one test that Modi has set for himself—and it is a high-stakes gamble. The BJP leadership is looking for a legislative victory substantial enough to energise the cadre and steer the national conversation away from Jantar Mantar. The 10-hour debate on the examinations amendment, in which younger MPs such as Tejasvi Surya and Bansuri Swaraj took centre stage, was only a curtain-raiser. The real contest lies in two constitutional measures being shepherd-ed by Amit Shah's home ministry. The first is the One Nation, One Poll amendment, aimed at holding simultaneous general and state elections. Cleared by the Ram Nath Kovind committee, it was introduced in the Lok Sabha in December 2024 and now awaits scrutiny by a joint parliamentary committee. The second is a fresh push for delimitation, a politically fraught exercise that is positioned as an enabling precondition for the implementation of the promised 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament from 2029, expanding the total number of seats in the Lok Sabha from 550 to 850. Back in April, the government had convened a special session for the purpose but had failed to muster the requisite numbers.

The government's arithmetic has improved since. The BJP's landslide victory in West Bengal on May 4, winning 207 of its 294 seats, heralded its first government in the eastern state. It was followed by a split in the Trinamool Congress that took about 20 Lok Sabha MPs and

CHANGING EQUATIONS

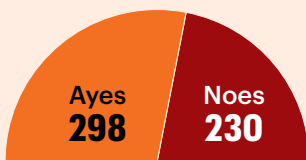
A constitutional amendment needs a two-thirds majority of members present and voting, and a majority of the total membership of each House. The NDA is better placed now than it was during the Budget session when the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha

LOK SABHA
Total seats: **543**

APRIL SCORE

**Constitution
(131st Amendment)
Bill defeated**

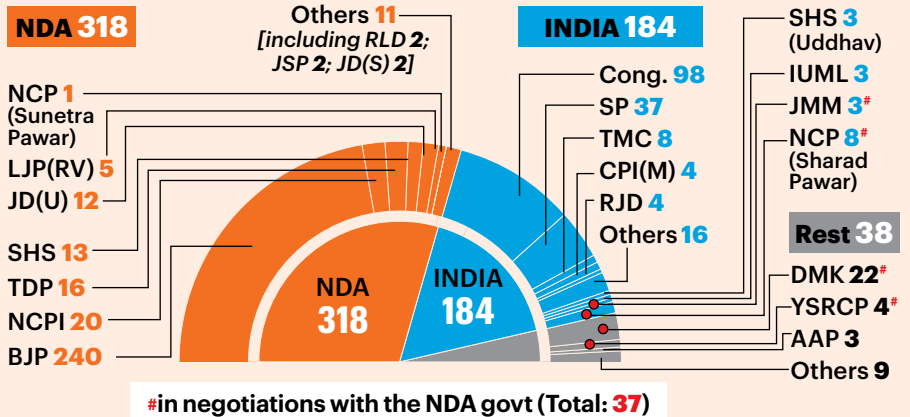
Members present: **528**



PRESENT SCENARIO

Current strength: **540** | Two-thirds majority: **360***

*of the full House; passing the bill will need two-thirds of those present and voting



SHS: Shiv Sena; TDP: Telugu Desam Party; NCPI: Nationalist Citizens Party of India (rebel TMC MPs); NCP: Nationalist Congress Party; LJP(RV): Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas); JD(U): Janata Dal (United); JSP: JanaSena Party; RLD: Rashtriya Lok Dal; JD(S): Janata Dal (Secular); Cong.: Congress; SP: Samajwadi Party; TMC: Trinamool Congress; CPI(M): Communist Party of India (Marxist); RJD: Rashtriya Janata Dal; IUML: Indian Union Muslim League; JMM: Jharkhand Mukti Morcha; DMK: Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam; YSRCP: Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party; AAP: Aam Aadmi Party

four Rajya Sabha members away from Mamata Banerjee, with the Lok Sabha group merging into a formation that has signalled support for the NDA and the Upper House members joining the BJP outright. Six of Uddhav Thackeray's MPs have crossed to Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena. Talks are on with the Sharad Pawar faction of the Nationalist Congress Party to merge its eight MPs with Sunetra Pawar's group. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, now out of the INDIA (Indian National Democratic Inclusive Alliance) bloc, is a possibility on specific measures. M.K. Stalin, having lost the assembly election to Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, needs the cover of a national party against investigations by the new state government, and BJP managers are telling him the fresh bill will carry a 50 per cent formula inside it. The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party, which had supported the bill in April as well, and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha are on the same list.

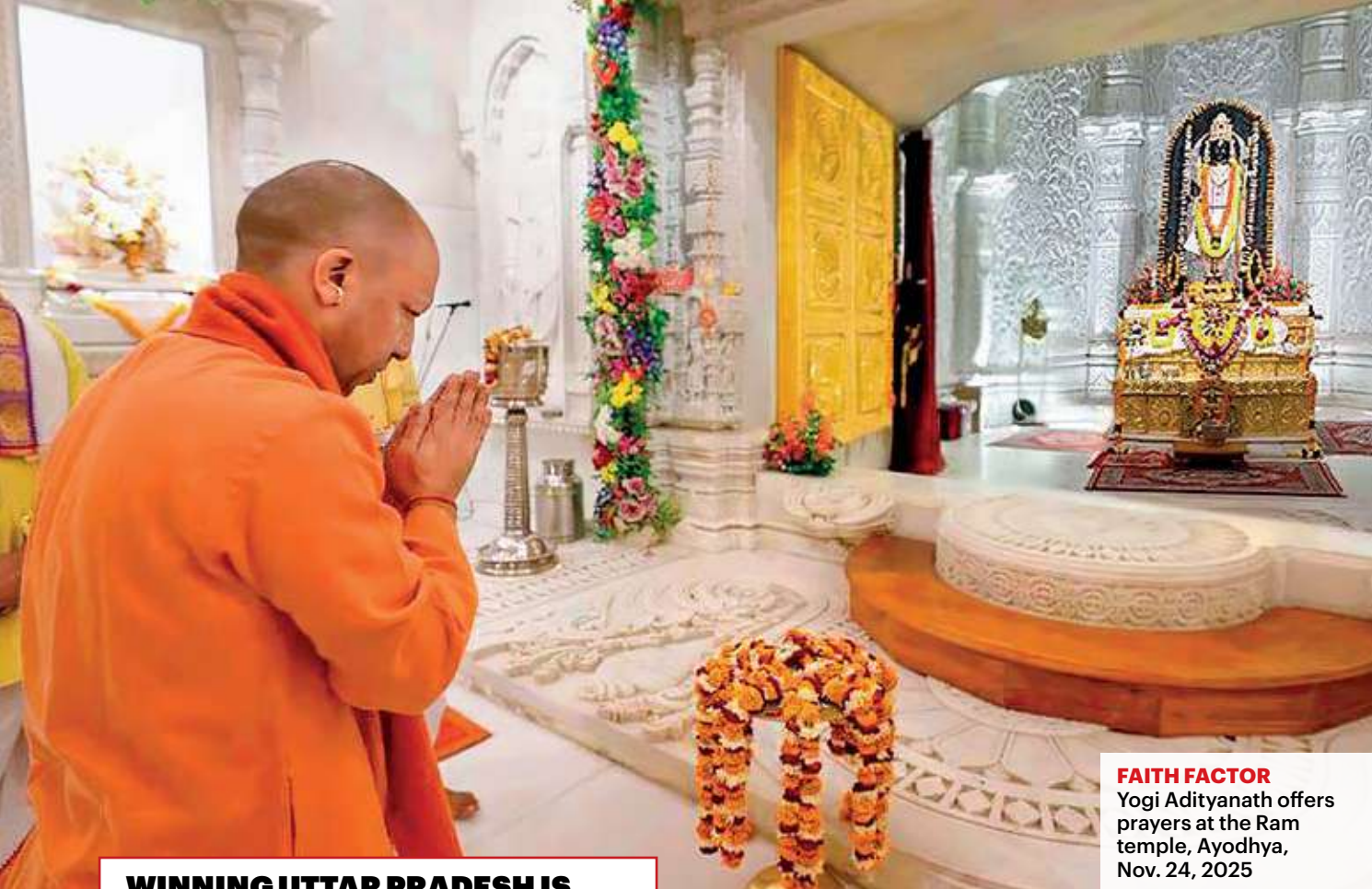
It is still not enough. The NDA has 318 members in the lower house against the 360 required for a two-thirds majority. Even if every new constituent votes with the government, the tally comes to about 355. That leaves the managers five short and hunting. One technicality could help them. Article 368 requires two-thirds of those present and voting, along with a majority of the total membership of each House, which means an absence is worth almost as much as a

conversion. A good deal of the negotiation now under way is not about who will vote yes but about who can be persuaded to be somewhere else that afternoon.

For Modi, this is the cleanest available way to look like himself again. One Nation, One Poll and women's reservation are the two pillars of the prime minister's constitutional agenda that the Opposition finds difficult to oppose openly, though they are divided on delimitation. If he succeeds in pushing through either, it will determine whether Modi 3.0 can deliver transformational change—or merely manage crises. At the same time, a second failure in four months, coming on the heels of the NEET capitulation, would be a serious blow to its credibility.

4. WINNING UTTAR PRADESH

Another test is one Modi cannot delegate, because it rests on the one skill he has consistently mastered: winning elections. Seven states go to the polls in 2027. Five of them—Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur—are BJP-ruled; Punjab is held by the Aam Aadmi Party; the Congress has Himachal Pradesh. The biggest prize, by far, is UP, with 80 Lok Sabha seats and a 403-member assembly. But the state's



FAITH FACTOR
Yogi Adityanath offers prayers at the Ram temple, Ayodhya, Nov. 24, 2025

WINNING UTTAR PRADESH IS CRUCIAL FOR MODI AND BJP. BUT WHILE YOGI REMAINS POPULAR, ANTI-INCUMBENCY AND THE AYODHYA DONATION THEFT MAY MAKE IT AN UPHILL TASK

IAN S

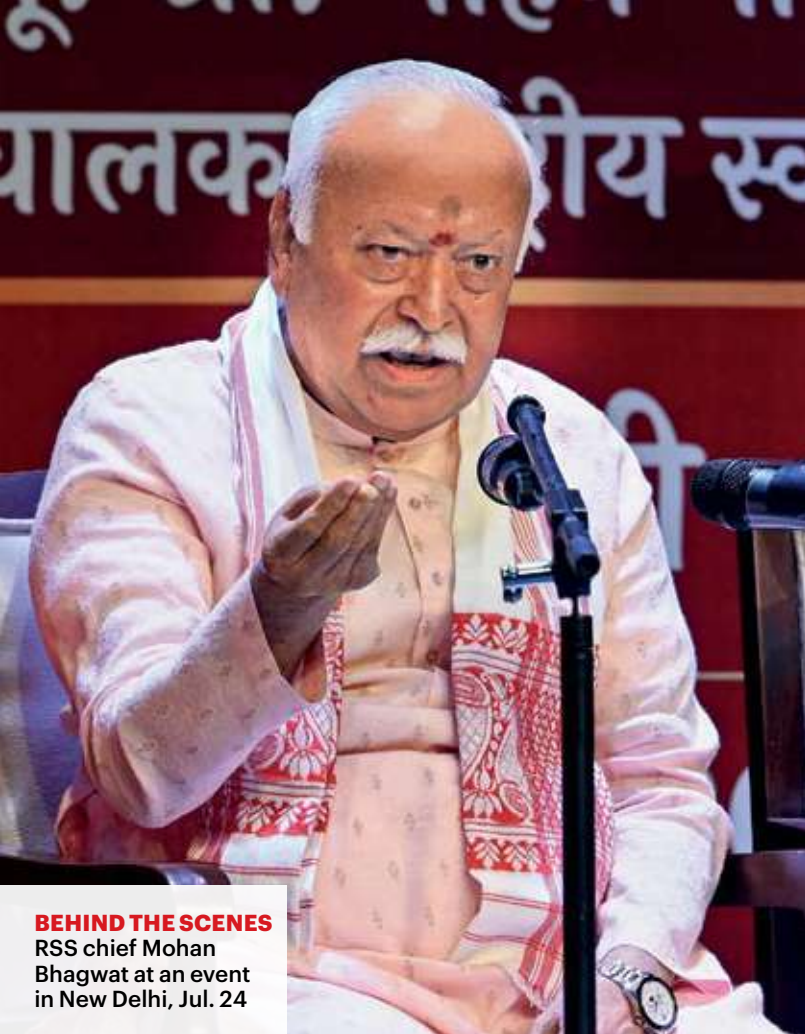
importance goes beyond numbers. A comfortable BJP victory in UP would steady the party's cadre across the country and reinforce the message that 2024 was merely a bad patch, not a political inflection point. A close contest, however, would send the opposite signal. The party knows exactly when the ground shifted. In the 2024 general election, the BJP won just 33 of UP's 80 LS seats, with a vote share of around 41 per cent—a sharp fall from the 62 seats it had secured in 2019 and its poorest performance in the state in the Modi era. The Samajwadi Party (SP) won 37 seats, while the INDIA bloc finished with 43. More damaging was the loss of Faizabad, the constituency that includes Ayodhya, just six months after the prime minister had inaugurated the Ram temple. That defeat demonstrated that the BJP could not rely on the temple to provide an enduring electoral advantage. The donation theft controversy this summer has complicated matters further by shifting the conversation from what was once its defining achievement to questions of mismanagement. The challenge now is to find an issue that can match the emotional resonance the Ram mandir once had in UP.

Some of what followed 2024 would have been difficult to imagine earlier. The party embraced a caste census,

an idea many of its own leaders had spent years opposing. Sunil Bansal, the architect of the BJP's formidable booth machinery in the state, was moved to a national role. Yogi Adityanath was given greater latitude in senior bureaucratic appointments. There is little doubt within the BJP that Yogi remains the state's most effective vote-getter after Modi himself. But he also carries the burden of a decade in office—an incumbency no UP chief minister has successfully overcome before. And the past two months have tested precisely the section of the electorate that has traditionally backed him: aspirational, upper-caste, urban and young.

However, what worries BJP strategists in UP is not anti-incumbency or factionalism, it is arithmetic. In 2022, the BJP and its allies secured 43.8 per cent of the vote against 36.6 per cent for the SP alliance. But the margin alone does not explain the result. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) polled 12.9 per cent and converted little of it into seats. That stranded vote, concentrated in reserved constituencies and eastern UP, provided the BJP the cushion it needed to edge past a divided Opposition in a string of closely contested seats. That cushion is now shrinking. The BSP failed to win a single Lok Sabha seat in 2024, and its vote share slipped into single digits. Several of its district-level organisers and second-rung leaders—R.K. Chaudhary, now an MP with the SP, Indrajeet Saroj and Lalji Verma—have moved closer to SP chief Akhilesh Yadav. What they bring with them is not merely votes, but the organisational machinery that mobilises them: booth committees and local leaders who know which households in which lanes turn out on polling day.

RSS IS SAID TO BE UNHAPPY WITH THE USE OF FORCE ON THE PROTESTERS. CHIEF BHAGWAT AT AN EVENT SAID GEN Z NEEDED TO BE HEARD, NOT REPRIMANDED



ARUN KUMAR

BEHIND THE SCENES
RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat at an event in New Delhi, Jul. 24

Which means that to retain UP in March 2027, Modi cannot merely hold on to his base; he has to expand it—a formidable challenge that will require reclaiming the narrative, rejuvenating the BJP cadre and Sangh volunteers on the ground and curbing factionalism.

5. KEEPING THE RSS HAPPY

What should also worry Modi and the BJP is the conspicuous silence of the wider Sangh Parivar during the entire Gen Z agitation. In earlier battles, the affiliates of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) could be counted on to build a counter-narrative, mobilise support or put their own numbers on the streets. This time, there was little sign of any such intervention. The conclusion many BJP workers have drawn is that the government was left to take the beating on its own.

The silence, though, was not absolute. On July 24, a day before Pradhan's resignation, RSS sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat, while addressing the closing session of the Vishwa Mangalya Sabha's national meeting on contemporary motherhood at Delhi's Ambedkar International Centre, said his generation had grown up in a culture of obedience, but today's youth were different. They ask questions and have to be given reasons, affection and time. He

made no reference to Jantar Mantar, but the message for Modi was unmistakable.

A second version has been doing the rounds since: that the Sangh was not absent so much as unconvinced. According to sources, blunt feedback reached the prime minister after July 20—that the police action had created a rupture with sections of the BJP's core constituency. The RSS is itself in the midst of a major Gen Z outreach initiative as part of its centenary celebration. Watching a government that it helped build deploy tear gas, lathis and pellet guns against students in the national capital was hardly the message that campaign needed.

Either interpretation poses a problem for Modi, say experts. But the second one is more consequential. The Sangh may have partly reconciled with the BJP leadership, put its workers behind the party's machine in crucial states and had a say in a few state units, but it has not bothered to hide its displeasure. For example, it has been sitting quiet for two years on the BJP request to release 14 pracharaks as general secretaries (organisation) in its state units. That post is the pivot on which a state unit turns, and the incumbent is traditionally the RSS's man inside the party. Eight states still have the vacancy, poll-bound Uttarakhand among them. The BJP leadership understands that they also need the Sangh's workforce and leadership to triumph in Lucknow a third time.

6. RESHUFFLING TEAM MODI

This is the only challenge that is entirely within Modi's control, which is why the delay has begun to beg an explanation. Experts say a meaningful reshuffle of the council of ministers has been overdue for some time. The string of assembly victories after 2024—Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi and Bihar—was expected to provide the chance to move people out, induct fresh faces and clarify who was accountable for what. It never came. As a result, there are ministers who have been occupying the same portfolios for years without any

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- B.Sc. - Economics (Hons.)
- M.Sc. - Computational Mathematics

- B.A. - Journalism & Mass Communication (Hons.)
- M.A. - Journalism & Mass Communication
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)
- B.Tech. - Chemical Engineering (CE)
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STRATEGY SESSION
PM Narendra Modi and his team leave after a meeting at the Parliament library, Jul. 21

PTI

serious scrutiny of what they have delivered. Pradhan's name had figured in reshuffle speculation earlier, and one explanation for his continuance was his proximity to Shah. It does not help that he eventually exited through resignation rather than a broader reorganisation, because it suggests that public pressure forced a change the prime minister would have preferred to make on his own terms. Party sources are expecting the biggest reshuffle of Modi 3.0 to communicate two messages at once: performance matters, and a younger generation is ready to take charge.

The backlog in the Modi cabinet reflects in the organisation as well. A national team for party president Nitin Nabin has been pending for months. The appointment of a 45-year-old national president was read inside the party as the beginning of a handover to a younger generation, and Nabin has said in private conversations that he wants a 50:50 blend of new faces and old hands. That has yet to happen. UP still lacks a full-time in-charge. Punjab has none either. Uttarakhand, one of the nine states without a general secretary (organisation), votes in six months. State leaderships, particularly of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, are said to be under review as well. The BJP changed CMs in Uttarakhand thrice and won anyway. A

**EXPERTS SAY
A CABINET
RESHUFFLE
HAS NOW
BECOME AN
IMPERATIVE
FOR PM MODI
TO REWARD
PERFORMANCE
AND TO GIVE
CHARGE TO
A YOUNGER
COHORT**

change or two would signal that accountability does not stop in Delhi.

Realigning the bureaucracy is the harder part, as is evident in the current education crisis. Sources in both the BJP and the RSS say that this government leans too heavily on its officers, that the political leadership in several ministries has been reduced to signing off on decisions that have already been made, and that the officers concerned are not held accountable when those decisions go wrong. Over the past decade, serving and retired civil servants have begun presiding over a great deal of the institutional apparatus, be it Sanjay Malhotra at the RBI, Tuhin Kanta Pandey at SEBI, Ajay Seth at IRDAI since September, Ravneet

Kaur at the Competition Commission of India and Injeti Srinivas at the NSE. The reforms intended to change this equation have moved slowly. Mission Karmayogi and the lateral entry push delivered far less than was promised.

The result was the political explosion this summer. Modi has repeatedly demonstrated an ability to turn political setbacks into opportunities. He will need that skill once again. But before anything else, he must win back the confidence of the generation that will define India's future. ■

—with Kaushik Deka and M.G. Arun



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THE AFFORDABLE HOME SHORTFALL

Despite a shortage of nearly 10 million affordable homes in urban India, private developers are fast exiting the segment as they no longer find it lucrative, leaving homebuyers in the lurch

By **M.G. ARUN**

ONE OF THE FEW Signature Global's The Serenas, Sohna, Haryana



THE CRISIS

Demand for affordable housing keeps rising while supply struggles to catch up

REQUIREMENT

9.6
mn units
needed in
urban India

AVAILABILITY

28,102
units
launched in 8 large
cities in the first half
of 2026

SHORTAGE

9.54
mn units*
Supply gap

**Based on the
estimation that
56,000 units will
be added in 2026*



Padmashree Vinod, 48, a schoolteacher who moved from Thrissur to Mumbai in 1998, spent nearly two decades in a modest chawl at Kajupada near Andheri before shifting to a rented flat in Kurla. She had hoped to buy a home of her own within a couple of years and began looking for a one-bedroom flat. The cheapest option within Mumbai, however, cost Rs 1.2 crore. She expanded her search to Navi Mumbai, where Maharashtra government town planner Cidco was developing low-cost housing in Taloja, Dronagiri, Kharghar and Kalamboli. Even those were beyond her reach. “After reviewing the location, the size and the price, we found that the end-cost was as high as what some private developers were offering,” she says. “The word ‘affordable’ is just a façade.”

Millions across urban India, like Padmasree, dream of owning a home but are priced out. They are left with few choices: remain in rented chawls or ageing buildings with poor infrastructure and few amenities, or move to the city outskirts and endure long commutes. According to real estate consultancy Knight Frank, urban India faces a shortage of nearly 10 million affordable homes—priced up to Rs 45 lakh, with a carpet area of up to 60 sq. m in metros and 90 sq. m in non-metros, as defined by the government. And the gap is only widening.

Despite the pressing need, affordable housing remains a story of poor planning and policy apathy. Even flagship government schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), aimed at expanding access to affordable homes, have fallen well short of meeting rising demand. World Bank



“Affordable housing is not for private developers. Our governments are not invested in helping that segment”

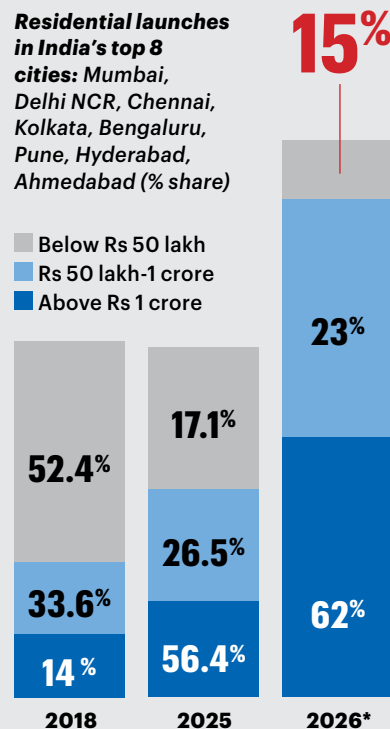
JERRY RAO, Founder, Value and Budget Housing Corporation

HARDIK CHHABRA

THE VANISHING BUDGET HOME

Once dominant in new launches, affordable housing has lost share to the mid-range and premium segments

Residential launches in India's top 8 cities: Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad (% share)



Source: Knight Frank; *Data for Jan.-Jun.

estimates show that India's urban population grew by about 23 per cent between 2014 and 2024, compared with the global average of 8.4 per cent. Today, 37 per cent of Indians live in urban areas, a share projected to rise to 40 per cent by 2030, driven by migration and the expansion of cities. Yet, housing for low- and middle-income groups and economically weaker sections has failed to keep pace.

The UN-Habitat's World Cities Report 2026 highlights a sharp decline in affordable housing across major cities. In India's eight largest cities—Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune and Ahmedabad—affordable housing accounted for nearly 52

PRIVATE SECTOR EXIT

This is not to say there were no sincere efforts. They were simply too small to meet the scale of the challenge or lacked long-term planning and sustained execution. Over the years, the government has launched several schemes to boost the supply of affordable housing. For instance, PMAY-U 1.0, introduced in 2015, has delivered 9.9 million homes for the urban poor and middle class across India. The scheme offered upfront interest subsidies on home loans, making EMIs more affordable for economically weaker sections, low-income groups and middle-income groups. While it had its own challenges, such as implementation delays



“The PM Awas Yojana is not adequate. There should be some sort of subsidy like the stamp duty and development charges concessions that the Maharashtra govt had allowed during COVID”

NIRANJANI HIRANANDANI, Chairman, Hiranandani Group

per cent of new supply in 2018 but dropped to just 15 per cent by 2026, according to Knight Frank. Meanwhile, the share of homes priced at Rs 1 crore and above rose from 14 per cent to over 62 per cent.

In absolute terms, only 28,102 of the 187,350 homes launched in the first half of 2026 across these eight cities were in the affordable segment. Most new launches—116,157 units—were priced above Rs 1 crore, while another 43,090 fell in the Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore bracket. With urban India facing a shortage of 9.6 million affordable homes, the country is on track to add barely 56,000 such units this year, leaving the deficit virtually unchanged at about 9.54 million homes. Knight Frank also notes that the supply-to-demand ratio plunged from 1.05 in 2019 to just 0.36 in 2025.

and hurdles in slum rehabilitation, the programme, whose first phase ended in March 2022, is generally deemed successful. The Centre has since launched PMAY-U 2.0 for 2024-29, which provides interest subsidies on home loans through an instalment-based mechanism to make long-term repayments more manageable.

However, these measures have not been enough. “The PMAY scheme is not adequate to address the needs of this segment,” says Niranjani Hiranandani, chairman of the Hiranandani Group. A large part of the affordable housing gap could have been bridged through greater private sector participation. But they have gradually lost interest, due to a host of factors that include scarce and expensive urban land, soaring construction costs, thin margins and regulatory hurdles

that inflate costs and delay projects. “Affordable housing is not for private developers. Our governments are not invested in helping that segment,” says Jerry Rao, former tech entrepreneur and founder of Value and Budget Housing Corporation (VBHC), an affordable housing venture. “We require the same number of approvals as a premium house, and the cost and time delays are the same. There is no support at all for affordable housing on the supply side. The Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) has not helped. It has just added one more layer of approval.”

No wonder, several developers that once focused on affordable housing have either exited the segment or shifted to premium projects. “All of VBHC's new six or seven projects are Rs 1 crore projects,” says Rao. Tata Housing, which has completed 27 affordable

WHAT AILS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

High costs, low margins and policy gaps are choking budget housing projects



↘ HIGH LAND PRICES

Skyrocketing urban land prices and a 25-30% surge in post-COVID construction costs have squeezed developers' profit margins. Around half the cost comprises taxes.

As a result, they are pushed to city peripheries, making commutes longer and difficult



↘ INORDINATE DELAYS

The lengthy process of acquiring land, securing clearances and completing construction makes projects costlier. Disruptions like the pandemic add to the delays



↘ LOW MARGINS

Private developers earn 25-30% profit margins on premium and luxury projects, compared with just 10-12% on affordable housing. Even a slight slowdown in sales can erode margins



↘ PRICE CAP

The government's Rs 45 lakh cap for 'affordable' homes has failed to keep pace with market realities, making budget housing economically unviable. Rising costs of cement, steel, labour and regulatory compliance further eat into margins



↘ INVESTMENT DROUGHT

The segment has attracted little interest from major institutional investors, large developers and public sector institutions. Instead, it is largely served by small local developers, who often face funding constraints and regulatory hurdles



↘ REGULATORY HURDLES

Developers must secure multiple approvals—land-use conversion, environmental clearances, zoning permissions, structural certifications and utility connections—before construction can begin. The process is often slow and opaque

housing projects across 17 cities, says its future developments will be in the mid, premium and luxury segments. "Most private developers have been driven away from affordable housing since the mid-to-upper end of the segment, where you have better margins, has thrived in the last four to five years," says Gulam Zia, senior executive director at Knight Frank India.

SOARING COST OF LAND

The irony is that while the real estate sector continues to grow at more than 10 per cent annually, affordable housing has all but vanished from developers' priority lists.

One of the biggest reasons for the decline in affordable housing is the sharp rise in urban land prices and the 25-30 per cent jump in post-pandemic construction costs, which have

squeezed developers' margins. According to estimates, land values in central Mumbai—across micro-markets such as Powai, Chembur, Ghatkopar and Vikhroli—have risen by 40-55 per cent over the past five years. "Land prices have gone up much faster than what they should have. That is a challenge," says Hiranandani. Adding to the burden, nearly half the cost of a home goes towards government levies. "For instance, if I am selling a property at Rs 60,000 per sq. ft, as much as Rs 30,000 goes to the government as stamp duty, development charges, cess, GST and so on. That creates a segment of housing that will not be affordable to those who deserve it," he adds.

A 2025 Knight Frank report says acquiring land for affordable housing in metros such as Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi and Chennai is economically

unviable because of soaring prices. Developers have therefore moved to city outskirts, where land is cheaper but often poorly connected to urban infrastructure. In the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, for instance, many such projects are located in Palghar, Karjat and Vasai-Virar—up to three hours from the central business districts. The long, expensive commute erodes the appeal of these homes.

Delays in the development cycle further drive up costs. "The problem is, from land acquisition to starting the development alone takes two to three years," says Sanjay Dutt, MD & CEO, Tata Housing. "To build takes another two to three years, for the project to be inhabitable takes another one or two years, and in between, you have the economic cycle, COVID, disruptions like war and so on, which further delays

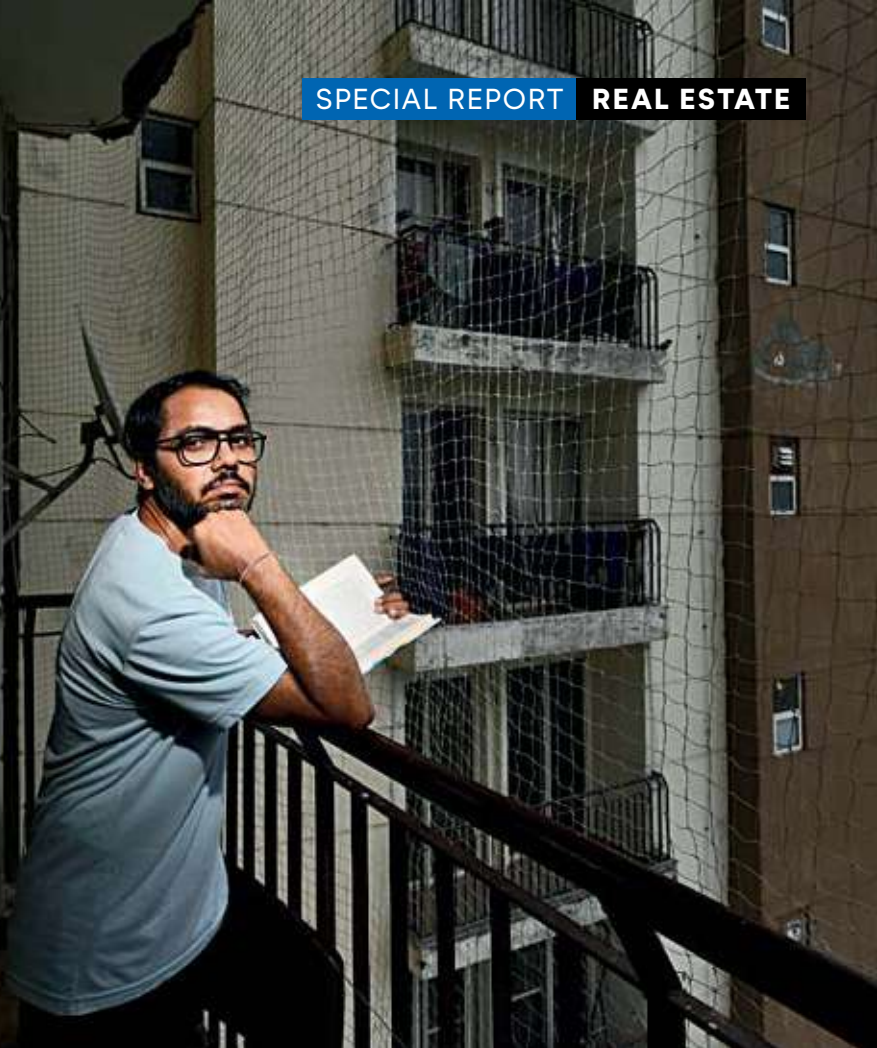
"OWNING A HOUSE IS OUT OF REACH"

SATYENDRA SHARMA, 44

Freelance content writer, Sector 151, Noida

Sharma lived in a rented home in Delhi with his mother, wife and two children before moving to Noida in 2020 as rents soared. But rents in Noida soon began climbing too, prompting him to dream of buying a home in Sector 151. That dream, however, has remained elusive. The most affordable homes now cost between Rs 80 lakh and Rs 1 crore—well beyond his budget. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a home was available for Rs 65 lakh, but a salary cut forced him to let the opportunity pass. Today, even if he secures a home loan, he would have to repay it within 15 years, pushing up his EMIs. He already spends Rs 19,000 a month on rent and nearly Rs 30,000 on his children's education. "Buying a house in Delhi-NCR remains just a dream for a middle-class person like me," he says.

— Manish Dixit



SPECIAL REPORT REAL ESTATE

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

the project." By the time homes reach buyers—if they do—they are often years late. "In the end, the developers are not in the business of making affordable homes, they are in the business of making profitable homes. Even if they build affordable homes, by the time they finish, the projects become luxury. So, it is a continuous loop, nobody is really addressing it, yet everybody seems to be talking about it." According to Dutt, even a Rs 1 crore home in Mumbai is still "cheap" because of the costs involved. "The government takes away 50 per cent, anyway. You are left with the balance 50, of which you make 15 per cent return," he adds.

Experts say the problem also lies in the design of affordable housing schemes. "It (the design) is haphazard, and is privately controlled. It follows a bid process, where the plot goes to the highest bidder by default and design," says Dutt. The high price developers pay for land, he argues, can only be justified by building premium com-

mercial or residential projects.

Another factor is the shifting economics for developers. Private builders earn profit margins of 25-30 per cent on premium and luxury projects, compared with just 10-12 per cent on affordable housing. Unlike premium projects, affordable housing offers little scope for revenue-generating amenities or "frills" such as swimming pools and gyms. "From the developers' point of view, margins are extremely low in affordable housing, and even a slight fall in sales velocity will mean margins getting further hurt," says Rao. "At the same time, overhead costs remain the same. So, there is very little incentive to be in this business."

The economics have been further strained by an outdated definition of affordability. The government's price cap for an "affordable" home has remained unchanged at Rs 45 lakh since 2017. Meanwhile, soaring land prices and rising construction, labour and compliance costs mean even basic homes on

city outskirts often breach that limit. Developers argue the cap has failed to keep pace with market realities.

REGULATORY MAZE

Yet another stumbling block is regulation. Developers must secure a range of approvals—land use conversion, environmental clearances, zoning permissions, structural certifications and utility connections—before construction can even begin. These approvals are often managed by multiple departments across different levels of government, making the process slow, opaque and inconsistent. Single-window clearance systems introduced in several states aim to simplify the process. However, these systems are often poorly integrated, partly digitised and still reliant on manual interventions that slow down progress. "There are schemes in various states where you are supposed to create certain affordable housing if you want to do a larger development, but they are not regulated

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properly, which means that supply of these homes do not come out on time,” says Dutt. None of that is designed in terms of quality of the product, last-mile connectivity, consideration of social infrastructure such as schools and hospitals. “They are done in locations with poor access...liveability index is poor. So, it does not serve the purpose even if they do get built,” he adds.

Inadequate institutional investments in affordable housing is yet another drawback. The segment has seen minimal engagement from major institutional investors, large-scale developers and public sector institutions. Instead, the bulk of construction activity in this space is driven by small and local developers who typically face constraints in terms of funding, project execution and adherence to regulatory standards, says the Knight Frank study. Extended timelines for project approvals and development clearances add significant financial burdens to builders, discouraging investments in low-margin projects.

THE POLICY PRESCRIPTION

The cost of capital in India is very high, followed by high taxes. “We have spoken about ease of doing business, but the cost of doing business is very high,” says Dutt. Many say that the real estate sector has several vested interests, because of the nature of the business. “State and central governments monetise their power in a way that it can only be accessible by rich and influential people. We are shutting every door and yet asking: why can’t we do affordable development?” he says.

Dutt believes the government holds the key to unlocking the sector’s potential. There has to be a serious effort to monetise vast tracts of land owned by the Centre and state governments. “There are 18,000 acres of port trust land in Mumbai. There were 350 acres of Dharavi land. There is plenty of land belonging to the Railways and defence. None of these bodies have been instructed to do anything about affordable homes,” he says.

Moreover, the governments, in their city development plans, need to



“The government holds the key to unlocking the affordable housing potential. There must be a serious effort to monetise vast tracts of land owned by the Centre and states”

SANJAY DUTT
MD & CEO, Tata Housing



“Most private developers have been driven away from affordable housing since the mid-to-upper end, which offers better margins, has thrived in the last 4-5 years”

GULAM ZIA
Senior Executive Director,
Knight Frank India

classify certain locations that must be reserved for affordable housing or mass housing, says Knight Frank’s Zia. “For example, there are land reservations for schools and hospitals, and civic amenities. If affordable housing is so crucial to maintain social equality, why is the government not classifying certain land only for it?” he asks. In land-scarce cities such as Mumbai, however, this may be difficult. That makes it all the more important to unlock underutilised land held by central agencies such as the railways and the defence establishment.

Another solution is to improve connectivity between cities and the hinterland. In Mumbai, for instance, if people can commute from Vasai, Virar, Panvel or Karjat within an hour, supported by affordable transport and better social infrastructure, part of the housing crisis could be addressed. Today, many spend over two hours commuting in overcrowded conditions at considerable expense. Experts also stress the need for an efficient sea transport network.

PMAY-U has worked better in blue-collar economies, where the key input—land—is relatively inexpensive. The white-collar services sector, concentrated mostly in metros and tier-2 cities, has been a major growth driver, but the scheme has not worked as well there, says Dutt. Wherever there is manufacturing or services, there should be a 30-40-year master plan with affordable transportation, hinterland connectivity and adequate social infrastructure. Hiranandani is of the view that the government also has to offer direct price support. “There should be some sort of subsidy which should be given, like the stamp duty and development charges concessions that the Maharashtra government had allowed during the pandemic,” he says.

But that is only part of the solution; affordable housing cannot succeed in isolation. It should be part of broader urban development. Cities need to offer an affordable quality of life, too. “It should be a place where a delivery boy or a cab driver—both vital to a modern city life—can also have a hygienic breakfast,” says Dutt, citing Singapore, where the quality of food sold on the street matches that in hotels.

Affordable housing is not a show-piece for developers but an essential need for millions of urban Indians. While the private sector’s retreat from the segment is worrying, the bigger concern is the absence of long-term, integrated planning, which has limited even government-led initiatives largely to smaller towns. Unless affordable housing becomes central to urban planning, India’s inequalities will persist, and the promise of a Viksit Bharat will remain out of reach. ■

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A NEW GROWTH MODEL

Gujarat's new industrial policy marks a shift from labour-intensive manufacturing to high-tech industries, betting on semiconductors, green energy and aerospace while confronting the challenge of creating enough quality jobs

By JUMANA SHAH

1. KACHCHH - ECONOMIC REGION

- Green hydrogen hub
- Deep-sea fishing cluster
- Agri-photovoltaic & saline agriculture innovation park
- Desert tourism circuit and entertainment city
- Mineral processing zone

ANI

Khavda renewable energy plant, Kachchh



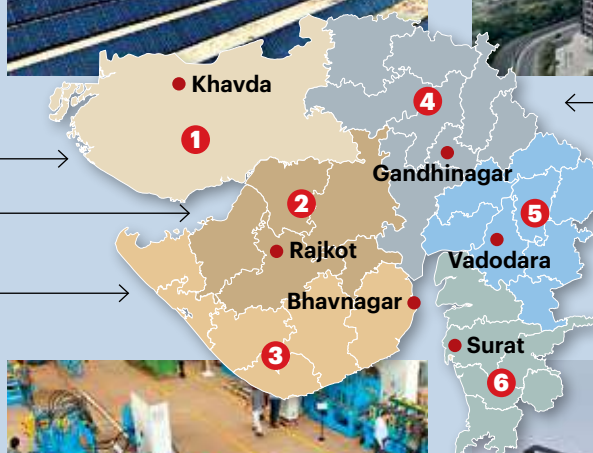
CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

GIFT City, Gandhinagar



2. SAURASHTRA - ECONOMIC REGION

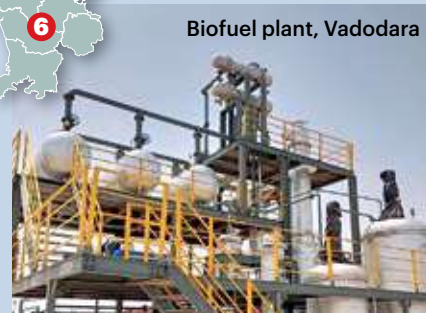
- Gujarat's largest multi-sector exports manufacturing hub
- India's largest Eco Industrial Park
- Auto parts hub
- Saurashtra Defence Innovation & Manufacturing Cluster
- Mega Food Park and Agro Cluster
- Regional Aerocity and MICE* centre
- Knowledge cluster for engineering & technology
(*Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions)



◀ **SIX ECONOMIC REGIONS PROPOSED UNDER THE VIKSIT GUJARAT INDUSTRIAL POLICY 2026**



Automotive steel factory, Rajkot



Biofuel plant, Vadodara

3. COASTAL - SAURASHTRA ECONOMIC REGION

- Cruise capital of India
- Bhavnagar as port-led city
- Fish Processing and Export Park in Veraval and Porbandar
- Gir Somnath as Spiritual and Wildlife Hub



Bhavnagar Port



Surat Diamond Bourse, DREAM City

₹10 lakh cr.

Investment target under the new industrial policy over five years; to support Gujarat's ambition to become a \$3.5 tn (Rs 338 lakh cr.) economy by 2047

21

No. of thrust sectors of the new policy, while support for small businesses continues

₹10,000 cr.

Minimum investment required in identified thrust sectors to qualify for customised incentive packages



4. NORTH GUJARAT ECONOMIC REGION

- Science and tech park (ESDM*-linked)
 - Agri-industrial corridor
 - International Medicity
 - AI ecosystem at GIFT City
 - Heritage, Religious & Buddhist circuit
 - Film and entertainment city
 - Augmented Reality-enabled E-sports zone
- (*Electronic System Design & Manufacturing)

5. CENTRAL GUJARAT ECONOMIC REGION

- Chhotaudepur as sports equipment hub
- Vadodara as bioeconomy hub

6. SURAT ECONOMIC REGION

- B2C Zone, DREAM City, Surat
- B2B Zone, High-speed Rail Zone, Surat
- EDU-City, HSR Zone, Surat

FOR DECADES, GUJARAT BUILT ITS REPUTATION AS INDIA'S FACTORY FLOOR. From textile mills in Surat and engineering workshops in Rajkot to ceramics in Morbi, pharmaceuticals in Ahmedabad and thousands of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the state created jobs and built one of India's strongest manufacturing economies. Now, the Viksit Gujarat Industrial Policy 2026 signals a decisive shift—from making more products to making more sophisticated products, reflecting a transition from labour-intensive to technology-intensive manufacturing.

The policy aims to attract Rs 10 lakh crore in investments over five years and contribute to Gujarat's ambition of becoming a \$3.5 trillion (Rs 338 lakh crore) economy by 2047. "With this policy, we are taking a decisive step towards building globally competitive industries, attracting next-generation investments and strengthening our integration with global value chains," said chief minister Bhupendra Patel, while releasing the new industrial policy last month.

THE BIG SHIFT

Gujarat, which accounts for 8.2 per cent of India's GDP, is among the country's wealthiest large states, with a per capita income of Rs 3.27 lakh in FY25, against a national average of Rs 2.05 lakh. Manufacturing is the single largest contributor to the state's economy, generating Rs 7.90 lakh crore, or 32.8 per cent of gross state value added, down from 36.8 per cent in FY22. Much of the decline, as per the Gujarat Socio-Economic Review 2025-26, reflects the normalisation of refining and chemical prices after the FY22 peak, alongside a prolonged slump in diamonds, textiles and chemicals since 2023. The state's Annual Survey of Industries estimates that nearly 2.6 million people are employed in the manufacturing sector. The challenge now is to ensure that employment growth is broad-based.

The new policy focuses on 21 thrust sectors, spanning advanced manufacturing, clean energy like green hydrogen, semiconductors, aerospace and traditional strengths such as

textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, food processing and engineering, while retaining support for small businesses. At the heart of this move is the creation of a new Ultra Mega Project category. Under this, companies investing at least Rs 10,000 crore and generating 3,000 jobs in the thrust sectors will qualify for customised incentive packages rather than fixed subsidies. The initiative gives Gujarat greater flexibility to negotiate with global manufacturers competing across countries



“WITH THIS POLICY, WE ARE TAKING A DECISIVE STEP TOWARDS BUILDING GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE INDUSTRIES, ATTRACTING NEXT-GENERATION INVESTMENTS AND STRENGTHENING OUR INTEGRATION WITH GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS”

BHUPENDRA PATEL
Chief Minister, Gujarat

and neighbouring states for large investments. Achal Bakeri, chairman of CII Gujarat State Council, and chairman and MD, Symphony Ltd, lauds the policy as comprehensive, laying as much emphasis on its actual implementation. "The state lacked a laid-out policy to compete and attract large investments," he says. "These investments were coming through on a case-to-case basis. Now, the policy gives coherence to the state's pitch."

That pitch, industry insiders say, is reinforced by Gujarat's reputation for efficient governance and speedy approvals. Anuj Jain, proprietor of Ahmedabad-based financial

advisory firm Artha Capital Partners, says Gujarat's biggest advantage in attracting investment has long been its ease of doing business, driven by streamlined online approvals, compliance systems and subsidy disbursal mechanisms. "The new policy seeks to further simplify and accelerate these processes. International companies value the transparency offered by the state's online approval, compliance and subsidy availing systems."

SPREADING THE GROWTH

Much of the investment is expected to flow into Gujarat's emerging technology corridors. Dholera has become the centrepiece of India's semiconductor ambitions, with Tata Electronics' fabrication plant, supporting chip units and an electronics manufacturing ecosystem already taking shape. Sanand, once an automobile hub, is rapidly attracting electronics and precision manufacturing. Dahej, leveraging its petrochemical infrastructure and Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR), is well placed to emerge as a centre for green hydrogen and specialty chemicals manufacturing. Meanwhile, GIFT City is expected to anchor financial services, fintech, global capability centres and other technology-driven services that complement the state's industrial base.

But concentrated investment also brings concentrated costs—soaring land prices, urban sprawl, pressure on civic infrastructure and pollution. While the current push is centred on North Gujarat and parts of Saurashtra, the new policy envisages specialised industrial clusters across the state (*see map*) to spread the benefits of growth more evenly, creating jobs across regions instead of fuelling distress migration to a handful of industrial hubs.

Officials acknowledge the imbalance but say the answer lies in regional specialisation. To that end, Gujarat has, over the past year, hosted four Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conferences ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in January 2027. The idea is to market

each region as a distinct industrial ecosystem, showcasing its existing strengths and attracting investments best suited to its infrastructure, workforce and natural advantages. "If land, labour and infrastructure are available, industry will go anywhere," says Bakeri.

As manufacturing becomes increasingly automated through artificial intelligence, robotics and smart factories,

fabs, electric vehicle makers, renewable energy companies and advanced manufacturing firms.

Sandeep Engineer, president of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry, says the MSMEs are happy with the policy. "In addition to plugging into the supply chain, large projects also mobilise trained labour and an ecosystem from which MSMEs benefit



“GUJARAT DID NOT HAVE A LAID-OUT POLICY TO COMPETE AND ATTRACT LARGE INVESTMENTS. THESE INVESTMENTS WERE COMING THROUGH ON A CASE-TO-CASE BASIS. NOW, THE POLICY GIVES COHERENCE TO THE STATE'S PITCH”

ACHAL BAKERI, *Chairman, CII Gujarat State Council; Chairman & MD, Symphony Ltd*

specialised skills will be in demand. A semiconductor fabrication plant may attract billions of rupees in investment while employing far fewer people than a comparable investment in textiles or garments. To meet the demand for such high-skilled jobs, the policy proposes stronger industry-academia partnerships, research and development support, incubation centres, technology commercialisation and startup promotion. Yet the state's ability to equip local youth with advanced skills require remains a work in progress. Ultimately, the policy's success may hinge on how quickly that skills gap is bridged.

THE FUTURE OF MSMEs

Where does this leave Gujarat's famed MSME sector, which accounts for the overwhelming majority of industrial units and a large share of manufacturing employment? The policy does not abandon MSMEs; it redefines their role. Instead of positioning them as standalone engines of growth, it seeks to integrate them into larger industrial value chains. MSMEs are expected to emerge as component manufacturers, specialised suppliers, exporters and service providers to semiconductor

over a period of time." Moreover, the government has independent policies for several employment-intensive industries like textiles, IT & ITeS, biotechnology, space tech, tourism, to name a few, in which industry-specific subsidies are provided and compliances eased, Engineer explains.

Jain of Artha Capital Partners, who helps MSMEs avail government subsidies, believes the policy's core benefit is in the redefinition of MSMEs, which expands the scope of units that can avail its benefits. The ceiling for micro enterprises has increased from Rs 1 crore to Rs 2.5 crore, for small enterprises from Rs 10 crore to Rs 25 crore, and for medium enterprises from Rs 50 crore to Rs 125 crore. "MSMEs generate 60-70 per cent of Gujarat's employment. The industries included in that additional Rs 75 crore are the largest employment generators. This will fuel employment," he says.

On paper, Viksit Gujarat Industrial Policy 2026 looks impressive. But whether it delivers broad-based prosperity will depend on how effectively the state enables its small businesses, entrepreneurs and workforce to participate in—and benefit from—the high-tech economy it is trying to build. ■

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BIHAR

DRIVING THE NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH

The first hundred days of the Samrat Government dispensation have catapulted Bihar's development journey into a high-velocity phase, advancing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of states as engines of national progress.



"Bihar – the land of Nalanda, Chanakya, and Ashoka – is rising again. Let's unite beyond caste and creed to build a strong, self-reliant, and proud Bihar. The time to reclaim our glory is now."

Shri Samrat Choudhary

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Bihar

A New Chapter Driven by Reform, Investment and Opportunity

On April 15, 2026, Bihar entered a new political chapter as Samrat Choudhary took oath as the state's 24th Chief Minister at Lok Bhavan in Patna, becoming the first Bharatiya Janata Party leader to assume the state's top executive office. His appointment naturally raised expectations across the state and the nation of advancing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of states no longer serving as passive recipients of Central policies, but as active engines of national growth, driven by a comprehensive "whole-of-government" approach.

Within hours of taking office, Chief Minister Choudhary began work on this broader agenda, calling for faster execution of projects, zero tolerance for corruption, quicker decision-making, efficient public service delivery, and seamless

coordination across departments. He reassured both citizens and alliance partners that Bihar's development journey would continue on familiar lines, declaring, "Bihar mein Narendra Modi ji aur Nitish Kumar ji ka model hi chalne wala hai." The message was clear: continuity would remain the foundation of governance, but it would be complemented by greater urgency, sharper accountability, and stronger inter-departmental coordination—breaking down bureaucratic silos to transform Bihar into a leading contributor to India's global aspirations.

The first hundred days of the double engine government have reflected that intent. From taking governance to the doorstep of citizens through Sahyog Shivir and accelerating industrial investment, to strengthening tourism, expanding infrastructure, embracing clean energy, modernising agriculture and preparing Bihar for the digital economy, the administration has pursued development across multiple fronts.

These initiatives are not isolated announcements. Together, they present a broader vision of a state seeking to improve public services, attract investment, generate employment and build modern infrastructure while ensuring that the benefits of growth reach every section of society. The journey is still in its early stages. Yet the pace, scale and diversity of decisions taken during these first hundred days offer a glimpse into the government's priorities and its ambition to position Bihar as a stronger contributor to the national goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Sahyog Shivir: Bringing Governance Closer to the People

Good governance is often measured by how easily citizens can access it. In Bihar, the Sahyog Shivir initiative is attempting to bridge the gap between the administration and the people by taking government services directly to villages.



Shri Narendra Modi

Hon'ble Prime Minister, India

Held on the first and third Tuesdays of every month, these camps function at both the state and panchayat levels, offering a decentralised platform for grievance redressal. Citizens no longer need to spend months navigating government offices for issues such as land disputes, ration cards, pensions or caste certificates. Instead, many of these matters are resolved on the spot.

For more complex legal or administrative cases, Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary personally participates in the camps, reinforcing the government's commitment to accountability at the grassroots.



To ensure timely action, grievances must be resolved within 30 days. Officials receive reminders on the tenth, twentieth and twenty fifth days, while failure to act by the thirty first day results in automatic suspension. The system places equal emphasis on responsiveness and accountability.

The initiative has already begun changing perceptions of public service delivery.



Rameshwar Mahto, a farmer from Vaishali, had spent fourteen months trying to correct his land records before his case was resolved digitally within hours at a Sahyog Shivir. His remark, "We didn't know where to go, but the Shivir brought the government to us," captures the programme's central objective of making governance more accessible and citizen centric.

Building an Investment Friendly Bihar: Creating Jobs Through Industry and Enterprise

Alongside governance reforms, Bihar has placed economic growth at the centre of its development agenda through policies designed to attract investment while encouraging local entrepreneurship.



A major reform has been the restructuring of the State Investment Promotion Board into a legally empowered Single Nodal Agency that must process industrial clearances within 30 days. If a department fails to act within the stipulated period, investors receive deemed clearance, allowing projects to proceed without procedural delays. The government has complemented this reform with the Bihar First Procurement Shield. Under the policy, public procurement and civil works worth up to ₹50 crore will give preference to local firms where at least 51 per cent of the shareholding is held by permanent residents of Bihar. The objective is to retain capital within the state, strengthen local businesses and move towards the long term goal of creating one crore jobs.

The policy has already translated into investment on the ground. Among the major approvals are a 960 MTPD par boiled rice production unit in Nalanda with an investment of ₹88.18 crore and a 60 KLPD ethanol plant in Kaimur worth ₹73.45 crore.

These are part of a wider industrial push during the government's first hundred days. Thirty approved projects are expected to generate more than 3,300 jobs, while another twenty nine projects are projected to create nearly 3,000 additional employment opportunities, signalling growing investor confidence in Bihar's changing business environment.

Unlocking Bihar's Tourism Potential: Celebrating Heritage While Creating New Opportunities

Tourism has emerged as another important pillar of Bihar's development strategy, combining heritage conservation with infrastructure, livelihoods and improved connectivity.

The government has approved ₹680 crore for the transformation of Hariharnath Dham into a world class spiritual destination. Development has





The government has committed to completing this corridor, together with the 39 kilometre Digha to Koilwar Marine Drive, within the next three years. Together, these projects are expected to create a continuous transport network along the Ganga, supporting trade, tourism and industrial expansion. The state's bridge building programme is equally ambitious. The 19.76 kilometre Kacchi Dargah Bidupur Bridge is India's longest six lane extradosed cable bridge, while the Aunta Simaria Bridge is recognised as Asia's widest six lane extradosed cable stayed river bridge.

Construction is also progressing rapidly on the 6.9 kilometre New Digha Sonepur Cable Bridge, developed under the NH 139W corridor at a cost of ₹3,005.98 crore.

Road connectivity is receiving similar attention. Through the Bihar State Road Development Corporation Limited, the government is expanding high capacity transport corridors to reduce freight costs and improve access between industrial clusters and rural districts.



Administrative approval exceeding ₹2,500 crore has already been granted under the Bihar State Highway IV Project for widening and strengthening roads across Madhubani, Sitamarhi, Darbhanga and several other districts. These upgrades are expected to improve connectivity, reduce travel time and support the seamless movement of people and goods across the state.

Together, these investments reflect a long term strategy that views infrastructure not merely as construction activity but as the backbone of economic growth, regional integration and improved quality of life.

Leading the Green Energy Transition: Clean Power for Every Household

Renewable energy has become a cornerstone of India's development agenda under the leadership

also gathered pace at Punaura Dham, alongside the proposal to rename the surrounding district Sitapuram. In Munger, 15.01 acres of land have been leased to the Isha Foundation for ninety nine years at a token amount of ₹1 to establish a global cultural and spiritual centre.

To encourage religious tourism beyond the state, the Sindhu Darshan Teerth Yatra Financial Assistance Scheme 2026 provides permanent residents of Bihar with reimbursement of 50 per cent of travel expenses, up to ₹20,000, for pilgrimage to the Indus River in Ladakh.

Rural tourism is receiving equal attention through the Mukhyamantri Homestay Protsahan Yojana 2026, which offers capital subsidies of up to ₹11 lakh for establishing homestays, creating new livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The state has also introduced the Mukhyamantri Bihar Heli Tourism Seva Yojana, offering subsidised ten minute helicopter joyrides over Patna from ₹2,100 per seat. Luxury ferry and river cruise services on the Ganga are adding another dimension to Bihar's tourism experience by combining cultural performances with local cuisine.

Improved air connectivity is expected to provide a further boost. The approval of a direct Gaya to Bangkok flight, supported through Viability Gap Funding of ₹10.4 crore for up to twelve months, is aimed at strengthening Buddhist tourism and attracting visitors from Thailand and other countries in South East Asia.

Together, these initiatives position tourism not only as a means of preserving Bihar's rich cultural legacy but also as an important driver of employment, entrepreneurship and regional economic growth.

Infrastructure Driving Economic Transformation: Building the Networks That Power Growth

Infrastructure has emerged as one of the defining pillars of Bihar's development strategy. From highways and bridges to riverfront corridors, the state is investing in projects that promise to strengthen connectivity, improve logistics and unlock new economic opportunities.

Among the most ambitious is the Munger to Bhagalpur Marine Drive, also known as the Ganga Path Corridor. Spanning more than 82 kilometres across two phases with a combined investment of nearly ₹10,000 crore, the project is designed to improve freight movement while reducing logistics costs across eastern Bihar.





of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Reflecting this national commitment, Bihar is accelerating its transition to clean energy and sustainable mobility through a series of ambitious initiatives.

At the centre of this effort is the ₹1,512 crore Rooftop Solar Programme, launched under the first phase of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, with a target of installing rooftop solar systems in 2.5 lakh Kutir Jyoti households by 20 November 2026. Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary has set an ambitious target of expanding the programme to 25 lakh households by November 2027. Under the scheme, beneficiary families receive 125 units of free electricity, while surplus power generated through rooftop solar systems is purchased by the government via Direct Benefit Transfer, creating an additional source of household income. The programme is a key pillar of Bihar's broader clean energy strategy, aimed at reducing electricity costs, promoting renewable energy adoption and

lowering carbon emissions. Over the coming years, the initiative is expected to benefit nearly 50 lakh families, placing Bihar among the frontrunners in India's solar energy transition.

The state's green agenda extends beyond solar power. Under the Bihar Electric Vehicle (Amendment) Policy 2026, the government has set a target of achieving 30 per cent electric vehicle registrations by 2030. A unified digital platform is being developed to integrate charging stations operated by multiple service providers, enabling users to locate facilities seamlessly through Google Maps.

Public transport is also undergoing a major transformation with the induction of nearly 400 electric buses. To support the growing EV ecosystem, fast charging stations are being established along major highways, at petrol pumps, hotels and dhabas, as well as in urban centres including Patna, Gaya, Muzaffarpur and Bhagalpur.

To encourage private investment, the government is offering capital subsidies ranging from ₹15,000 to ₹37,500 for AC charging units and ₹37,500 to ₹1.5 lakh for heavy duty DC fast charging infrastructure. Together, these initiatives reflect Bihar's commitment to building a cleaner, more energy secure and environmentally sustainable future while supporting India's larger transition towards renewable energy.

Designing the Cities of the Future: Planning Sustainable Urban Growth

As Bihar's economy expands, the government is also reimagining its urban landscape through planned townships, improved civic infrastructure and modern public services.

A key initiative is the development of 12 theme based greenfield satellite townships, including Patliputra, Magadh and Mithila. Built on a progressive land pooling model, the scheme allows participating landowners to receive 55 per cent of the fully developed land in return, ensuring that local communities remain partners in urban expansion.

The townships are expected to attract nearly ₹1 lakh crore in investment while easing pressure on existing cities and creating new centres of economic activity.

Urban infrastructure is receiving a similar boost under the AMRUT 2.0 Mission. Projects worth more than ₹730 crore have been approved for Bihar

TRANSFORMING BIHAR'S CONNECTIVITY

A two-phase highway corridor connecting Munger, Sultanganj, Bhagalpur and Sabour.

PHASE 1



ROUTE

Herudiyara (Munger) to Ajaibinath Temple, Sultanganj



LENGTH
42 Km



COST

₹5,119 crore



INFRASTRUCTURE

Four to six lane corridor with bridges

MUNGER
(HERUDIYARA)

SULTANGANJ

BHAGALPUR
BYPASS

SABOUR
(NH 33)

**STRONGER ROADS
STRONGER BIHAR**

PHASE 2



ROUTE

Sultanganj through Bhagalpur bypass to Sabour (NH 33)



LENGTH
40.80 Km



COST

₹4,849 crore



INFRASTRUCTURE

Flyovers, embankments and integrated access roads



Sharif, Hajipur, Begusarai and Saharsa, covering sewage treatment plants, water supply networks and modern sewerage systems that will benefit hundreds of thousands of households.

The government has also established the Bihar State Safai Karamchari Commission, sanctioning 11 posts to ensure its effective functioning. In addition, funds have been approved for the operation and maintenance of cremation grounds and burial sites on government land across rural Bihar, ensuring dignity and better civic services for local communities.

These initiatives reflect a broader vision of creating cleaner, better planned and more liveable cities while preparing Bihar for future urban growth.

Supporting Farmers and Cooperatives: Strengthening Bihar's Rural Economy

Agriculture continues to be the backbone of Bihar's economy, and the government has introduced several measures aimed at improving farm incomes and strengthening the cooperative sector.

Aligned with the national priority of strengthening farmers' welfare, Bihar will implement the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana from the Rabi 2026 to 27 season, replacing the state's existing crop assistance scheme. The move ensures that insured farmers receive compensation equivalent to their cultivation costs, with no upper limit on insured land, extending benefits to both small and large farmers.

The government has also cleared ₹42.99 crore in outstanding sugarcane dues for farmers in the Sasamusa region of Gopalganj district. The decision is expected to facilitate the reopening of the Sasamusa Sugar Mill, improving livelihoods while generating employment in the region. To strengthen agricultural marketing, the government is establishing the Bihar State Marketing Cooperative Federation Ltd, which will oversee the collection, storage, processing, transportation and marketing of products produced by cooperative societies.

Until the federation becomes operational, BISCOMAUN has been designated as the state nodal agency to sign agreements with the

National Cooperative Export Ltd, enabling Bihar's cooperative products to access international markets and secure better returns for farmers. Together, these measures seek to improve agricultural resilience while integrating Bihar's rural economy with larger domestic and global markets.

Education and Healthcare: Investing in Human Capital

Recognising that long term growth depends on education and healthcare, Bihar has announced significant investments across both sectors. Under the Unnat Shiksha Ujjwal Bhavishya initiative, the government has announced that 211 new degree colleges will commence operations from 15 July 2026, which will improve the Gross Enrolment Ratio and extend quality higher education to students in underserved and rural regions of the state.

The state is also establishing two National Institute of Fashion Technology campuses, strengthening Bihar's position as an emerging centre for design education in eastern India. Alongside this, Model Schools equipped with smart classrooms, STEM laboratories and upgraded infrastructure are being developed in every block to improve the quality of school education.

Healthcare infrastructure is expanding at a similar pace. Patna Medical College is being developed into the country's largest medical college with a capacity of 5,462 beds. A dedicated Centre of Excellence for Autism in Patna will provide specialised diagnosis, therapy, training and research facilities, while a new medical college at Sitamarhi will be established as Maa Sita Medical College and Hospital, recognising the district's cultural and religious significance.

The government has also approved the Bihar Small and Medium Healthcare Establishments (Establishment and Registration) Regulations





Transparent Governance for a Modern State: Reforms That Improve Public Services

Alongside development projects, Bihar has introduced a series of governance reforms aimed at making administration faster, more transparent and technology driven.

A major step is the implementation of the Bihar Registration Rules, 2026 and the Bihar Stamp (Service Provider License and E Stamp Supply) Rules, 2026, which will make property registration completely paperless across the state, reducing delays while improving transparency and revenue collection. The Prohibition, Excise and Registration Department has also digitised registration deeds dating back to 1990 and made them available in a searchable online format, enabling citizens to access records online and enhancing transparency, convenience and Ease of Living.

The government has further strengthened these reforms by extending the home registration facility to all senior citizens aged 80 years and above, enabling them to complete property registration from the comfort of their homes through mobile registration units. This facility is intended to improve Ease of Living and make public services more citizen-centric. The new digital registration system also enables people residing outside Bihar to complete property registration through an online application. Registration documents will be delivered through WhatsApp and e-mail, while GIS-based verification and online land validation will make transactions more secure, transparent and reliable, reducing disputes and enhancing public confidence in the registration process.

The government has also transferred 1.85 acres of land adjoining Patna Airport to the Airports Authority of India to support future airport expansion.

In the transport sector, the One Time Traffic Challan Settlement Scheme, 2026 offers vehicle owners an opportunity to clear traffic challans pending for more than ninety days through a rationalised settlement process. The government has simultaneously withdrawn motor vehicle tax exemption on new government vehicles purchased against a Certificate of Deposit, while continuing the benefit for private vehicles to encourage the scrapping of older, more polluting vehicles.

Reinforcing its commitment to clean administration, the government has decided to abolish the Bihar Vigilance Investigation Cadre, integrating its officers into the Home Department and Police to streamline anti corruption efforts. Together, these reforms reflect an approach that combines administrative efficiency with greater public accountability.

2026, bringing smaller clinics, diagnostic centres and dispensaries under a common regulatory framework to strengthen quality standards and patient safety across the state.

By expanding educational opportunities and improving access to quality healthcare, Bihar is investing in the foundations of long term social and economic development.

Women at the Centre of Development: Safety, Livelihood and Economic Empowerment

Women's empowerment has emerged as a central pillar of Bihar's development agenda, with initiatives spanning safety, livelihoods and financial inclusion.

To strengthen policing, the Home Department has deployed 1,500 scooters and 3,200 motorbikes exclusively for women police personnel across the state. While the scooters improve mobility in congested urban areas, the motorbikes enable faster response on highways and across larger jurisdictions.

The statewide Police Didi initiative has further strengthened community policing by creating a direct interface between women police officers and local communities. Through regular visits to villages, panchayats and educational institutions, Police Didis encourage women and girls to report grievances, spread awareness on cyber safety and legal rights, and make policing more approachable. Economic empowerment has received equal attention. Having already mobilised more than 1.40 crore women into 11.03 lakh Self Help Groups across all 38 districts, the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society, better known as JEEViKA, is now extending its successful rural model into urban areas.

The expansion of Didi Ki Rasoi, operated through the state backed Annapoorna Jeevika Food Products Company Limited, has taken community kitchens beyond hospitals to police training centres, government offices and other public institutions.

Urban Self Help Groups are also managing subsidised crèches, enabling more women to join the workforce. At the same time, municipal corporations are awarding sanitation, waste management and hospital laundry contracts directly to SHG federations, creating sustainable livelihood opportunities.

To improve financial inclusion, trained Urban Bank Sakhis are helping informal sector workers access Mudra loans, micro credit and the PMFME Scheme, ensuring that women become active participants in Bihar's growing economy.





The government is also encouraging the use of Artificial Intelligence across welfare programmes to improve efficiency and transparency. Legislators, officials and government employees will receive specialised AI training through institutions including NUS, C-DAC, IIT Patna and NIELIT.

Private sector participation is gathering pace as well. Tiger Analytics has announced plans to establish a 200 person Global AI Delivery Centre in Patna while training 5,000 local youth in emerging technologies, reinforcing Bihar's ambition to become an important player in India's digital economy.

The Road Ahead: A Strong Beginning

The first hundred days of the new government present a picture of a state attempting to accelerate development across multiple fronts. From governance reforms and industrial investment to tourism, infrastructure, clean energy, education, healthcare, agriculture and digital innovation, Bihar has laid out an ambitious roadmap for inclusive growth.

The scale of these initiatives reflects a long term vision that seeks to improve public services, create employment, strengthen infrastructure and encourage investment while ensuring that development reaches both urban and rural communities.

Challenges inevitably remain, particularly in sustaining the pace of implementation and ensuring long term fiscal discipline. Yet the breadth of decisions taken during these first hundred days demonstrates a clear intent to combine economic growth with social development.

If implemented effectively, these initiatives have the potential to position Bihar as a more competitive, connected, and investment-ready state, contributing meaningfully to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Managing Growth Responsibly: Prudent Fiscal Management

The government's development agenda has been supported by measures aimed at strengthening Bihar's financial management.

The Cabinet has approved the temporary enhancement of the Bihar Contingency Fund from ₹350 crore to ₹13,900 crore until 30 March 2027, ensuring adequate resources to respond quickly to emergencies and disaster related expenditure. Financial management has also been modernised through the creation of a Cyber Treasury for the centralised accounting of SNA SPARSH bills, streamlining payments under the just in time financial system.

In addition, the government has approved the release of grants recommended by both the Fifteenth Finance Commission and the Fifth State Finance Commission, strengthening the financial capacity of rural and urban local bodies across Bihar.

Building Bihar's Digital Future: Preparing for the Knowledge Economy

As India positions itself as a global leader in Artificial Intelligence and digital innovation under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Bihar is laying the foundations of its own knowledge economy through the proposed Bihar AI Policy 2026.

While investing in physical infrastructure, Bihar is also positioning itself as an emerging technology driven economy.

The Department of Information Technology recently convened an extensive consultation on the proposed Bihar AI Policy 2026, led by IT Minister Nitish Mishra, Chief Secretary Pratyaya Amrit and IT Secretary Abhay Kumar Singh. The policy seeks to transform Bihar from a state associated with migration into one driven by innovation and knowledge creation.

Developed with the participation of organisations including the India AI Mission, Microsoft, Google India, NASSCOM, IIT Patna, Deloitte, KPMG and PwC, the policy rests on three pillars:

- Advanced digital infrastructure through AI laboratories, data centres and localised Large Language Models.
- A future ready workforce supported by AI education and skill development.
- Strong partnerships between industry and academic institutions to promote innovation and research.



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NOW, MEN BLING IT ON

Urban men across India are taking to jewels not just for ceremonial but everyday use. Spurred by celebrity adoption and dedicated product lines, the burgeoning male jewellery segment now constitutes 10-15 per cent of the overall jewellery market

By JUMANA SHAH

W

When Akshay Jhawar, 36, a textiles exporter in Surat, walked into a private jewellery show last year looking for some glint, he itched for something radical, something that quietly announced his personality to every room he walked into, unfettered by the shirt-and-tie decorum of formal society. The only jewellery he had worn since birth was a gold ring on his ear—a community ritual—and he wanted something more assertive. Venus Jewels, the diamond and solitaire exporters that had organised the show, had done so reluctantly, too, unconvinced by the profitability of male jewellery for anything other than ceremonial purchases. The industry truism, after all, was that men buy, women wear.

But that's not true anymore.

"I don't have words for it," says Jhawar, sporting a bright stud he fell in love with at the display. "I felt like I had found my soulmate. When I come in somewhere wearing a solitaire, I feel like I own the room." His surprise is echoed by Akshat Shah, partner at Venus Jewels. "It was truly an eye-opener. We underestimated the demand for men's jewellery," he says. The pieces on display that day, costing anywhere from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 2 crore, were "lapped up", he says, "and people wanted more!"

Jhawar is far from the only man in Indian cities taking to jewellery for everyday use. He and others like him are reviving a norm of beauty that saw its heyday with the sultans and maharajas of South Asia and declined with the arrival of European colonialism: jewellery on men. Movie stars, cricketers and musicians are seen flaunting rings and chains that convey

the same ideals as those forebears—wealth, power and virility—mixed with a subtle, modern cosmopolitanism. A platinum bracelet serves the same purpose as a *kada*—"the strength to overcome any obstacle"—for Aviral Kukreja, 39, a capital markets investor eyeing a natty neck chain.

Politicians have long flashed a ring or two, a gold chain too, to

₹1.3
lakh crore

Size of India's male
jewellery market, which
grew 25-30% year-on-
year in 2025





CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

“THROUGHOUT HISTORY, INDIAN DIETIES AND RULERS HAVE ALWAYS WORN JEWELLERY. THE MODERN IDEA OF MASCULINITY IS AN ANGLICISED VERSION. JEWELLERY MAKES ONE FEEL CONFIDENT AND SEEN. I HAVE FLAUNTED JEWELS FOR MANY YEARS AS THEY BRING OUT MY INNER PEACOCK”

SUVIR SARAN

Chef and writer

project prosperity or for astrological protection. In a “crowded social environment”, jewellery becomes a “visual differentiator” for men, says Jhawar. A man who buys jewellery, says Neil Sonawala, managing director at the Mumbai-based Zen Diamonds, is “fashion-conscious and young-at-heart”. The male jewellery market has ballooned as a result. Post COVID, jewels have been flying off the shelves for networking dinners, weekend brunches, sporting events and even board meetings. Jewellery for men constitute as much as 35-40 per cent of lifestyle and fashion sales in India now, according to Pooja Madhavan, founder and MD at Limelight Lab Grown Diamonds, and account for 15-25 per cent of the country’s jewellery market, per the Indian Bullion and Jeweller Association. Worldwide, men’s jewellery is forecast to grow at 9.9 per cent CAGR between 2025 and 2034—against roughly 5 per cent for the overall jewellery market.

CHOOSE YOUR AESTHETIC

Many aesthetics have been out on the prowl. Actors like Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan star in ad campaigns wearing ‘elegant but visible’ gold and platinum, simple designs that can be worn to office. Baroque jewels have become the go-to for Ranveer Singh, who has become the poster boy for a heritage-forward style and sexuality that aren’t bound down by conventional norms. Virat Kohli and Shubman Gill are often on the pitch wearing rings and leather bracelets that convey a quiet strength, while M.S. Dhoni’s chains and *kadas* reflect his



RAZZLE DAZZLE
Ranveer Singh, the poster boy for heritage-forward style and sexuality

Photo: @sabyasachiofficial

SOCIETY & TRENDS

JEWELLERY

calm, restrained image. Rap stars are close behind, with Vivian Fernandes, Honey Singh, Raftaar and Badshah wearing chunky chains and oversized rings that channel the raw, unadulterated energy of their music. Diljit Dosanjh brought his Punjabi aesthetic to Coachella in 2023 with layered necklaces and silver cuffs fitted with designer jackets and turbans.

THE GOLD RUSH

As a response, bands are pivoting to expand their range. Nearly a third of the inventory sold by Candere (part of Kalyan Jewellers) is now exclusively for men. “Earlier, the men’s category was limited to classic rings, pendants and wedding bands,” says Madhavan, of Limelight Lab Grown Diamonds. “Today, we have introduced everyday luxury pieces—titanium rings, kurta buttons, ceramic and tennis bracelets, belt buckles, solitaire necklines—that men can style casually or formally.” Suraj Shantakumar, company director of Coimbatore-based Kirtilal Kalidas, has seen a rise of interest even in the traditional south Indian market. “Cufflinks, brooches and pendants are emerging categories. The primary consumers are men aged roughly 25-50, especially professionals, entrepreneurs and business communities,” he says. His company has now tripled their range. “The latest trend is brooches for men,” says Dhruval Dholakia, head of operations and resources at Shree Ramkrishna Exports. “For years, we had about three designs in our range. Last year, we increased it to 21.”

Even though the rising popularity of men’s jewellery is too small to offset the losses faced by the larger industry, troubled by geopolitical and export headwinds, the Indian man has arrived just in time to take advantage of evolving cultural norms. For once, women alone will not have to bear the charge of extravagance in everyday appearance. ■

WHAT MEN WANT

Three distinct male jewellery aesthetics are gaining popularity in India, from the subtlest to the flashiest



➤ **Minimalist**
Signet rings, thin chains, small studs. Driven by office-friendly aesthetics, ‘elegant but visible’ styles

➤ **Streetwear**
Chunky chains, iced-out pendants, oversized rings. Popularity driven by rappers, especially among the Gen Z



➤ **Maximalist**
Baroque pearl necklaces, antique silver chains, flashy hip-hop rings. For ceremonial wear and championed by icons like Ranveer Singh and Diljit Dosanjh

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IN THE BIG LEAGUE

INDIA'S BEST UNIVERSITIES OWE THEIR SUCCESS
TO A PEDAGOGY THAT IS IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES

By KAUSHIK DEKA

A T JANTAR MANTAR THIS MONTH, AND AT SIT-INS THAT SPREAD FROM DELHI TO MULTIPLE LOCATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, students protested an education system they say has stopped working for them. Their grievances vary by state and institution—rising fees, faculty vacancies, compromised examinations, delayed academic calendars and placement promises that evaporate by the time they graduate. Underlying them is a deeper anxiety that the degree at the end of the educational pipeline no longer guarantees the opportunity, mobility or security it once appeared to promise.

INDIA'S NO. 1 UNIVERSITIES

STREAM	UNIVERSITY
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	UNIVERSITY OF DELHI, NEW DELHI
GENERAL PRIVATE	SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE
MEDICAL	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, NEW DELHI
TECHNICAL	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI
LAW	NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU

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The protests cannot be brushed aside. They are a warning from a generation that has invested heavily in education but is increasingly uncertain about its returns. Yet they should not become the only lens through which to view Indian higher education. Alongside the failures are institutions that are expanding access, redesigning curricula, producing high-quality research, improving clinical and professional training, incubating enterprises and creating more inclusive campuses.

A ranking published in a year of student protest must ask more than which university appears on top. It must examine what academic leadership looks like, whether institutions are keeping pace with economic and technological change, how effectively they support students, and whether the education they provide leads to intellectual growth, professional capability and meaningful opportunity. For students and parents, its value lies in helping them ask better questions before making

INDIA'S MOST IMPROVED UNIVERSITIES

CATEGORY	MOST IMPROVED UNIVERSITY
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW, LUCKNOW
GENERAL PRIVATE	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
MEDICAL	N.A.
TECHNICAL	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR
LAW	DAMODARAM SANJIVAYYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, VISAKHAPATNAM

The Most Improved Universities are ranked based on their percentage growth in ranking over the past five years (2022-2026) in the India Today-MDRA Best Universities Ranking

The challenge is to distinguish those responding to a changing world from those merely adding courses, buildings and credentials.

It is in this complex backdrop that the India Today Group publishes the 2026 edition of its annual Best Universities Survey. It does not intend to just applaud institutions that already enjoy reputational advantages or to reduce a vast, varied university system to a league table. It is another way of holding up a mirror to the state of higher education by celebrating the best, identifying what they are doing differently and encouraging the rest to improve through a healthy competitive environment.

one of the most consequential and expensive decisions of their lives.

The need for such scrutiny has grown with the extraordinary expansion of Indian higher education. The country now has 1,293 universities, more than double the number in 2014-15. This represents a remarkable democratisation of aspiration. A university degree is no longer the preserve of a small urban elite. Families across classes, regions and social groups increasingly see higher education as the most credible route to employment, mobility and dignity.

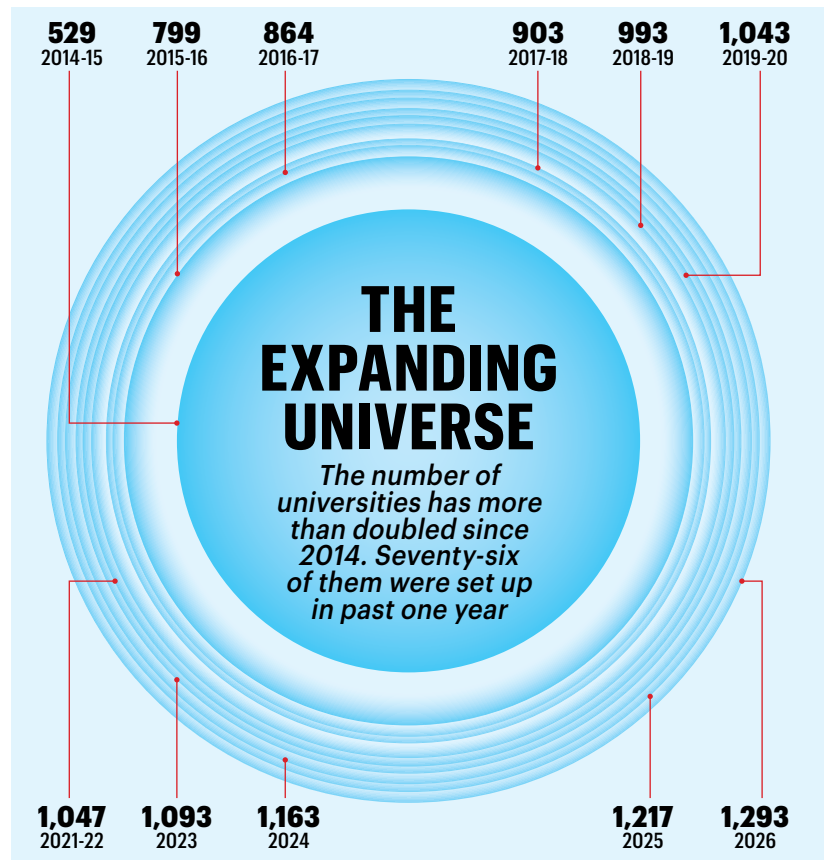
The rise of private universities has widened choice and introduced new programmes, facilities and

models of institutional management. It has also made independent assessment more necessary. The label 'private' does not by itself denote either excellence or inadequacy, just as the label 'public' does not guarantee quality. Institutions within both categories vary widely in faculty strength, research culture, infrastructure, affordability, governance and graduate outcomes. For families navigating hundreds of universities and thousands of courses, the central question is no longer about a recognised degree, but equally its educational value. The INDIA TODAY Best University Survey makes that assessment easier.

The expansion of institutions has been accompanied by a substantial increase in participation. The Gross Enrolment Ratio for the 18-23 age group rose from 23.7 per cent in 2014-15 to 30 per cent in 2023-24. The National Education Policy 2020 aims to raise it to 50 per cent by 2035. Female GER, at 31.2 per cent, has exceeded male GER for seven consecutive years, an indication that access for women has improved.

Enrolment, however, is only one part of the story. It records who enters the system, but not whether students find competent teachers, whether classes and examinations are held on time, whether they acquire the skills their courses promise, or whether financial, academic and social pressures force them to leave without completing their degrees.

Some of these concerns are reflected in the anger visible in the protests. They explain why a survey must evaluate more than reputation. A famous name may open doors, but it cannot compensate indefinitely for inadequate teaching, poor student support, obsolete curricula or unreliable examinations. Conversely, a less celebrated university may be improving quickly, building strong departments or producing better



THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM

TYPE OF UNIVERSITY	TOTAL NUMBER
CENTRAL UNIVERSITIES	57
STATE UNIVERSITIES	521
DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITIES	157
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES	558
TOTAL	1,293

outcomes in a discipline.

The INDIA TODAY survey seeks to capture these distinctions by assessing institutions across 120+ attributes grouped under five parameters: Reputation & Governance; Academic & Research Excellence; Infrastructure & Living Experience; Personality & Leadership Development; and Career Progression & Placement. The weight for each parameter has been kept unchanged from past years to allow meaningful comparison over time.

Together, these measures are more useful than a placement figure or a publicity claim viewed in isolation. A university may advertise its highest salary package without disclosing how many students were placed, which programmes they came from or what the median outcome was. It may showcase

18

UNIVERSITIES
EXCLUSIVELY
FOR **WOMEN**,
UP FROM 11
IN 2014-15

19

OPEN
UNIVERSITIES,
OF WHICH 1 IS
CENTRAL, 17
STATE, 1 PRIVATE

37

MINORITY-MANAGED
UNIVERSITIES,
16 ARE MUSLIM,
10 CHRISTIAN,
5 JAIN, 3 SIKH

151

AFFILIATING UNIVERSITIES
HAVE **100** OR MORE COLLEGES

21

UNIVERSITIES HAVE **500**
OR MORE COLLEGES

a new laboratory without revealing whether students regularly use it. It may announce international collaborations that produce little faculty or student exchange.

A ranking must also guard against becoming a closed club in which established institutions repeatedly confirm their established reputations. That is why the introduction of the Most Improved Universities category is significant. By measuring the percentage change in an institution's relative position between the 2022 and 2026 rankings, it draws attention to momentum rather than inherited prestige.

For students, this can be almost as valuable as knowing which institution stands first. A university that is consistently improving its faculty, research, infrastructure and student outcomes may offer a more dynamic environment than one relying largely on its historical reputation. For university leaders, the category makes improvement visible and demonstrates that rankings need not merely reward those already at the top but create incentives for institutions further down the table.

The strongest insights from this year's survey emerge not from the names of the category leaders alone

but from the choices those institutions are making. At the University of Delhi, the rise in global rankings has been accompanied by a broader definition of academic achievement. Doctoral research can now result not only in a thesis or journal article but also in a patent, prototype or startup.

Symbiosis International offers another model. Founded to assist international students in Pune, it now has

AS THE JANTAR MANTAR PROTESTS DEMONSTRATED, EXPANSION WITHOUT CREDIBILITY WON'T SATISFY INDIA'S YOUNG

45 institutes and 105 programmes, serving about 70,000 students from more than 85 countries. Its MBA in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which offers no conventional placements, receives 12,000 applications for 60 seats. The demand shows that many students are willing to choose enterprise creation over a guaranteed recruitment pipeline.

At AIIMS Delhi, the educational

advantage lies not only in its longstanding dominance of medical rankings but also in the scale and complexity of its clinical work. Residents treat rare and difficult diseases in an intensive tertiary-care environment, making clinical exposure central to their education.

At IIT Delhi, academic excellence is being recast around flexibility, interdisciplinary learning and practical problem-solving. Its redesigned programmes allow students to combine courses across departments, while artificial intelligence and sustainability are being embedded across disciplines.

At the National Law School of India University, expansion is being matched by investments in academic capacity, residential infrastructure and inclusion. With 118 faculty members and 1,631 students as of June 2026, it is completing two academic blocks and will build hostels for nearly 3,000 students by 2028. It is also piloting AI-assisted tutoring and launching the Women's Inclusion and Leadership in Law initiative. The latter addresses a stark imbalance: women make up 32 per cent of law graduates but only 15 per cent of the 1.8 million lawyers admitted to practice.

These initiatives across top universities prove that excellence is built around flexibility, exposure, inclusion, research and application. For, as the protests at Jantar Mantar have demonstrated, expansion without credibility will not satisfy India's young. The institutions recognised in the Best Universities Survey demonstrate that decline is not inevitable and that the country already has different pathways to excellence. The purpose of the survey is to make those pathways visible, giving students and parents better information, rewarding institutions that perform well and challenging others to raise their standards. ■

METHODOLOGY

HOW THE UNIVERSITIES WERE RANKED

With 765 general, 98 medical, 172 technical and 30 law universities to choose from, the India Today Group's annual ranking of Best Universities has a special place in India's academic calendar. It makes critical career decisions easier for aspirants, while offering recruiters, parents, alumni, policymakers, universities and the public an overview of the state of university education.

INDIA TODAY's knowledge partner, Marketing and Development Research Associates (MDRA), followed a rigorous methodology while

tutes of National Importance, was prepared. Postgraduate programmes in four streams—general, medical, technical and law—were evaluated. Only universities offering full-time, in-classroom courses and having produced at least three graduating batches by the end of 2025 qualified.

Experienced experts were consulted to frame the parameters for each category. The indicators and their relative weights were meticulously determined. The weights remained unchanged from past years to ensure consistency and comparability.

Comprehensive objective questionnaires for each category were sent to qualifying universities and

objective score was assigned under each parameter, and data normalised to ensure performance was not determined just by aggregate figures.

A perceptual survey covered 305 well-informed respondents—20 chancellors or vice-chancellors, 83 directors, deans or registrars, and 202 senior faculty members, including professors and heads of departments—across cities in four zones.

➤ **North: Delhi-NCR, Lucknow, Jaipur and Chandigarh**

➤ **West: Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad and Indore**

➤ **South: Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Coimbatore**

➤ **East: Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati and Patna**

Respondents provided national and zonal rankings in their fields of experience, assigned 75 per cent and 25 per cent weightage respectively. They also rated universities on a 10-point scale across the five parameters. The objective and perceptual scores were combined in a 50:50 ratio to arrive at the final score.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

TYPE OF UNIVERSITIES	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
General	132	122	117	110	102	102	91	80	66
Medical	22	20	19	19	16	15	14	14	10
Technical	28	26	28	29	30	29	24	17	10
Law	10	8	9	10	10	10	9	6	5
Total	192	176	173	168	158	156	138	117	91

conducting the survey from March to July 2026. For the objective ranking, MDRA calibrated 120+ attributes grouped under five broad parameters—Reputation & Governance, Academic & Research Excellence, Infrastructure & Living Experience, Personality & Leadership Development and Career Progression & Placement. The ranking used current-year data provided by the universities and also gave parameter-wise scores.

A list of more than 800 qualifying universities, including Insti-

uploaded on MDRA's website. Formal invitations, emails, phone calls and follow-ups were used to encourage participation and clarification. Some 192 universities submitted data and supporting documents on time; 190 were ranked.

The submissions and supporting documents were then scrutinised. Data were verified with past records, mandatory disclosures, phone checks, email confirmations and university websites. Institutions were asked to correct or update insufficient or inaccurate information. An

MOST IMPROVED UNIVERSITIES

Beginning this year, a new category, 'Most Improved Universities', has been introduced to highlight institutions that have made the greatest progress over five years. The ranking measures the percentage improvement in a university's relative position between the 2022 and 2026 rankings.

The MDRA core team was led by CEO Abhishek Agrawal and included senior project director Abnish Jha, research manager Vaibhav Gupta, research executive Robin Singh and assistant managers, EDP, Manveer Singh and Mahesh Joshi. ■



Hindustan Group of Institutions Honour Eminent Personalities at the 5th Edition of Dr. K.C.G. Verghese Excellence Awards 2026



Chennai, June 20, 2026: Hindustan Group of Institutions (HGI), one of India's premier educational institutions, successfully hosted the 5th Edition of the Dr. K.C.G. Verghese Excellence Awards 2026, Chennai. Instituted in memory of the late Dr. K.C.G. Verghese, Founder-Chairman of HGI, the awards recognise individuals whose outstanding achievements and contributions have created a lasting impact in their respective fields. Established in 2009, the awards have evolved into a prestigious platform celebrating excellence, innovation, leadership, and service to society. The 2026 edition honoured 13 distinguished personalities across six categories, namely Lifetime Achievement, Academic & Research Excellence, Corporate Excellence, Alumni Excellence, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Child Prodigy.

The event was presided over by Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, Chairman, Hindustan Group of Institutions, in the presence of Dr. Elizabeth Verghese, Founder Chairperson; Dr. Ashok George Verghese, Vice President, HGI; Dr. Susan Verghese, Vice President, HGI; Dr. Annie Jacob, Director, KCG College of Technology; Dr. Aby Sam, Executive Director, HGI; Mr. Enid Verghese Jacob, Associate Director, HGI; and Dr. M. Rajaram, IAS (Retd.), Advisor, HGI.

The ceremony was graced by Hon'ble Justice A.D. Jagadish Chandira, Judge, Madras High Court, as the Chief Guest, and Mr. Hugues Boiteau, Scientific and Academic Attaché, Institut Français India, as the Distinguished Guest. The occasion also witnessed the digital launch and unveiling of the HGI 60th Year Commemorative Logo, marking six decades of excellence in education, research, innovation, and nation-building.

Among the recipients, Mr. Biju Balendran, Deputy Managing Director, MG Motor India, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his remarkable contributions to the automotive industry.

The same category also recognised Mr. Satish Chandra Gupta, Senior Advisor, IndiGo; Dr. Bashi V. Velayudhan, Director, ICAAD, SIMS Hospitals; and Dr. G.S.K. Velu, Chairman, FICCI Tamil Nadu State Council and Managing Director, Neuberg Diagnostics, for their exemplary contributions to aviation, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and industry leadership.

The Academic & Research Excellence Award was conferred upon Dr. Rajnish Kumar, Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Madras, in recognition of his significant contributions to research and higher education.

The Corporate Excellence Award was presented to Lt. Col. V. Shanmuga Velan, Founder and Chief Technology Officer, Elena Geo Systems Pvt. Ltd., for his achievements in technology and innovation.

The Alumni Excellence Awards were presented to Mr. Sisirakanta Dash, Group Chief Strategy Officer, Air India Limited; Mr. P. Senthil Kumar, Global Executive Leader, Ashok Leyland; Mr. Nandakumar Shekar, international football player and HITS alumnus; and Ms. T. Dharshini, national basketball player and HITS alumna, reflecting HGI's legacy of nurturing leaders across diverse domains.

The Corporate Social Responsibility Awards were conferred upon Mr. K. Ramesh, Founder, Mugavari Foundation, and Dr. Saundarya Rajesh, Managing Director, Avtar Group, in recognition of their impactful contributions towards social development and inclusion.

The Child Prodigy Award was presented to Ms. Victoria Isaac (Victoriastic) for her exceptional talent and achievements at a young age.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, Chairman, Hindustan Group of Institutions, stated that the Excellence Awards are a tribute to the values of excellence, innovation, integrity, and service that have guided HGI throughout its 60-year journey. He emphasised that the awards celebrate individuals whose leadership and accomplishments continue to inspire progress across industries and communities. Reaffirming the vision of the institution's Founder, he noted that education remains one of the most powerful instruments of transformation and nation-building and highlighted HGI's commitment to nurturing talent, fostering innovation, strengthening industry-academia collaboration, and developing future-ready professionals.

As Hindustan Group of Institutions commemorates six decades of educational excellence, the Dr. K.C.G. Verghese Excellence Awards continue to reflect its enduring commitment to recognising outstanding achievers, promoting innovation, and contributing meaningfully to national development. Through its focus on quality education, research, entrepreneurship, employability, and industry engagement, HGI remains dedicated to empowering future generations and shaping leaders who can drive positive change in society.

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GENERAL (GOVERNMENT)

NO. 1

UNIVERSITY OF DELHI
New Delhi

GURUSPEAK

GEARING FOR THE AI ERA

HAVING EMERGED AS THE COUNTRY'S LEADING GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITY, DELHI UNIVERSITY IS BETTING ON RESEARCH, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO FUEL ITS GLOBAL AMBITIONS

By Shelly Anand

Our target over the next five years is to bring Delhi University into the group of the world's top 200 universities. We want our students to become job creators. Research is not only about publications; it is also about creating products, patents and social impact

PROFESSOR YOGESH SINGH
Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi



ARUN KUMAR



he University of Delhi has set itself an ambitious goal: to be counted among the world's top 200 universities within the next five years. The confidence stems from its recent progress. Over the past four years, the university, popularly known as DU, has climbed nearly 200 places in the

QS World University Rankings, moving from 521 to 322.

For Professor Yogesh Singh, vice chancellor, rankings are only one measure of success, and the focus is not on chasing numbers alone. "The larger objective is to build a university that produces researchers, innovators, entrepreneurs and

TOP 10

GENERAL UNIVERSITIES (GOVT)

RANK 2026	RANK 2025	RANK 2024	RANK 2023	RANK 2022	RANK 2021	RANK 2020	RANK 2019	RANK 2018	UNIVERSITY
1	1	2	2	2	2	NP*	NP	2	UNIVERSITY OF DELHI, NEW DELHI
2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI
3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	5	ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH
4	5	5	7	7	NP	4	4	4	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD
5	6	6	9	12	12	NP	NP	NP	GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI
6	7	7	11	10	10	7	9	9	COCHIN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, KOCHI
7	9	8	13	13	14	14	12	18	BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY, COIMBATORE
8	11	14	19	21	21	22	NP	NP	UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW, LUCKNOW
9	8	9	10	9	9	10	NP	NP	DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, PUSA, SAMASTIPUR
10	10	12	16	18	15	17	14	14	ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY, GUNTUR

*NP = Not participated

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The University offers 125+ Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Doctoral, Diploma, and Professional programmes across Engineering, Management, Computer Applications, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Nursing, Allied Health Sciences, Ayurveda, Education, Law, Sciences, Humanities, Aviation, and other emerging disciplines. Its distinctive 70% Industry Immersion Learning Model ensures students gain extensive practical exposure through live projects, industry certifications, internships, field training, expert mentorship, and real-world problem-solving, making them career-ready from the very first year.

Spread across a lush green, technology-enabled campus, Sanskriti University features world-class infrastructure, including smart classrooms, advanced laboratories, digital libraries, innovation centres, premium hostels, and outstanding sports facilities such as a FIFA-standard AstroTurf Football Ground, synthetic basketball courts, tennis courts, and modern indoor sports complexes. The University also houses a state-of-the-art Panchkarma Wellness Centre, while its Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital has been ranked 6th in Uttar Pradesh and 69th in India by QCI & NCISM, Government of India. Sanskriti University has established itself as a centre of excellence in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship through its government-supported Incubation Centre. The University has filed 3,058+ patents, published 2,200+ research papers, and earned several prestigious recognitions, including the "Emerging University of the Year" award.

TOP 5

INDIA'S MOST IMPROVED GENERAL UNIVERSITIES (GOVERNMENT)

RANK	UNIVERSITY	CITY
1	UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW	LUCKNOW
2	GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY	NEW DELHI
3	UNIVERSITY OF DELHI	NEW DELHI
4	BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY	COIMBATORE
5	ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY	GUNTUR

The Most Improved Universities are ranked based on their percentage growth in ranking over the past five years (2022-2026) in the India Today-MDRA Best Universities Ranking

TOP 5

GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PhDs IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PhDs
1	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD	2,728
2	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI	2,525
3	UNIVERSITY OF DELHI, NEW DELHI	2,456
4	ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAINAGAR	2,082
5	BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY, COIMBATORE	1,604

socially conscious graduates," he says. Under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the university is reshaping its curriculum, encouraging interdisciplinary learning and investing in research, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Instead of assessing doctoral scholars only through academic publications, DU is widening the definition of research excellence. Students who develop patents, build prototypes, create technologies with social impact or establish successful startups will also receive academic recognition.

The university plans to support promising student ventures with incubation facilities, seed funding, legal and accounting support, as well as mentoring. "The mindset has to shift from job-seeking to job creation," says Singh. Entrepreneurship has already found a place in undergraduate education.

The implementation of NEP has also accelerated flexibility in learning. Under DU's major-minor academic structure, students are no longer confined to a single discipline. An English major can earn a minor in journalism, a Computer

TOP 5

GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PG COURSES

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PG COURSES
1	ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH	148
2	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD	96
3	ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAINAGAR	93
4	SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY, TIRUPATI	81
5	GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR	79
5	UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE, MYSURU	79

TOP 5

GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS FILED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD, PRAYAGRAJ	158
2	GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA, BILASPUR	154
3	ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAINAGAR	153
4	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD	146
5	DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA GORAKHPUR UNIVERSITY, GORAKHPUR	127

Science student can study Psychology, while someone pursuing Hindu Studies can complement it with management or Computer Science. "We are making education more porous," says Singh. "Students should be free to explore their interests instead of remaining locked into one academic silo." New value-added courses also reflect this wider definition of education. Financial literacy has emerged as one of the university's most popular offerings, attracting nearly 30,000 students.

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Dr. Prabhakar B. Kore
Chancellor
KLE Technological University, Hubballi

TOP 5

GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS PUBLISHED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAINAGAR	153
2	SRI PADMAVATI MAHILA VISVAVIDYALAYAM (WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY), TIRUPATI	144
3	GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA, BILASPUR	142
4	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, HYDERABAD	127
5	NAGALAND UNIVERSITY, LUMAMI	118

STUDENTSPEAK

👨🎓 **Postgraduate education at the University of Delhi is research-driven. Placements may not be the primary focus, but working closely with faculty and finding the right mentor can open several career opportunities**👨🎓

PRIYANKA DUTTA

MSc (Chemistry), Second year



well. Faculty members are being encouraged to move away from lecture-heavy classrooms and adopt more interactive methods, using videos, graphics and discussions instead of relying solely on the blackboard. As Singh puts it, every lecture should feel like “an episode of a web series” that leaves students wanting to know more.

Artificial Intelligence is another area the university refuses to ignore. Singh sees AI not as a threat but as a tool with which students must learn to work. DU

is seeking to prepare students for jobs that may not yet exist by focusing on AI literacy, entrepreneurship, critical thinking, financial literacy, innovation, problem-solving and adaptability.

Looking ahead, DU is also expanding physically. It is preparing to launch a new college from the next academic session, offering futuristic programmes in Computer Science, AI, Data Science and Entrepreneurship.

Another enduring strength is the university's exceptional alumni network,

which spans politics, business, academia, the arts, media and the civil services. This network connects students to accomplished professionals across fields and reinforces the university's influence far beyond its campuses.

Whether that is enough to propel DU into the world's top 200 remains to be seen. What is already evident is that the university is seeking to redefine success through greater academic flexibility, stronger research and an education geared to a rapidly changing world. ■

TOP 5

GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS GRANTED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA, BILASPUR	81
2	NAGALAND UNIVERSITY, LUMAMI	68
3	GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI	47
4	COCHIN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, KOCHI	43
5	SRI PADMAVATI MAHILA VISVAVIDYALAYAM (WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY), TIRUPATI	42

TOP 5

FIVE GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST FACULTY-STUDENT RATIO

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RATIO
1	SRI KONDA LAXMAN TELANGANA STATE HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, SIDDIPET	1.07
2	PUNJAB AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, LUDHIANA	0.99
3	TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, COIMBATORE	0.65
4	CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, IMPHAL	0.63
5	JUNAGADH AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, JUNAGADH	0.59

Note: Only PG student count was considered to calculate the ratio;
Total faculty = permanent faculty + visiting faculty + contractual/ad hoc faculty



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Biomaterials & Bio-nanotechnology | Cellular, Tissue & Genetic Engineering
Biomedical Signal & Image Processing

Biotechnology - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved
AI & Data Driven Biotechnology | Industrial & Pharmaceutical Biotechnology
Medical Biotechnology | Bio-Entrepreneurship & Regulatory Affairs

Agriculture Engineering - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved
Geospatial AI & Remote Sensing | Processing & Food Engineering
Soil & Water Conservation Engg | Farm Machinery & Power Engineering

M.Tech.

Computer Science & Engineering - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved

Biomedical Engineering - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved

Biotechnology - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved

Agriculture Engineering - 20th Batch | AICTE Approved

BCA - 31st Batch | AICTE Approved

AI & Machine Learning | Cyber Security | Data Science | Internet of Things

MCA - 29th Batch | AICTE Approved

Cloud Computing | Internet of Things | Network and Information Security
Full Stack Development | Data Science & Machine Learning

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OUT OF THE BOX PEDAGOGY

THE MULTIFACETED APPROACH TO EXPANDING ITS STUDENTS' HORIZONS HAS MADE SYMBIOSIS ONE OF INDIA'S FOREMOST INSTITUTIONS IN PRIVATE EDUCATION

By Dhaval S. Kulkarni



1970, S.B. Mujumdar, then a professor of botany at Fergusson College, Pune, began interacting with foreign students

studying in the city and writing about the difficulties they faced. He soon launched the Symbiosis International Cultural Centre to better assimilate

international students. Realising that these efforts were limited in scope, Mujumdar decided to enter the education sector, beginning with the Symbiosis English Language Teaching Institute (ELTIS) for students from non-English-speaking countries. This was followed by a law college in 1977, a business management institute in 1978 and, eventually, colleges for several more disciplines.

Symbiosis acquired deemed university status in 2002. Today, Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a multidisciplinary institution with 45 institutes, 105 courses and programmes, more than 1,300 faculty members, and around 70,000 students from across India and 85 other countries. It operates six campuses in India and one in Dubai. The university's 400-acre Lavale campus, in the hills on Pune's outskirts, is divided into the Hill Base and Hill Top campuses and is home to over 19,000 students.

"The main differentiator between Symbiosis and other private universities is that it was established by a teacher," says Dr Vidya Yeravdekar, Mujumdar's daughter and current pro-chancellor, Symbiosis International (Deemed University). In 2019, Symbiosis became the first private institution in the country to establish a medical college exclusively for women. The Symbiosis Medical College for Women has one of the lowest

TOP 10
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

RANK 2026	RANK 2025	RANK 2024	RANK 2023	RANK 2022	RANK 2021	RANK 2020	RANK 2019	RANK 2018	UNIVERSITY
1	2	1	NP*	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE
2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	AMITY UNIVERSITY UTTAR PRADESH, NOIDA
3	4	4	3	2	3	3	2	1	CHRIST (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), BENGALURU
4	7	7	6	7	10	11	12	8	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), CHENNAI
5	8	6	5	5	8	8	7	6	JAIN (DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY), BENGALURU
6	6	5	4	4	7	6	5	2	BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH, BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH
7	5	3	2	3	6	7	6	9	KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), GUNTUR
8	9	9	9	11	17	19	21	18	GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA
9	10	8	8	8	11	10	NP	NP	XIM UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR
10	11	10	7	6	9	9	8	NP	NIRMA UNIVERSITY, AHMEDABAD

*NP=Not participated

fee structures in the country (Rs 10 lakh annually), and is attached to a 900-bed teaching hospital that treats patients free of cost.

"We show the way, the world follows," says Ramakrishnan Raman, vice-chancellor, pointing to how Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi launched a business school at a time when few institutions were thinking along those lines. Symbiosis, he says, also has a history of thinking beyond conventional mod-

els. It introduced innovation and entrepreneurship programmes in 2015, when the government was still developing its approach to startups and entrepreneurship.

Its MBA in Innovation and Entrepreneurship does not offer placements, yet it receives around 12,000 applications for just 60 seats at a time when MBA programmes are typically judged by their placement records. Raman claims that

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one out of four corporate leaders at the CXO and vice-president levels is a Symbiosis alumnus. Shrirang Altekar, professor and director of the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM), says the institute has incubated more than 100 startups. "We want students to be creators of jobs and not seekers of jobs," he says. Around 80 per cent of the curriculum is taught by faculty members, while the remaining 20 per cent is delivered by industry professionals. For the past four years, Symbiosis has also organised The Grand Pitch, modelled on the format of TV's *Shark Tank*, giving student entrepreneurs an opportunity to present their business ideas.

Abhijit Chirputkar, director of the Symbiosis Institute of Digital and Telecom Management (SIDTM), says the major focus is on interdisciplinary courses that add value. Management programmes, for instance, include credits from other disciplines. The university's academic and extracurricular infrastructure includes research cells, badminton and pickleball courts, gyms and dining facilities with Eat Right certification. Students can participate in semester exchanges, summer schools and winter schools at partner universities across Europe, including institutions in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Belgium. "Here, teaching is not just about academics. It also integrates the newest trends and technology through our alumni

TOP 10

MOST IMPROVED GENERAL UNIVERSITIES (PRIVATE)

RANK	UNIVERSITY	CITY
1	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)	CHENNAI
2	GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY	GREATER NOIDA
3	PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY	BENGALURU
4	SAGE UNIVERSITY	INDORE
5	INTEGRAL UNIVERSITY	LUCKNOW
6	SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY	MATHURA
7	GLA UNIVERSITY	MATHURA
8	SWAMI VIVEKANAND SUBHARTI UNIVERSITY	MEERUT
9	CMR UNIVERSITY	BENGALURU
10	AMITY UNIVERSITY MAHARASHTRA	MUMBAI

Note: The Most Improved Universities are ranked based on their percentage growth in ranking over the past five years (2022-2026) in the India Today-MDRA Best Universities Ranking

GURUSPEAK

The combination of diversity and uncompromising academic standards is one of the university's greatest strengths

DR VIDYA YERAVDEKAR

Pro Chancellor, Symbiosis International (Deemed University)



TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PG COURSES

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PG COURSES
1	AMITY UNIVERSITY UTTAR PRADESH, NOIDA	116
2	SWAMI VIVEKANAND SUBHARTI UNIVERSITY, MEERUT	110
3	BHARATI VIDYAPEETH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), PUNE	104
4	INTEGRAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW	73
5	CHRIST (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), BENGALURU	69

TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NO. OF PATENTS FILED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	JAIN (DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY), BENGALURU	3,621
2	GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA	2,928
3	CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI	2,396
4	CHITKARA UNIVERSITY, PATIALA	2,083
5	SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY, MATHURA	1,904



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B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Cyber Security)
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B.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering
B.Tech Civil Engineering
B.Tech Mechanical Engineering
M.Tech Computer Science Engineering
M.Tech Computer Science Engineering (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
M.Tech Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
M.Tech Cloud Computing
M.Tech Civil Engineering
M.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering
M.Tech Mechanical Engineering
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Bachelor of Business Administration (Business Analytics, Digital Marketing, Tourism & Hospitality Management, Aviation Management, Supply Chain Management)
Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons.) Tourism & Hospitality Management, Aviation Management, Supply Chain Management
Bachelor of Commerce (Hons.)

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MBA (HR, Marketing, Finance, Operations Management)
MBA(Business Analytics)
MBA(Digital Marketing)
Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

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Bachelor of Computer Application
Bachelor of Computer Application (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
Bachelor of Computer Application (Artificial Intelligence and Data Science)
Bachelor of Computer Application (Cyber Security)
B.Sc. (Graphics & Web Designing)
B.Sc. (Multimedia)
Master of Computer Application
Master of Computer Application (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
Master of Computer Application (Data Science)
Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

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UNNATI GHOSH

MBA (HR), Symbiosis Institute of Business Management



TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST FACULTY-STUDENT RATIO

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RATIO
1	WORLD UNIVERSITY OF DESIGN, SONEPAT	2.02
2	USHA MARTIN UNIVERSITY, RANCHI	1.30
3	SRI SIDDHARTHA ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TUMKUR	1.00
4	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), CHENNAI	0.98
5	KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), GUNTUR	0.94

Note: Only PG student count was considered to calculate the ratio; Total faculty = Permanent faculty + visiting faculty + contractual/ad hoc faculty

TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS GRANTED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	CHITKARA UNIVERSITY, PATIALA	1,111
2	AMITY UNIVERSITY UTTAR PRADESH, NOIDA	358
2	SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, SOLAN	358
4	CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI	195
5	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), CHENNAI	154

TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PHDs IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PHDs
1	AMITY UNIVERSITY UTTAR PRADESH, NOIDA	1,171
2	BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH, BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH	894
3	SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE	808
4	CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI	631
5	KALINGA UNIVERSITY, RAIPUR	577

TOP 5

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS PUBLISHED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	JAIN (DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY), BENGALURU	2,813
2	CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI	2,298
3	SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY, MATHURA	2,018
4	CHITKARA UNIVERSITY, PATIALA	1,696
5	KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), GUNTUR	1,465

network to make us industry-ready,” says K.R. Arvind, a second-year MBA student at SIDTM.

Kevin Gandhi, an MBA student at the Symbiosis School of Banking and Finance, says the presence of students from across the world creates a multicultural experience. Avishi Upadhyaya, an MBA in Communication Management student at SIMC, says the amenities, facilities and faculty give students an edge, while events held throughout the year allow them to interact with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.

Actor Amitabh Bachchan is professor emeritus at the Faculty of Media and Communication. Former diplomats such as Pavan K. Varma, Talmiz Ahmad and Vijay Gokhale are distinguished professors at the university. Raghav Khanna and Garima Pura, who were part of the team behind the Oscar-winning documentary, *The Elephant Whisperers*, are SIMC alumni. ■



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ALONG WITH OFFERING EXPERT GUIDANCE AND A WIDE RANGE OF EXPOSURE TO POSTGRADUATES, AIIMS DELHI IS OPENING UP NEW AREAS OF STUDY AND UPDATING OLD ONES

By Sonali Acharjee

F

or generations of Indian doctors, earning a post-graduate seat at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, has represented the pinnacle of medical training. While the competition to enter the institute is legendarily tough, what truly distinguishes AIIMS is not simply its prestige

but the unique ecosystem it offers—one where patient care, research, innovation and academic excellence intersect every day.

AIIMS Delhi offers one of the country's most comprehensive portfolios of postgraduate programmes, spanning MD, MS, MDS, DM, MCh,



A class in progress at AIIMS Delhi

TOP 10

MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES

RANK 2026	RANK 2025	RANK 2024	RANK 2023	RANK 2022	RANK 2021	RANK 2020	RANK 2019	RANK 2018	UNIVERSITY
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	NP*	JAWAHARLAL INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (JIPMER), PUDUCHERRY
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	NP	KING GEORGE'S MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW
4	4	4	4	4	4	NP	NP	NP	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES (NIMHANS), BENGALURU
5	5	5	5	6	6	NP	NP	NP	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), JODHPUR
6	7	6	8	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RISHIKESH
7	8	8	9	8	9	NP	NP	NP	INSTITUTE OF LIVER & BILIARY SCIENCES, NEW DELHI
8	9	7	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RAIPUR
9	10	9	10	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), PATNA
10	NP	NP	6	5	5	4	4	2	PANDIT BHAGWAT DAYAL SHARMA UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, ROHTAK

*NP=Not participated

MD in Hospital Administration, MSc Nursing, Master's and PhD Biotechnology courses, alongside doctoral and fellowship programmes. Importantly, the curriculum is continually revised to keep pace with changing healthcare needs and advances in medicine, ensuring that residents are trained in contemporary clinical practice rather than relying on static textbooks.

Perhaps the institute's greatest strength is its unparalleled clinical exposure. "As one of India's busiest tertiary-care centres, AIIMS attracts patients from every state, many with rare, complex or advanced diseases that residents are unlikely to encounter elsewhere," says Dr Nikhil Tandon, the acting director of AIIMS New Delhi.

This provides postgraduate students with experience across an extraordinary

GURUSPEAK

Residents learn by treating rare and complex cases while contributing to research that directly informs clinical practice and public health

DR NIKHIL TANDON

Acting Director, AIIMS New Delhi



range of conditions, from routine illnesses to those needing cutting-edge transplant medicine, advanced oncology cases, genetic disorders and highly specialised surgical procedures.

"Research is equally central to

postgraduate life," adds Dr Tandon. Unlike at many medical colleges, where research remains largely thesis-driven, AIIMS encourages residents to engage with multidisciplinary research teams, clinical trials, translational medicine and labora-

TOP 5

MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF SUPER SPECIALITY STUDENTS PASSING OUT IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	TOTAL NUMBER
1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI	755
2	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RISHIKESH	180
3	KING GEORGE'S MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW	153
4	JSS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH, MYSURU	145
5	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES (NIMHANS), BENGALURU	141

TOP 5

MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES WHERE STUDENTS (MS/ MD) ATTEND TO HIGHEST NUMBER OF OPD PATIENTS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PATIENTS
1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI	14,371
2	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES (NIMHANS), BENGALURU	13,174
3	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), PATNA	12,228
4	PANDIT BHAGWAT DAYAL SHARMA UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, ROHTAK	9,709
5	INSTITUTE OF LIVER & BILIARY SCIENCES, NEW DELHI	8,564

Average number of patients attended to by a final year student (MS/ MD) with the help of senior doctors in various OPDs (in one year)

tory science. Departments are equipped with sophisticated diagnostic and research facilities, while students regularly present their work at national and international conferences, building academic credentials early in their careers.

Another defining feature is the institute's strong culture of super-specialisation. Students train alongside nationally recognised experts across virtually every discipline, creating opportunities for mentorship that extend well beyond residency. "The academic environment also promotes collaboration across departments, allowing physicians, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, geneticists and basic scientists to work together on patient care and research," says Dr Aakanksha Kumari, DM Endocrinology, AIIMS Delhi.

AIIMS has also been updating its postgraduate programmes to reflect the changing nature of medicine. This year, it introduced three new specialisations within the MSc Nursing programme. The institute has also renamed its DM Endocrinology course as DM in Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes, recognising the growing importance of diabetes and metabolic disorders in clinical practice.

The AIIMS campus is home to PULSE, one of India's best-known inter-medical festivals for cultural, literary, sports and research events. Residents have access to a 24-hour library, sports facilities and societies for music, theatre, debating, photography and community service

Training, too, is evolving alongside these changes. Depending on their specialisation, residents today work with advanced imaging, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, molecular diagnostics, precision medicine and digital health technologies that are becoming an increasingly routine part of patient care.

The Department of Community Medicine at AIIMS is another distinctive part of the curriculum. It trains postgraduate students to understand health beyond the walls of a tertiary-care centre.

Residents gain hands-on experience in epidemiology, disease surveillance, health systems, biostatistics and public health research while working in urban and rural field-practice areas.

What ultimately sets AIIMS apart, however, is the stimulating environment in which this learning takes place. Residents are exposed to an extraordinary range of patients while learning from some of the country's leading clinicians and researchers.

Life at AIIMS also extends beyond residency. The campus is home to PULSE, one of India's best-known inter-medical festivals, bringing together students for cultural,



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TOP 5

MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH LOWEST TUITION FEES (MS/MD)

RANK	UNIVERSITY	TUITION FEES (ENTIRE COURSE)
1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI	₹702
1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RAIPUR	₹702
3	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), JODHPUR	₹1,667
4	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), PATNA	₹3,027
5	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RISHIKESH	₹9,500

TOP 5

MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST FACULTY-STUDENT RATIO

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RATIO
1	INSTITUTE OF LIVER & BILIARY SCIENCES, NEW DELHI	2.56
2	NITTE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), MANGALURU	2.39
3	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES (NIMHANS), BENGALURU	1.82
4	D.Y. PATIL EDUCATION SOCIETY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), KOLHAPUR	1.80
5	JSS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH, MYSURU	1.69

Note: MS/MD student count was considered to calculate the ratio
Total faculty = permanent faculty + visiting faculty + contractual/ ad hoc faculty



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DR AAKANKSHA KUMARI
DM Endocrinology, AIIMS Delhi



literary, sports and research events. Residents also have access to a 24-hour central library, modern simulation and skills laboratories, sports facilities, hostels and active student societies spanning music, theatre, debating, photography and community service.

AIIMS Delhi has topped the NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) Medical Rankings every year since their launch in 2016, remaining India's highest-ranked medical institution for 10 straight years.

The institute is also increasingly embedding artificial intelligence into medical education through initiatives such as the newly launched Indo-French Centre for AI in Health, which combines research, clinical innovation and medical training. ■

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BUILDING ON ITS LEGACY, IIT DELHI IS MAKING LEARNING MORE FLEXIBLE, RESEARCH MORE COLLABORATIVE AND INNOVATION MORE CLOSELY CONNECTED TO INDUSTRY AND SOCIETY

By Shelly Anand

INDIA'S PREMIER **ENGINEERING INSTITUTIONS** are no longer defined by academic rigour alone. They are expected to produce graduates who can navigate technological disruption, collaborate across disciplines and solve complex global problems. IIT Delhi has embraced that shift with characteristic confidence. Rather than resting on its formidable reputation, the institute is reshaping itself through a more flexible curriculum, stronger global partnerships, interdisciplinary research and a renewed emphasis on innovation, communication and student well-being.

"Students are our greatest strength. Our goal is to attract the brightest minds and prepare them to become future leaders in research, innovation and society," says Prof. Somnath Baidya Roy, Dean, Planning. A flagship initiative is ALIGN (Academic and Learning Integration for Growth and Networking), a collaboration with 18 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) that allows outstanding undergraduates to spend a year at IIT Delhi before

TOP 10

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES

RANK 2026	RANK 2025	RANK 2024	RANK 2023	RANK 2022	RANK 2021	RANK 2020	RANK 2019	RANK 2018	UNIVERSITY
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
2	2	2	2	2	4	NP*	NP	3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR
3	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR
4	5	5	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE
5	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI
6	7	7	6	6	7	5	5	5	DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI
7	8	8	7	7	6	6	NP	NP	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MANDI
8	9	9	8	8	8	10	NP	NP	INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BANGALORE, BENGALURU
9	10	10	9	9	9	7	NP	NP	BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, PILANI
10	11	11	10	10	10	9	NP	NP	INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, HYDERABAD

*NP=Not participated





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PROF. SOMNATH BAIDYA ROY

Dean, Planning, IIT Delhi



progressing to postgraduate and doctoral studies. The programme widens opportunities for talented students while creating a larger pipeline of future researchers in India.

The institute is also deepening its global engagement. A new joint degree with Paris's Sorbonne University in healthcare and medical technologies adds to existing part-

nerships with universities in Australia, Taiwan and elsewhere. IIT Delhi has also doubled its international postgraduate intake, reinforcing its ambition to become a more globally connected campus where international exposure is embedded through joint degrees, student exchanges and collaborative research.

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TECHNICAL

TOP 5

INDIA'S MOST IMPROVED TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES

RANK	UNIVERSITY	CITY
1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	KHARAGPUR
2	JSS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY	MYSURU
3	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI	NEW DELHI
4	UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR	JAIPUR
5	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SRINAGAR	SRINAGAR

Note: The Most Improved Universities are ranked based on their percentage growth in ranking over the past five years (2022-2026) in the India Today-MDRA Best Universities Ranking

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST VALUE FOR MONEY

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RoI
1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR	78.5
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	73.4
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI	70.9
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	55.2
5	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GANDHINAGAR	27.9

Note: RoI (return on investment) is calculated based on average annual salary (MTech) / tuition fees (MTech entire duration)

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PhDs IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF STUDENTS
1	VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, BELAGAVI	2,671
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI	1,366
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	1,246
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	1,055
5	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI	813

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST FACULTY-STUDENT RATIO

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RATIO
1	JAYPEE INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, NOIDA	3.33
2	HINDUSTAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), CHENNAI	3.28
3	NOORUL ISLAM CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, KANYAKUMARI	2.39
4	INDIRA GANDHI DELHI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN (IGDTUW), NEW DELHI	1.86
5	DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI	1.59

Note: MTech student count was considered to calculate the ratio

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS FILED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR	656
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	462
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR	442
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	402
5	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI	354

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STUDENTSPEAK

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS PUBLISHED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR	656
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR	444
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI	371
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	357
5	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	318

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS GRANTED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR	509
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI	442
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	367
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR	341
5	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CALICUT, KOZHIKODE	143

TOP 5

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF PATENTS LICENSED IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NO. OF PATENTS
1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PATNA	57
2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI	41
3	VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, BELAGAVI	36
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR	23
4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE	23

Two years at IIT Delhi have transformed my academic journey. Supportive faculty, world-class labs and computational facilities, inspiring talks by global experts and a vibrant community of intellectually curious students have deepened my understanding of science and motivated me to contribute through research

JOSWIN P. JOY

PhD scholar, Centre for Atmospheric Sciences, IIT Delhi



recorded and translated into multiple Indian languages, allowing students from non-English-speaking backgrounds to revisit complex concepts in their mother tongue. AI-powered translation will further expand the programme.

Recognising that technical expertise alone is insufficient, IIT Delhi has established a Teaching-Learning Centre and a Centre for Academic Communication to help students present their research effectively and engage wider audiences. Equally important is student well-being. An Academic Progress Group provides personalised academic support, while an expanded counselling network and partnerships with hospitals ensure access to professional mental health services. "We cannot remove every pressure students face, but we can create a strong support system that helps them overcome those challenges," says Prof. Roy.

Innovation extends well beyond classrooms. Mandatory internships for undergraduate and MTech students, industry exposure for PhD scholars, active technical clubs, makerspaces (collaborative work spaces) and a well-equipped Central Workshop encourage students to transform ideas into working prototypes. Together, these initiatives are helping IIT Delhi prepare future innovators equipped to lead in an increasingly interconnected world. ■

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A CASE FOR EXCELLENCE

THE NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY (NLSIU), BENGALURU, RETAINS ITS TOP SPOT IN NATIONAL LEGAL EDUCATION RANKINGS. NOW, IT AIMS FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURAL OVERHAUL AND AI-FORWARD CURRICULUM

By Ajay Sukumaran

National Law School of India University (Bengaluru) has occupied the top position in legal education rankings for quite some time. According to Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Sudhir Krishnaswamy, this happened “not by accident, but by design”. Of the faculty and studentry, he says, “When you bring together such a diverse group of talented people, the educational environment it creates has remarkable effects.”

The two main items on the agenda for making the institute grow even further are fixing infrastructural constraints and ideat-



Students at the National Law University of India (NLSIU), Bengaluru

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ing initiatives that keep up with a changing legal profession.

Two new academic blocks will come up by the end of this year, according to Krishnaswamy, which are part of a phased overhaul targeted for completion in 2028. The expanded infrastructure, which will include new hostel buildings, will cater to nearly 3,000 students, a climb from the current headcount of 1,934 students on campus as of July 2026. Currently, 118 faculty members cater to these students.

NLSIU will soon launch a research centre dedicated to promoting equity, inclusion and justice in India's legal profession. Its first project, the Women's Inclusion and Leadership in Law (WILL) Initiative, will seek to highlight the structural barriers hindering women's participation in the profession

TOP 5

LAW UNIVERSITIES

RANK 2026	RANK 2025	RANK 2024	RANK 2023	RANK 2022	RANK 2021	RANK 2020	RANK 2019	RANK 2018	UNIVERSITY
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY (NLSIU), BENGALURU
2	2	2	2	2	2	NP*	NP	2	THE WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES (NUJS), KOLKATA
3	4	3	3	4	4	3	NP	NP	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), GANDHINAGAR
4	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	NP	NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY (NLIU), BHOPAL
5	5	5	5	5	5	4	7	NP	DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (RMLNLU), LUCKNOW

*NP=Not participated

GURUSPEAK

🔥 **NLSIU has had the privilege of being at the top of national rankings in legal education for some time. We understand that this is both a privilege and a responsibility, requiring us to maintain standards, set new benchmarks and grow at every stage** 📈

PROF. DR SUDHIR KRISHNASWAMY

Vice Chancellor, NLSIU



"We are very excited to set a new benchmark not only for legal education but for what university education should aspire to be, in terms of open and inclusive spaces," says Krishnaswamy.

On the academic front, NLSIU plans to begin extensive pilots using AI tutoring models. "There is a great deal of experimentation across the world in this field. I am glad to say that we, at NLSIU, are at its cutting edge. We have adopted and implemented AI platforms as effectively as anyone," says Krishnaswamy. "This year, we are looking to embed the technology further into the university's

teaching and learning practices. As we close out the calendar year, we hope to have adequate evidence to roll out much larger initiatives," he adds.

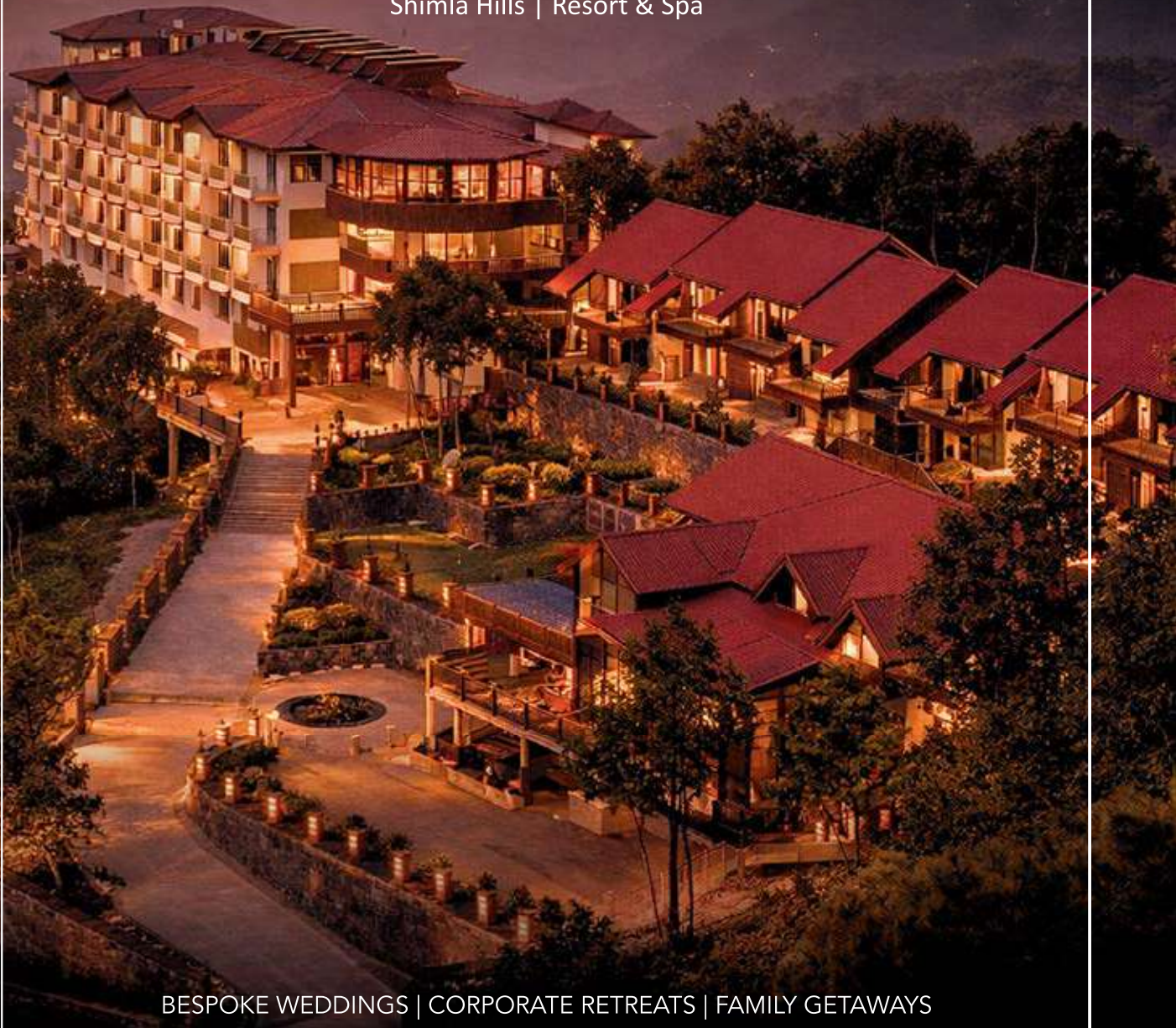
NLSIU will launch a new research centre this academic year, dedicated to promoting equity, inclusion and justice within India's legal profession. The centre's first project, the Women's Inclusion and Leadership in Law (WILL) Initiative, will seek to highlight the structural barriers hindering women's participation in the profession through evidence-based research.

Women comprise only 15 per cent of the 1.8 million enrolled



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TOP 3

INDIA'S MOST IMPROVED LAW UNIVERSITIES

RANK	UNIVERSITY	CITY
1	DAMODARAM SANJIVAYYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (DSNLU)	VISAKHAPATNAM
2	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU)	GANDHINAGAR
2	HIDAYATULLAH NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (HNLU)	RAIPUR

Note: The Most Improved Universities are ranked based on their percentage growth in ranking over the past five years (2022-2026) in the India Today-MDRA Best Universities Ranking

TOP 5

LAW UNIVERSITIES WITH LOWEST TUITION FEES

RANK	UNIVERSITY	TUITION FEES
1	DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (RMLNLU), LUCKNOW	₹45,000
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3	THE TAMIL NADU DR. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI	₹80,000
5	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), GANDHINAGAR	₹1,20,000

Note: For one-year LLM course

TOP 5

LAW UNIVERSITIES WITH BEST FACULTY-STUDENT RATIO

RANK	UNIVERSITY	RATIO
1	NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY (NLSIU), BENGALURU	1.62
2	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), GANDHINAGAR	1.31
3	NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY (NLIU), BHOPAL	0.9
4	HIDAYATULLAH NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (HNLU), RAIPUR	0.89
5	THE WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES (NUJS), KOLKATA	0.83

Note: Only LLM student count was taken to calculate the ratio

TOP 5

LAW UNIVERSITIES OFFERING HIGHEST NUMBER OF PhDs IN PAST THREE YEARS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
1	THE TAMIL NADU DR. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI	61
2	DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (RMLNLU), LUCKNOW	48
3	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), GANDHINAGAR	31
4	NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY (NLSIU), BENGALURU	17
4	THE WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES (NUJS), KOLKATA	17

Mock court at the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS), Kolkata



DEBAJYOTI CHAKRABORTY

TOP 5

LAW UNIVERSITIES WITH MAXIMUM NO. OF VICTORIES IN INTER-UNIVERSITY MOOT COURT COMPETITIONS

RANK	UNIVERSITY	COMPETITIONS WON
1	MAHARASHTRA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (MNLU-CS), CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR	25
2	DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (RMLNLU), LUCKNOW	20
3	THE TAMIL NADU DR. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI	15
4	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), GANDHINAGAR	9
5	HIDAYATULLAH NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (HNLU), RAIPUR	8

Note: For AY 2024-25

STUDENTSPEAK

“I come from a law background, so NLSIU has helped me learn more about the legal dimensions of public policy. NLSIU also has an excellent pool of electronic and library resources, which has enabled us to access valuable material for our writing and research.”

PARTHASARATHY P.

Master's in Public Policy,
Batch of 2027



advocates in the country, although they represent about 32 per cent of all law graduates annually in India. “We want to put our shoulder to the wheel and try to change this situation in as significant a way as we can. We are very excited about these initiatives,” says Krishnaswamy.

He recognises that NLSU's stature in national rankings is both a privilege and a responsibility. The mission, according to Krishnaswamy, is maintaining standards, establishing new ones and growing at every step. ■



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- Master in Physiotherapy (M.PT) @ Belagavi



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GENERAL (GOVERNMENT)

RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	1	1	UNIVERSITY OF DELHI, New Delhi	166.7	174.2	137.2	120.2	193.4	791.7	993.5	1,785.2
↔	2	2	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, New Delhi	168.4	175.6	147.6	115.7	166.2	773.5	996.5	1,770.0
↔	3	3	ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, Aligarh	157.0	165.0	146.2	79.6	160.6	708.4	969.5	1,677.9
↑	4	5	OSMANIA UNIVERSITY, Hyderabad	165.3	149.7	115.9	96.8	138.9	666.6	970.6	1,637.2
↑	5	6	GURU GOBIND SINGH INDRAPRASTHA UNIVERSITY, New Delhi	153.0	162.2	127.2	121.2	146.5	710.1	924.7	1,634.8
↑	6	7	COCHIN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, Kochi	154.7	165.8	109.6	94.0	179.9	704.0	878.3	1,582.3
↑	7	9	BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY, Coimbatore	161.2	151.2	132.2	98.6	107.0	650.2	900.6	1,550.8
↑	8	11	UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW, Lucknow	153.2	150.4	110.0	82.5	169.1	665.2	880.5	1,545.7
↓	9	8	DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, PUSA, Samastipur	142.4	177.9	137.7	91.2	131.9	681.1	860.7	1,541.8
↔	10	10	ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY, Guntur	160.5	157.7	124.0	108.0	122.0	672.2	847.3	1,519.5
↑	11	12	GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, Amritsar	154.8	135.3	112.3	74.3	137.3	614.0	897.1	1,511.1
↑	12	14	UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD, Prayagraj	150.0	159.8	126.2	91.5	138.3	665.8	834.5	1,500.3
↔	13	13	ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, Annamalainagar	146.7	142.0	110.1	68.0	110.8	577.6	909.6	1,487.2
↑	14	15	THE UNIVERSITY OF BURDWAN, Burdwan	148.0	147.6	125.5	72.9	147.2	641.2	841.3	1,482.5
↑	15	17	CHAUDHARY CHARAN SINGH UNIVERSITY, Meerut	154.2	143.0	123.3	106.7	114.8	642.0	833.5	1,475.5
↔	16	16	UNIVERSITY OF KERALA, Thiruvananthapuram	175.5	167.9	145.2	90.6	113.1	692.3	776.4	1,468.7
↑	17	19	UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE, Mysuru	149.2	155.9	115.1	99.0	151.4	670.6	790.5	1,461.1
↔	18	18	MANGALORE UNIVERSITY, Mangaluru	140.1	168.0	139.1	82.1	114.6	643.9	806.8	1,450.7
↑	19	20	UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT, Malappuram	166.8	145.1	113.4	72.5	95.0	592.8	855.3	1,448.1
-	20	NP	PUNJAB AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, Ludhiana	139.9	181.4	128.2	79.6	102.1	631.2	675.3	1,306.5
↔	21	21	GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA, Bilaspur	158.7	163.2	115.7	89.7	84.0	611.3	665.3	1,276.6
↑	22	23	TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, Coimbatore	147.8	221.3	127.9	61.0	90.4	648.4	595.7	1,244.1
↑	23	24	CENTRAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, New Delhi	153.7	109.2	98.2	63.1	106.0	530.2	712.4	1,242.6
-	24	NP	SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY, Tirupati	148.2	151.9	111.0	89.1	99.7	599.9	617.1	1,217.0
↑	25	27	KUMAUN UNIVERSITY, Nainital	137.9	145.0	127.3	59.5	106.9	576.6	588.1	1,164.7
↓	26	25	MIZORAM UNIVERSITY, Aizawl	145.3	155.2	113.1	64.3	92.8	570.7	591.9	1,162.6
↑	27	29	CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH, Dharamshala	144.1	148.9	118.8	76.6	70.8	559.2	452.8	1,012.0
↔	28	28	VIDYASAGAR UNIVERSITY, Midnapore	114.8	145.1	100.0	50.2	115.1	525.2	475.7	1,000.9
↑	29	30	JUNAGADH AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, Junagadh	134.5	163.4	126.3	91.3	138.7	654.2	341.8	996.0
↑	30	34	CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF HARYANA, Mahendergarh	126.7	141.9	98.6	62.3	93.2	522.7	340.1	862.8
↑	31	33	MAHATMA JYOTIBA PHULE ROHILKHAND UNIVERSITY, Bareilly	167.2	139.0	117.1	83.0	109.9	616.2	243.6	859.8

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	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	32	32	DR. Y.S.R. HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, Venkataramannagudem	112.5	155.2	134.8	64.7	115.7	582.9	272.1	855.0
↑	33	35	BUNDELKHAND UNIVERSITY, Jhansi	157.6	146.2	110.4	62.0	92.5	568.7	285.4	854.1
↑	34	37	DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA GORAKHPUR UNIVERSITY, Gorakhpur	153.1	111.0	66.4	92.5	107.4	530.4	302.9	833.3
↑	35	36	SRI PADMAVATI MAHILA VISVAVIDYALAYAM (WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY), Tirupati	144.9	159.0	89.7	67.2	58.1	518.9	307.0	825.9
↑	36	39	CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KARNATAKA, Kalaburagi	119.5	151.0	120.7	69.6	105.3	566.1	248.1	814.2
↑	37	38	MAHATMA GANDHI KASHI VIDYAPITH, Varanasi	135.3	104.1	80.5	52.6	98.6	471.1	270.7	741.8
↑	38	42	SRI KONDA LAXMAN TELANGANA STATE HORTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, Siddipet	68.9	145.4	128.6	95.0	126.2	564.1	176.6	740.7
↑	39	40	UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES RAICHUR, Raichur	125.9	152.0	131.7	67.7	119.0	596.3	134.5	730.8
↑	40	43	MAKHANLAL CHATURVEDI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION, Bhopal	103.8	65.1	82.2	25.1	69.2	345.4	367.3	712.7
-	41	NP	CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, IMPHAL, Imphal	86.0	139.4	95.0	39.7	96.8	456.9	203.8	660.7
↑	42	45	NAGALAND UNIVERSITY, Lumami	134.8	141.0	98.9	50.2	74.9	499.8	149.6	649.4
↓	43	41	HSNC UNIVERSITY, Mumbai	71.2	89.5	55.5	85.1	94.3	395.6	250.4	646.0
-	44	NP	RAJMATA VIJAYARAJE SCINDIA KRISHI VISHWAVIDYALAYA, Gwalior	89.1	126.7	119.1	59.2	93.3	487.4	156.4	643.8

GENERAL (PRIVATE)

RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

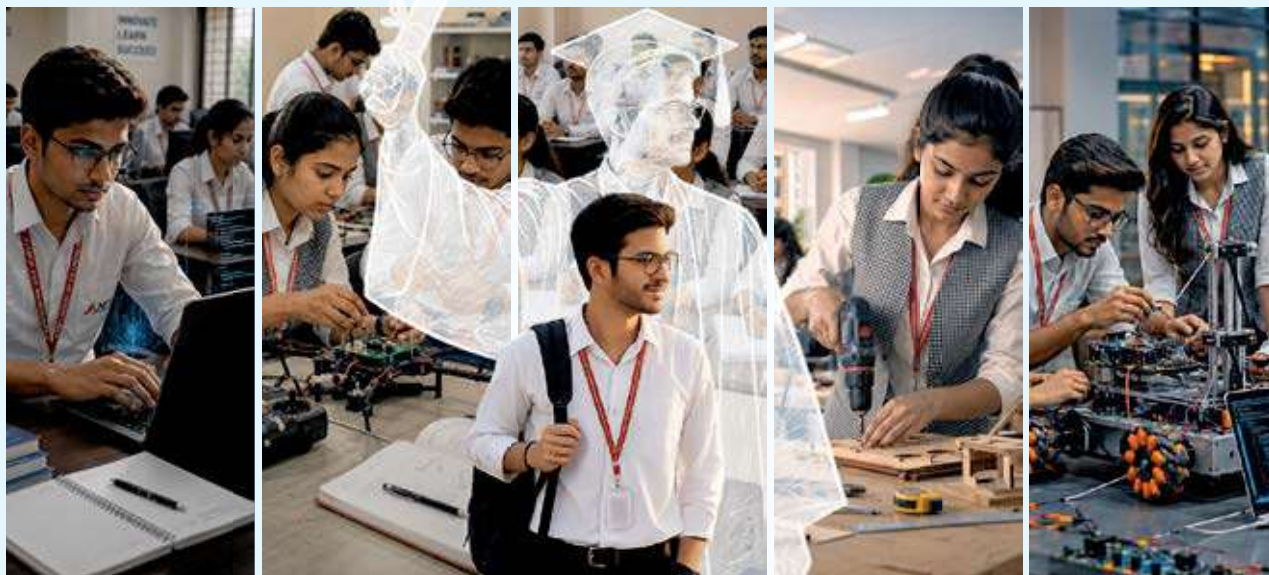
	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↑	1	2	SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), Pune	143.5	178.9	126.3	105.2	188.1	742.0	914.3	1,656.3
↑	2	3	AMITY UNIVERSITY UTTAR PRADESH, Noida	131.3	176.2	139.6	123.0	128.6	698.7	906.4	1,605.1
↑	3	4	CHRIST (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Bengaluru	131.3	158.8	127.5	117.2	162.9	697.7	847.6	1,545.3
↑	4	7	SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Chennai	150.2	155.7	141.2	89.2	117.9	654.2	824.3	1,478.5
↑	5	8	JAIN (DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY), Bengaluru	132.1	163.5	114.7	95.0	140.8	646.1	825.6	1,471.7
↔	6	6	BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH, Tonk	155.9	135.9	136.4	101.4	140.6	670.2	793.7	1,463.9
↓	7	5	KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Guntur	80.9	175.1	137.9	94.6	162.6	651.1	808.2	1,459.3
↑	8	9	GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, Greater Noida	115.2	176.6	119.4	91.9	129.5	632.6	823.7	1,456.3
↑	9	10	XIM UNIVERSITY, Bhubaneswar	93.6	131.2	119.2	99.5	164.0	607.5	803.2	1,410.7
↑	10	11	NIRMA UNIVERSITY, Ahmedabad	131.3	145.1	121.5	93.8	137.5	629.2	751.6	1,380.8
↑	11	12	MANIPAL UNIVERSITY JAIPUR, Jaipur	112.0	153.6	137.0	80.0	142.7	625.3	723.2	1,348.5
↑	12	13	ICFAI FOUNDATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, Hyderabad	117.9	107.3	126.8	119.8	156.1	627.9	709.4	1,337.3
↑	13	14	MANAV RACHNA INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND STUDIES, Faridabad	143.9	150.3	132.3	94.5	128.6	649.6	685.7	1,335.3
-	14	NP	BHARATI VIDYAPEETH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Pune	148.2	135.5	75.0	84.2	127.6	570.5	712.4	1,282.9

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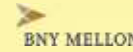
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RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

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				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	15	15	CHITKARA UNIVERSITY, Patiala	122.7	161.7	107.3	82.9	158.7	633.3	626.1	1,259.4
-	16	NP	CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, Mohali	116.6	160.0	126.5	88.7	128.1	619.9	632.1	1,252.0
↔	17	17	GLA UNIVERSITY, Mathura	125.3	146.4	122.5	77.8	89.9	561.9	683.2	1,245.1
↓	18	16	MAHARISHI MARKANDESHWAR (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), MULLANA, Ambala	137.8	140.4	125.9	62.0	129.0	595.1	648.1	1,243.2
↓	19	18	AMITY UNIVERSITY HARYANA, Gurugram	116.7	150.1	145.6	87.4	138.4	638.2	604.4	1,242.6
↓	20	19	SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, Solan	123.1	113.7	109.5	102.7	132.3	581.3	632.4	1,213.7
-	21	NP	ST JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY, Bengaluru	148.7	123.9	123.2	92.7	134.1	622.6	564.4	1,187.0
↓	22	21	AMITY UNIVERSITY RAJASTHAN, Jaipur	136.0	114.4	131.9	81.3	112.8	576.4	554.9	1,131.3
↑	23	25	B.S. ABDUR RAHMAN CRESCENT INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Chennai	135.7	118.6	141.4	102.7	99.6	598.0	456.6	1,054.6
↑	24	26	AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN, Coimbatore	154.3	119.8	128.6	70.4	93.0	566.1	487.3	1,053.4
↓	25	24	SIKKIM MANIPAL UNIVERSITY, Gangtok	130.2	131.5	129.0	74.5	83.7	548.9	459.4	1,008.3
↑	26	28	REVA UNIVERSITY, Bengaluru	111.0	147.4	116.6	87.6	129.3	591.9	414.4	1,006.3
↔	27	27	SWAMI VIVEKANAND SUBHARTI UNIVERSITY, Meerut	135.1	136.0	127.3	76.7	103.8	578.9	405.2	984.1
-	28	NP	BML MUNJAL UNIVERSITY, Gurugram	105.2	124.2	129.6	73.7	117.7	550.4	424.7	975.1
-	29	NP	NOIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, Greater Noida	121.9	146.0	128.2	74.2	107.8	578.1	341.7	919.8
↓	30	29	JAYPEE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, SOLAN, Solan	142.7	119.5	127.0	73.0	117.8	580.0	324.4	904.4
↑	31	32	AMITY UNIVERSITY MADHYA PRADESH, Gwalior	117.8	126.9	119.7	80.0	108.4	552.8	347.8	900.6
↓	32	30	SHOBHIT INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY (DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY), Meerut	111.0	124.5	128.6	86.3	92.5	542.9	356.8	899.7
↑	33	38	INTEGRAL UNIVERSITY, Lucknow	124.8	120.5	103.7	78.8	88.6	516.4	367.1	883.5
↔	34	34	SRI SRI UNIVERSITY, Cuttack	121.4	118.1	130.7	104.6	93.2	568.0	315.1	883.1
↑	35	40	SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY, Mathura	110.9	129.4	126.6	64.5	113.5	544.9	331.4	876.3
↑	36	37	SRI SIDDHARTHA ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, Tumkur	131.9	126.0	134.2	77.5	127.4	597.0	278.4	875.4
↑	37	39	PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY, Bengaluru	97.8	114.8	112.2	72.1	114.5	511.4	346.7	858.1
↓	38	35	DR. C. V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY, Bilaspur	106.2	110.4	105.1	62.7	90.4	474.8	378.8	853.6
-	39	NP	ANURAG UNIVERSITY, Hyderabad	123.4	145.3	123.1	86.7	115.7	594.2	243.0	837.2
↑	40	42	JECRC UNIVERSITY, Jaipur	92.8	103.8	75.3	80.6	131.0	483.5	350.4	833.9
-	41	NP	ST ALOYSIUS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Mangaluru	145.5	118.2	134.0	71.2	118.7	587.6	225.5	813.1
↑	42	44	JAIPUR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, Jaipur	130.5	106.7	122.3	50.7	107.5	517.7	280.5	798.2
-	43	NP	CMR UNIVERSITY, Bengaluru	109.8	93.3	86.7	57.9	129.6	477.3	317.9	795.2
↑	44	49	AMITY UNIVERSITY KOLKATA, Kolkata	83.7	166.7	116.6	99.4	133.6	600.0	194.2	794.2
↓	45	43	ICFAI UNIVERSITY, TRIPURA, Agartala	110.2	109.7	130.6	84.3	57.7	492.5	297.5	790.0
-	46	NP	AMITY UNIVERSITY PUNJAB, Mohali	76.5	132.0	135.6	80.4	134.4	558.9	224.7	783.6
↔	47	47	AMITY UNIVERSITY MAHARASHTRA, Mumbai	70.9	112.9	126.8	49.0	118.4	478.0	247.1	725.1
↔	48	48	SAGE UNIVERSITY, Indore	105.2	66.4	76.7	50.4	92.2	390.9	329.8	720.7



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				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↑	49	54	LINGAYA'S VIDYAPEETH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Faridabad	114.2	124.6	136.8	63.9	103.6	543.1	176.9	720.0
↓	50	46	RABINDRANATH TAGORE UNIVERSITY, Raisen	67.5	98.5	117.5	75.4	96.4	455.3	264.5	719.8
↓	51	50	QUANTUM UNIVERSITY, Roorkee	63.7	141.2	119.5	78.8	111.9	515.1	204.4	719.5
↑	52	55	VIVEKANANDA GLOBAL UNIVERSITY, Jaipur	117.3	121.0	99.8	83.9	97.6	519.6	198.6	718.2
-	53	NP	USHA MARTIN UNIVERSITY, Ranchi	94.1	141.4	128.0	90.5	51.2	505.2	205.7	710.9
-	54	NP	GOKHALE INSTITUTE OF POLITICS AND ECONOMICS, Pune	116.8	117.2	77.8	51.6	120.8	484.2	226.1	710.3
↓	55	51	KALINGA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (KISS) DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY, Bhubaneswar	93.0	91.4	114.7	51.8	95.7	446.6	262.6	709.2
↓	56	53	JAGRAN LAKECITY UNIVERSITY, Bhopal	69.7	120.5	121.0	95.7	89.8	496.7	207.6	704.3
↓	57	56	ARKA JAIN UNIVERSITY, Gamharia	105.2	98.7	96.2	96.7	57.7	454.5	186.7	641.2
-	58	NP	KALINGA UNIVERSITY, Raipur	101.2	152.9	92.8	70.0	110.0	526.9	108.5	635.4
-	59	NP	DESH BHAGAT UNIVERSITY, Mandi Gobindgarh	124.9	120.4	116.1	82.5	69.7	513.6	119.2	632.8
-	60	NP	SHRI VAISHNAV VIDYAPEETH VISHWAVIDYALAYA, Indore	68.5	125.1	107.9	69.3	81.9	452.7	177.1	629.8
↔	61	61	SIKKIM PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, Gangtok	78.1	100.0	127.2	69.0	82.4	456.7	169.3	626.0
-	62	NP	VISHWAKARMA UNIVERSITY, Pune	68.4	113.9	116.3	90.0	103.7	492.3	133.4	625.7
↑	63	64	LNCT UNIVERSITY, Bhopal	73.7	106.9	105.4	28.9	121.6	436.5	188.5	625.0
-	64	NP	BRAINWARE UNIVERSITY, Kolkata	61.4	127.3	102.3	92.0	50.6	433.6	191.3	624.9
↑	65	67	AMITY UNIVERSITY CHHATTISGARH, Raipur	76.6	105.8	129.2	87.2	119.1	517.9	103.7	621.6
-	66	NP	RAMA UNIVERSITY, Kanpur	105.6	96.4	139.0	54.5	102.1	497.6	123.5	621.1
↓	67	60	WORLD UNIVERSITY OF DESIGN, Sonapat	58.1	101.7	130.0	77.9	109.5	477.2	142.1	619.3
-	68	NP	SHOBHIT UNIVERSITY, Gangoh	110.5	100.7	112.7	66.5	90.2	480.6	132.2	612.8
-	69	NP	IMS UNISON UNIVERSITY, Dehradun	49.5	62.8	82.9	71.9	85.0	352.1	255.7	607.8
↓	70	66	CT UNIVERSITY, Ludhiana	65.3	88.8	112.3	94.0	94.5	454.9	152.7	607.6
↓	71	65	RAYAT BAHRA UNIVERSITY, Mohali	112.3	107.1	65.9	77.8	85.3	448.4	158.4	606.8
-	72	NP	SRI SATYA SAI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICAL SCIENCES, Sehore	82.0	99.6	111.9	67.7	82.5	443.7	160.6	604.3
-	73	NP	HARIDWAR UNIVERSITY, Roorkee	63.9	103.5	115.9	77.6	127.5	488.4	101.3	589.7
-	74	NP	UNITED UNIVERSITY, Prayagraj	69.5	114.6	96.5	78.1	102.0	460.7	117.2	577.9
-	75	NP	APEX UNIVERSITY, Jaipur	85.3	124.8	114.1	67.2	103.8	495.2	72.9	568.1
↓	76	71	MANGALAYATAN UNIVERSITY, Jabalpur	69.2	106.4	122.7	84.0	78.7	461.0	94.2	555.2
↓	77	69	ITM UNIVERSITY, Raipur	80.9	78.3	80.9	78.4	71.8	390.3	148.5	538.8
↓	78	70	SHRI RAMSWAROOP MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY, Barabanki	91.7	55.5	102.5	53.7	68.0	371.4	158.9	530.3
-	79	NP	DR. C. V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY, Khandwa	61.5	98.5	84.8	75.9	67.2	387.9	100.4	488.3
↓	80	72	CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ UNIVERSITY, Navi Mumbai	59.9	83.0	84.2	52.0	98.8	377.9	96.6	474.5
↓	81	75	AISECT UNIVERSITY, Hazaribag	49.8	51.6	23.7	19.5	111.0	255.6	200.9	456.5



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				208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↓	82	74	MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, Shillong	58.8	55.5	54.7	53.7	68.3	291.0	149.1	440.1
-	83	NP	MADHYANCHAL PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, Bhopal	45.5	52.0	53.5	42.0	128.6	321.6	86.3	407.9
-	84	NP	HIMALAYAN UNIVERSITY, Itanagar	67.6	60.8	60.0	58.1	27.6	274.1	131.5	405.6
↓	85	76	DR. C. V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY, Vaishali	60.5	39.2	39.2	30.4	99.7	269.0	136.3	405.3
-	86	NP	ICFAI UNIVERSITY, JHARKHAND, Ranchi	69.2	90.8	73.7	27.1	59.0	319.8	83.2	403.0

MEDICAL

RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	G= GOVT/ P=PVT	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
					225	225	200	150	200	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	1	1	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI, New Delhi	G	211.4	203.4	193.8	140.2	198.5	947.3	991.4	1,938.7
↔	2	2	JAWAHARLAL INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (JIPMER), Puducherry	G	193.8	186.7	183.8	124.4	195.8	884.5	985.3	1,869.8
↔	3	3	KING GEORGE'S MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, Lucknow	G	191.0	175.8	173.2	121.0	160.9	821.9	970.5	1,792.4
↔	4	4	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES (NIMHANS), Bengaluru	G	191.3	191.8	163.0	105.9	159.1	811.1	915.4	1,726.5
↔	5	5	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), JODHPUR, Jodhpur	G	192.3	164.6	158.1	102.6	170.6	788.2	928.8	1,717.0
↑	6	7	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RISHIKESH, Rishikesh	G	182.4	155.7	138.6	99.3	179.4	755.4	855.2	1,610.6
↑	7	8	INSTITUTE OF LIVER & BILIARY SCIENCES, New Delhi	G	178.1	166.6	132.5	122.8	155.3	755.3	831.9	1,587.2
↑	8	9	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), RAIPUR, Raipur	G	180.3	141.3	146.4	91.6	143.8	703.4	867.5	1,570.9
↑	9	10	ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), PATNA, Patna	G	176.2	144.1	129.1	78.7	170.5	698.6	834.3	1,532.9
-	10	NP	PANDIT BHAGWAT DAYAL SHARMA UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, Rohtak	G	167.7	132.8	182.6	128.9	106.2	718.2	802.4	1,520.6
-	11	NP	BABA FARID UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, Faridkot	G	168.2	95.6	148.6	75.7	151.4	639.5	793.8	1,433.3
↓	12	11	SRI RAMACHANDRA INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Chennai	P	164.2	159.7	165.3	125.1	143.8	758.1	658.9	1,417.0
↓	13	12	JSS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH, Mysuru	P	161.5	147.3	157.0	133.8	138.5	738.1	674.7	1,412.8
↓	14	13	NITTE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Mangaluru	P	162.7	183.6	150.4	121.7	125.0	743.4	662.6	1,406.0
↓	15	14	BLDE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Vijayapura	P	163.3	122.6	139.7	84.0	132.5	642.1	662.4	1,304.5
↓	16	15	KLE ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Belagavi	P	154.8	160.1	166.5	106.1	155.4	742.9	474.9	1,217.8
↓	17	16	MGM INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCES, Navi Mumbai	P	147.2	89.9	142.1	107.9	139.4	626.5	444.2	1,070.7

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					225	225	200	150	200	1,000	1,000	2,000
↓	18	17	D.Y. PATIL EDUCATION SOCIETY (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Kolhapur	P	153.1	127.9	167.2	56.8	68.2	573.2	494.5	1,067.7
↓	19	18	SRI GURU RAM DAS UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, Amritsar	P	151.7	105.8	143.7	73.5	80.6	555.3	412.7	968.0
↔	20	20	CHETTINAD ACADEMY OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION, Kelambakkam	P	136.8	110.4	119.9	86.1	140.6	593.8	320.4	914.2
↓	21	19	SRI BALAJI VIDYAPEETH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Puducherry	P	129.9	114.5	143.6	100.6	143.2	631.8	271.2	903.0
-	22	NP	MALLA REDDY VISHWAVIDYAPEETH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Hyderabad	P	98.3	80.8	127.9	83.5	89.6	480.1	235.6	715.7

TECHNICAL

RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	G- GOVT/ P-PVT	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUC- TURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTU- AL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
					208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	1	1	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, New Delhi	G	186.5	203.3	149.6	132.2	193.0	864.6	1,000.0	1,864.6
↔	2	2	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KANPUR, Kanpur	G	163.9	196.1	162.5	129.2	193.4	845.1	976.1	1,821.2
↑	3	4	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR, Kharagpur	G	158.2	209.6	152.8	110.3	192.7	823.6	964.1	1,787.7
↑	4	5	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE, Roorkee	G	171.3	179.0	134.9	120.9	165.6	771.7	947.6	1,719.3
↑	5	6	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI, Guwahati	G	146.5	176.1	148.4	114.3	160.3	745.6	935.7	1,681.3
↑	6	7	DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, New Delhi	G	149.9	148.7	141.4	101.2	159.5	700.7	919.2	1,619.9
↑	7	8	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MANDI, Mandi	G	132.0	196.0	149.7	110.0	128.6	716.3	899.8	1,616.1
↑	8	9	INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BANGALORE, Bengaluru	P	135.9	162.3	128.7	96.2	166.7	689.8	902.7	1,592.5
↑	9	10	BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, PILANI, Pilani	P	139.5	169.4	153.0	108.4	157.7	728.0	856.6	1,584.6
↑	10	11	INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, HYDERABAD, Hyderabad	P	135.0	156.7	132.4	92.9	170.8	687.8	844.6	1,532.4
↑	11	13	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PATNA, Patna	G	135.8	181.6	139.2	84.2	152.0	692.8	749.0	1,441.8
↔	12	12	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GANDHINAGAR, Gandhinagar	G	152.1	189.4	137.0	70.3	127.6	676.4	756.4	1,432.8
-	13	NP	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CALICUT, Kozhikode	G	116.1	146.5	123.0	85.7	152.7	624.0	796.8	1,420.8
↔	14	14	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI, New Delhi	G	121.8	149.2	141.6	123.8	113.8	650.2	751.9	1,402.1
↔	15	15	INDIRA GANDHI DELHI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN (IGDTUW), New Delhi	G	126.0	162.8	130.3	103.0	130.5	652.6	732.5	1,385.1
-	16	NP	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY RAIPUR, Raipur	G	130.8	154.3	112.6	96.8	121.7	616.2	706.9	1,323.1
↔	17	17	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SILCHAR, Silchar	G	132.9	132.4	135.2	73.7	118.5	592.7	660.8	1,253.5
↑	18	20	GUJARAT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, Ahmedabad	G	125.1	100.6	111.6	67.8	94.3	499.4	669.9	1,169.3



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	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	G- GOVT/ P-PVT	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
					208	250	175	150	217	1,000	1,000	2,000
↑	19	22	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SRINAGAR, Srinagar	G	116.1	162.4	132.6	76.3	95.5	582.9	557.7	1,140.6
-	20	NP	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY ANANTAPUR, Ananthapuramu	G	133.9	120.0	107.4	67.1	130.2	558.6	553.2	1,111.8
↔	21	21	JSS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY, Mysuru	P	108.4	153.8	121.4	119.3	99.3	602.2	493.9	1,096.1
-	22	NP	VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, Belagavi	G	119.0	108.2	145.5	84.3	83.9	540.9	526.4	1,067.3
-	23	NP	JAYPEE INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, NOIDA, Noida	P	98.5	139.7	134.4	108.9	130.9	612.4	442.8	1,055.2
↑	24	25	MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, Gorakhpur	G	108.2	142.9	113.1	77.1	131.5	572.8	466.2	1,039.0
↓	25	24	VIGNAN'S FOUNDATION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & RESEARCH (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Guntur	P	136.8	126.3	102.8	78.9	94.0	538.8	494.6	1,033.4
↑	26	27	UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT, Jaipur	P	110.3	141.8	133.1	93.1	117.5	595.8	350.0	945.8
-	27	NP	HINDUSTAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), Chennai	P	119.0	136.3	127.8	85.2	112.2	580.5	354.5	935.0
↔	28	28	NOORUL ISLAM CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, Kanyakumari	P	118.3	135.3	124.7	86.5	107.8	572.6	226.6	799.2

LAW

RANKS & SCORES OF UNIVERSITIES

	OVER-ALL RANK 2026	OVERALL RANK 2025	UNIVERSITY & CITY	G- GOVT/ P-PVT	REPUTATION & GOVERNANCE	ACADEMIC & RESEARCH EXCELLENCE	INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE	PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT	OBJECTIVE SCORE	PERCEPTUAL SCORE	OVERALL SCORE
					175	250	150	200	225	1,000	1,000	2,000
↔	1	1	NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY (NLSIU), Bengaluru	G	151.3	225.9	127.0	180.2	187.6	872.0	982.6	1,854.6
↔	2	2	THE WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES (NUJS), Kolkata	G	140.8	205.4	123.1	170.9	186.5	826.7	910.7	1,737.4
↑	3	4	GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (GNLU), Gandhinagar	G	138.6	223.8	131.5	166.5	170.2	830.6	831.2	1,661.8
↓	4	3	NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY (NLIU), Bhopal	G	140.0	224.5	128.9	158.9	174.1	826.4	821.3	1,647.7
↔	5	5	DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (RMLNLU), Lucknow	G	137.7	160.1	127.7	154.2	180.0	759.7	794.1	1,553.8
-	6	NP	HIDAYATULLAH NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (HNLU), Raipur	G	122.0	214.2	120.8	128.3	142.0	727.3	607.9	1,335.2
↑	7	8	DAMODARAM SANJIVAYYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (DSNLU), Visakhapatnam	G	122.7	167.9	123.4	130.6	116.1	660.7	536.0	1,196.7
-	8	NP	DHARMASHASTRA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (DNLU), Jabalpur	G	124.9	162.6	113.8	151.5	91.3	644.1	446.6	1,090.7
-	9	NP	MAHARASHTRA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY (MNLU-CS), Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar	G	114.7	162.5	110.3	111.1	159.7	658.3	402.0	1,060.3
-	10	NP	THE TAMIL NADU DR. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY, Chennai	G	148.1	128.8	110.3	115.4	138.6	641.2	392.1	1,033.3

- Ranking is based on objective data & perceptual survey data
- Only universities that submitted their objective data have been ranked. Universities like NALSAR, NLU Delhi, IIT Bombay, IIT Madras, IIT BHU, etc. which did not submit their objective data on time or refused to participate have not been ranked
- Only universities which fulfilled the below criteria were considered eligible for participation in ranking:
 - Minimum three batches graduated
 - Offering full-time postgraduate (PG) programme
- All scores have been rounded off to one decimal place. This may result in rounding-off errors while adding the parameter-wise score
- Universities not ranked during perceptual survey have got 0.0 marks in perceptual score



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The Kadakola Industrial Area is a major, rapidly expanding industrial and logistics hub which is well connected to Mysore City. SIT is the brainchild of a well-known respected 96-year old prestigious Seshadripuram Educational Trust (SET), Bangalore, which is running 34 institutions in three districts of Karnataka. This experience of SET has helped SIT which took its first step in 2024 and has grown from strength to strength. The Institution is approved by AICTE, New Delhi and is affiliated to Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi, Karnataka. The institution has highly experienced and research-oriented faculty supporting and training students to face the converging technologies. The campus redefines technical education for the modern era by blending advanced laboratories and skill-enhancing learning spaces into a student-friendly environment. At SIT, experiential learning by students is the mission which encourages logical thinking among students and brings confidence in solving problems. The campus features a dedicated Makers Lab, which is fully equipped with FDM 3D printers, CNC machines, soldering stations, computer aided design software which helps in designing mechanical and electronic systems. Our students in first year itself take advantage of Maker's lab. They design and implement projects beyond curriculum using 3D printers, CNC machine, microcontrollers, and develop IoT (Internet of Things) devices. The idea is that students should conceive, design, implement and operate prototypes. This helps in troubleshoot hardware failures and refine mechanical or electrical designs before final deployment.

To-day employers are looking for freshers who can communicate, prepare error free documents, convince the customers and have aptitude of logical reasoning. SIT has not only created Language Lab to refine LSWR skills but also Teamwork & collaboration along with technical knowledge. The institute provides high level placement training from the first year itself so that students are ready for

placement by the time they reach final year. Eminent professionals from the industry are invited to provide industry-specific training which enhances placement opportunities.

The Central library's ambience attracts faculty and students to visit and take full advantage of books and journals as well as expansive digital library. SIT believes that extracurricular activities help in holistic development of a student. There are various clubs, professional body memberships like IEEE, etc. and NSS. Sports department facilitates indoor sports facilities, a gymnasium, and yoga centre for overall wellness and personality development. A dedicated Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) has been started and startup incubator under Institutional Innovation Council (IIC). EDC & IIC organizes bootcamps, hackathons, and pitch competitions to empower student entrepreneurs to refine their ideas.

For out state students the college provides secure and well-furnished hostel for girls and boys. SIT operates a dedicated transportation facility for students. The transport network covers Mysuru city and nearby taluks, ensuring a safe and punctual commute to campus. Through strategic tie-ups with AWS Academy, Infosys Springboard, and IBM, Students pursue certification programs in cutting-edge domains and professional programming at no extra cost. In addition to certifications, as per VTU guidelines interested students are counselled to pursue credit-based minor degrees in emerging fields alongside their core B.E. programs to fit industry demands.

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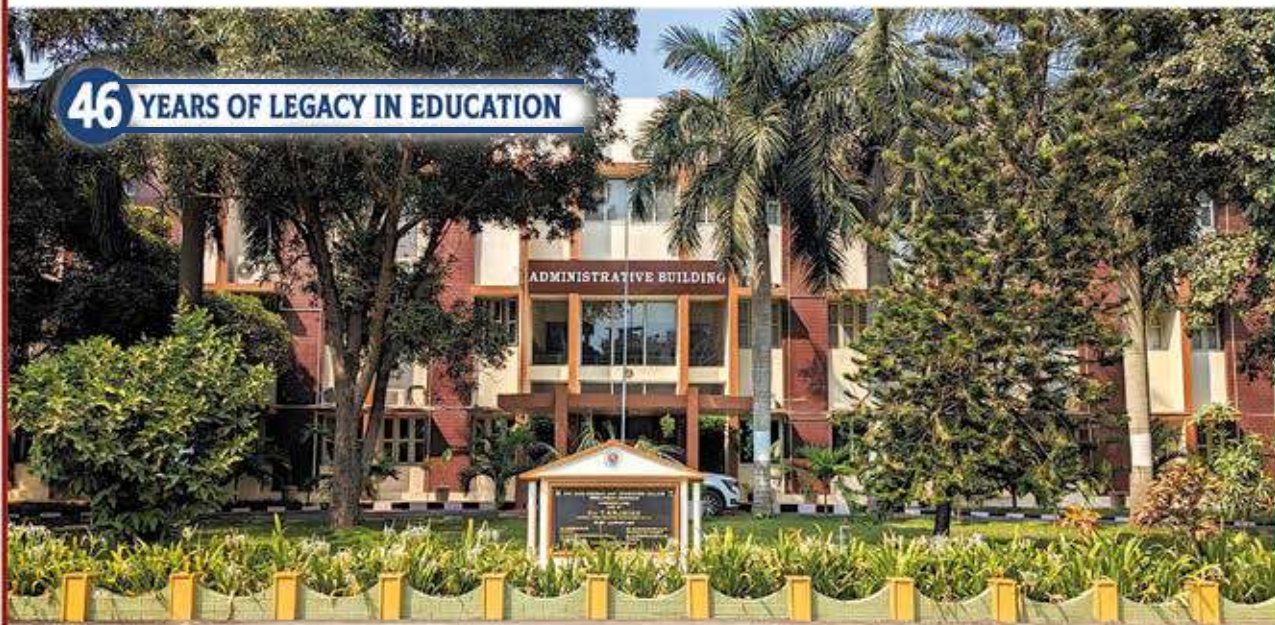
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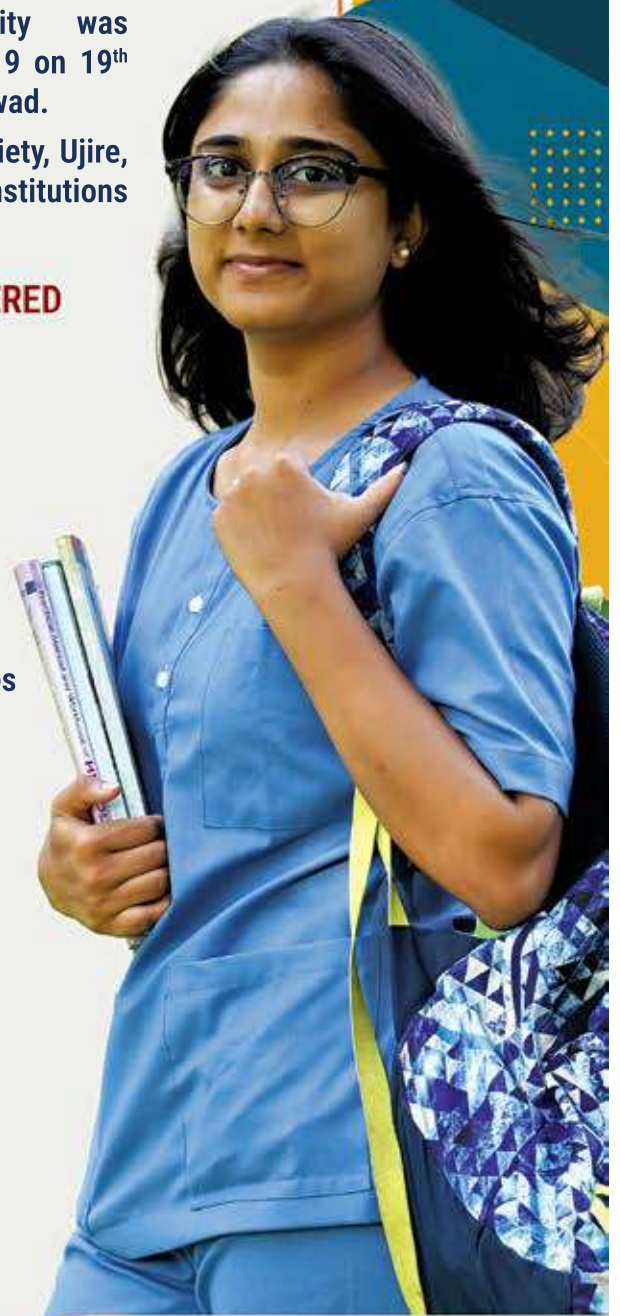


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ANEESH S. GOWDA MAKES WAVES FOR INDIA

In a remarkable blend of academic excellence and sporting achievement, **Aneesh S. Gowda**, a fifth-year BA LLB student at CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, has earned selection to represent India at the **2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, and the Asian Games 2026**.

Aneesh is currently representing India in the **Men's 200m Freestyle** and **Men's 4x200m Freestyle Relay** at the Commonwealth Games. His selection is the latest milestone in an impressive swimming career marked by consistent performances at national and international levels.

Aneesh has represented India at the **Asian Games 2023 and the World University Games in 2023 and 2025**. His international achievements include being a key member of the Indian team that won the **silver medal in the 4x200m Freestyle Relay at the 2025 Asian Aquatics Championships**. His performances have established him as one of India's leading freestyle swimmers. At the university level, Aneesh has achieved an exceptional record. Representing CHRIST University, he was crowned **Individual Champion at the All India Inter-University Aquatics Championship for three consecutive years**. His medal-winning performances in the 200m, 400m and 1500m freestyle events have contributed significantly to the university's success in collegiate swimming. His achievements also extend to the national and state levels.

Aneesh has earned multiple medals at the **Khelo India Youth Games and Khelo India University Games**, where his performances earned him the popular moniker "**Golden Boy**." He also holds several Karnataka state swimming records across different distances.

Balancing an intensive five-year law programme with elite-level training demands extraordinary discipline. Between lectures, examinations, moot courts and internships, Aneesh continues to dedicate countless hours to training in the pool.

His journey stands as an inspiring example of how determination,



discipline and academic commitment can coexist with sporting excellence. As he looks ahead to Glasgow and the Asian Games, Aneesh S. Gowda carries with him the aspirations of Indian swimming—and the promise of even greater achievements ahead.





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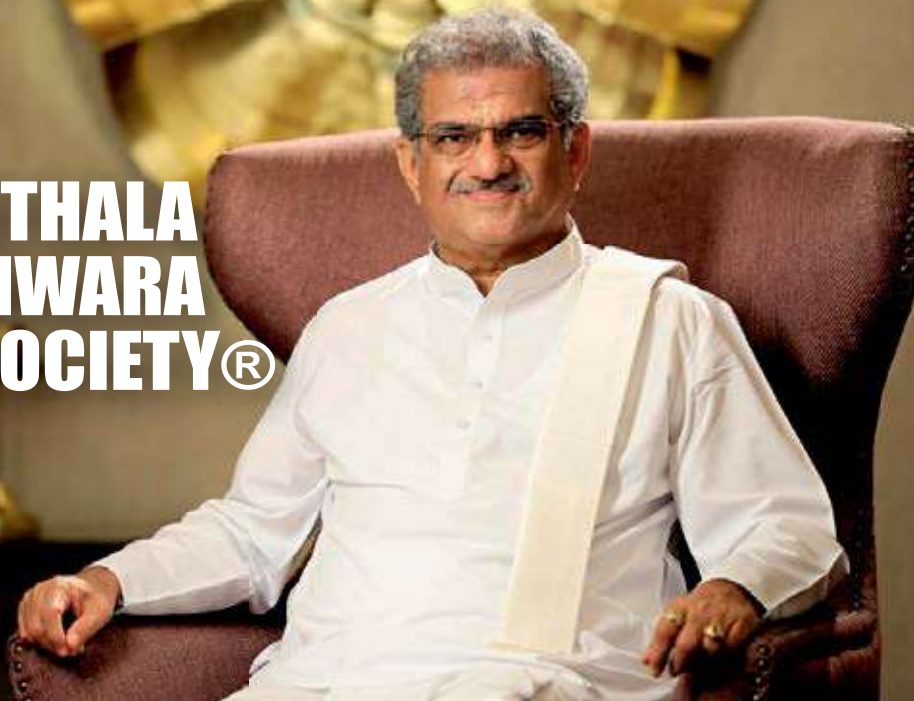
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Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Educational Society® (SDMES), Ujire, Karnataka, is a premier educational organisation committed to quality and value-based education across diverse disciplines. Under the visionary leadership of **Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade**, Dharmadhikari of Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala and President of SDME, the Society has emerged as a centre of academic excellence and cultural values, nurturing responsible citizens from **Kindergarten to Doctoral studies** with its guiding motto, “**Adding Value into Education.**”

The history of **Dharmasthala** dates back over **800 years**. A unique confluence of faiths, it has been nurtured by **21 generations of the Heggade family** into a renowned centre of spirituality and service, guided by the four pillars of charity: **Annadana, Aushadhadana, Abhayadana, and Vidyadana.**

Padma Vibhushan Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, recipient of India's second-highest civilian honour and a nominated Member of the Rajya Sabha, is a visionary educationist and philanthropist. With a firm belief that education empowers rural communities, he has established institutions that provide quality, value-based education and nurture responsible citizens.

SDM Educational Society manages over **56 institutions** offering programmes in Medicine, Dentistry, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Pharmacy, Engineering, Management, Law, Ayurveda, Naturopathy, and General UG & PG education. Its campuses feature modern infrastructure, including WiFi connectivity, digital libraries, and e-learning facilities. Through scholarships, free hostel facilities for deserving students, and value-based educational practices, SDM

nurtures students into competent professionals and responsible citizens.

General Education: The SDM Educational Society provides quality, value-based education through its schools and premier colleges. With a focus on academic excellence, language skills, and inclusive learning, institutions like Mangala Jyothi Integrated School, Vamanjoor, promote education for all. SDM College (Autonomous), Ujire, established in 1966 and accredited NAAC A++, remains a flagship institution offering diverse Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes, along with SDM College of Business Management, Mangaluru and SDM Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Mysuru.

Technical and Technological Education: The SDM Educational Society offers quality technical education through its **Engineering Colleges at Ujire and Dharwad**, providing Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and PhD programmes in Engineering and Technology. The Society also manages a **Polytechnic College** and **five Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)**, equipping students with industry-relevant skills and contributing to the development of a highly skilled technical workforce.

Business Management and Law: Recognising the importance of Management and Legal Education, the SDM Educational Society has established premier institutions across Karnataka, including SDM Law College & Centre for PG Studies and Research in Law, Mangaluru, SDM Institute of Management, Mysuru, and SDM PG Centre for Management Studies & Research, Mangaluru. These institutions offer Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Research programmes, nurturing future professionals and leaders.

Medical Education: The SDM Educational Society offers quality

education in Allopathy, Dentistry, Ayurveda, Yoga, and Naturopathy through its institutions across Karnataka. Providing Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Research programmes, these institutions are supported by advanced teaching hospitals for clinical training and research. Kshemavana – SDM Institute of Naturopathy and Yogic Sciences, Nelamangala, established in 2023, promotes holistic healthcare through Yoga and evidence-based natural therapies.

SDM University Dharwad: SDM University Dharwad established in **2018**, is a State Private University sponsored by **SDM Educational Society, Ujire**, under the visionary leadership of Padma Vibhushan Dr D. Veerendra Heggade, Chancellor of the University. A centre of excellence in **medical education, research, and healthcare**, the University is recognised for its innovative digital assessment system and advanced teaching hospitals.

Under the visionary leadership of **Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade**, the SDM Educational Society has established unique value-based initiatives like **Sri Siddavana Gurukula**, which nurtures agriculture, moral values, and leadership among college students, and **Rathnamanasa**, a residential school that blends formal education with practical training in agriculture, horticulture, and dairying for high school students.

For over five decades, **SDM Educational Society** has been empowering rural students through quality, value-based education. With a vision to bring world-class education to rural communities, the Society has transformed **Ujire** into a prominent educational hub, inspiring generations of students towards academic and professional excellence.



|| Om Shri Manjunathaya Namaha ||



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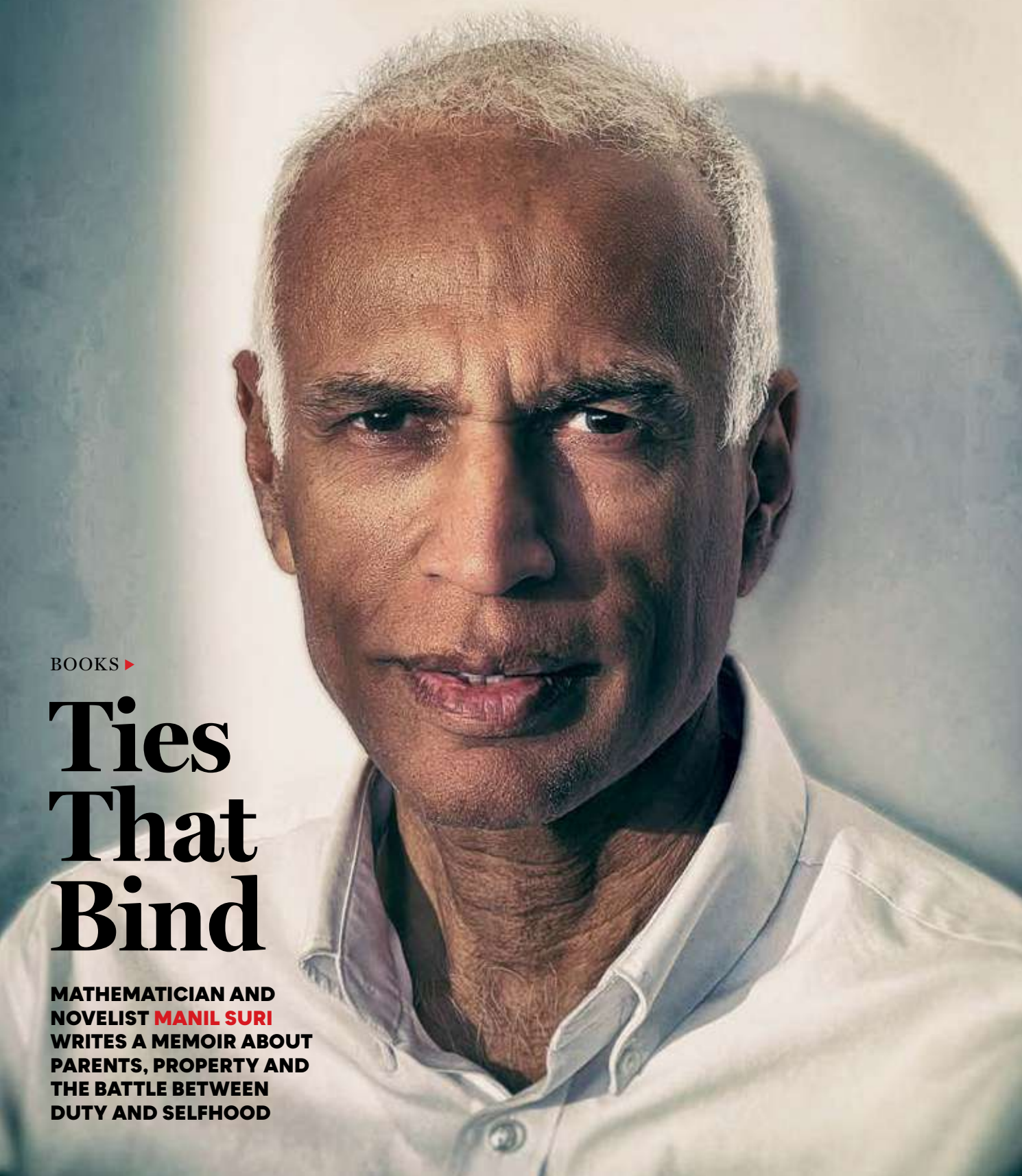
THE LISTICLE: MUSICAL PERFORMANCES **PG 144**

SPORTS: STRIKING A BALANCE **PG 146**

BOOKS ▶

Ties That Bind

MATHEMATICIAN AND NOVELIST **MANIL SURI** WRITES A MEMOIR ABOUT PARENTS, PROPERTY AND THE BATTLE BETWEEN DUTY AND SELFHOOD



गौरवशाली आदिवासी संस्कृति,
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सूचना एवं जनसंपर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड

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जगन्नाथ सिंह पातर
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राघोजी भांगरे
शूरवीर पसालथा खुआंगचेरा

कुशल कोंवार रुपिणी देबबर्मा
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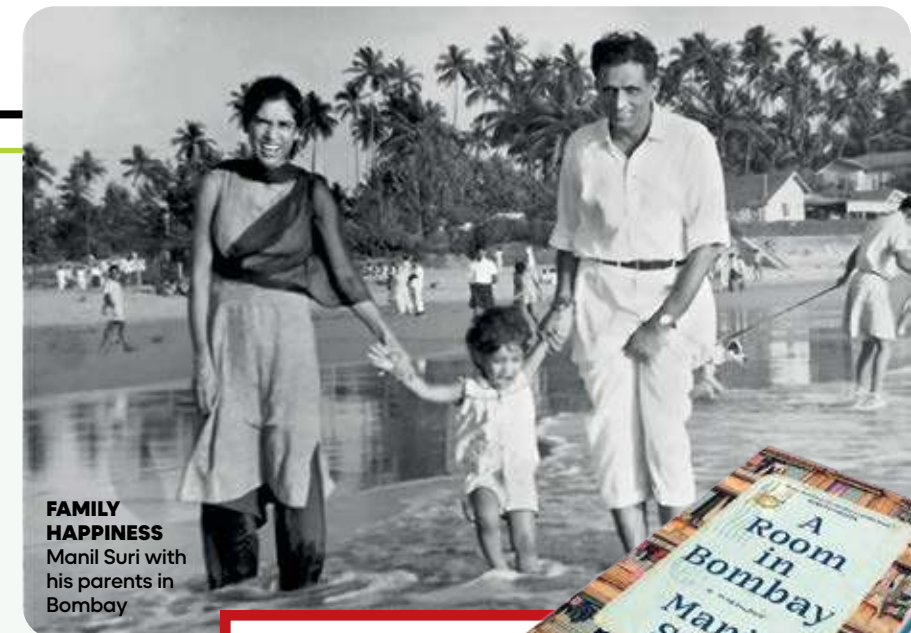
LEISURE

H

HOW DOES SPACE, OR THE LACK OF IT, WRING OUR RELATIONSHIPS? HOW DOES PLACE CONTOUR OUR PERSONALITY?

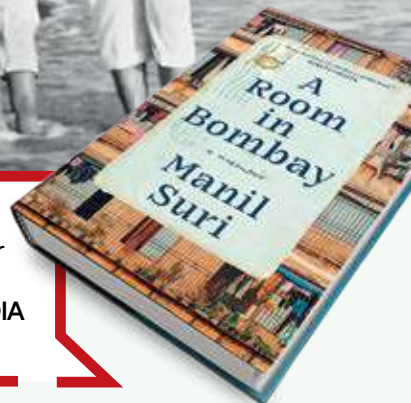
When and how does a room morph from a location into a protagonist? What do escape and freedom mean? And is there escape without guilt? These are just some of the questions that Manil Suri, author of three novels and a book on popular mathematics, probes in his memoir, *A Room in Bombay*.

When we speak, Suri is in Pittsburgh, attending a literary festival. The Booker-longlisted author says that while he struggles with plot in fiction, in a memoir the plot was already laid out for him. He often found he had “too much plot”, as so much had happened to him. He grew up in a derelict apartment in Bombay, which his parents, Ram and Prem, shared with three Muslim



FAMILY HAPPINESS
Manil Suri with his parents in Bombay

A ROOM IN BOMBAY: A Memoir
By Manil Suri
HARPERCOLLINS INDIA
₹699; 352 pages



families. The families used a common kitchen and bathroom, which often led to heated skirmishes. His parents were caught in a loveless and humourless marriage, and from a young age Suri became peacekeeper, accountant, cheerleader and soother of broken spirits. In the confines of Razia Mansion, as a friendless child, he realised he might be gay. At the

age of 20, he finally admitted to his mother—“I couldn’t do it anymore. The flat was killing me; I couldn’t stay”—and left for the US.

Suri elaborates on the grip of the room: “The room did have this clutching quality to it, like it had all of us in its grasp. And it was both a place that was somewhere to escape from all the hostility around us, but

BOOKS ▼

KNOWING YOUR PLACE

DREAMS ARE DASHED IN THE FEUDAL PAKISTAN DEPICTED IN
DANIYAL MUEENUDDIN'S *THIS IS WHERE THE SERPENT LIVES*

It's strange to think of Daniyal Mueenuddin, an already much-heralded writer, as a debut novelist. Back in 2009, his brilliant collection of short stories, *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*, was a finalist for both a Pulitzer prize and the United States' National Book Award. Mueenuddin's stories recreated, with verve, insight and genuine feeling,

his unusual experience as the scion of a landowning family in Pakistani Punjab who returned from the United States to run his farm.

This understanding gives his voice authority. You believe what he is telling you in this novel, about life in grand houses and squalid lean-tos, about life as a wealthy, art-buying, Turgenev-reading housewife, a diffident America-returned

scion, a corpulent munshi, an orphan who rises to become a trusted driver to the boss, a favoured servant undone by ambition, a prickly gangster at once contemptuous and covetous of the trappings of the old order and so on.

The problem, though, is that Mueenuddin's understanding, his intimacy with Pakistan's still extant feudal structure, prevents him, or

THIS IS WHERE THE SERPENT LIVES
By Daniyal Mueenuddin
PENGUIN
INDIA/HAMISH
HAMILTON
₹699; 368 pages



also this prison because we were all in there and, in a way, that's good and that's bad."

His departure and the US gave him a new lease of life, he found friends and lovers and finally a partner and home. But back in Mumbai, his father continued to battle alcoholism and his mother (a voracious reader and a beloved teacher) her own demons. The memoir is a tug of war between

her expectations as she found that her husband did not share her inclination towards art, literature or politics.

Writing *A Room in Bombay* allowed Manil Suri to see his father anew. He had always perceived him through his mother's eyes as the dreamer and the drunk. But the book gave him new insights. Suri

(UMBC) since 1983—is accustomed to seeing patterns like a scientist. This training held him in good stead while navigating personal tumults. When dementia started robbing Prem of her senses, Suri had to find a solution that provided for her, while not upending his own life.

A Room in Bombay movingly illustrates the shapes of love and caregiving. It could be a wife who insists on cleaning her husband, even though she is loath to do it. It could be a son inviting his hallucinating mother into his home in another continent though he knows it will topple his life. It is a book about how liberation and guilt walk in tandem. As Suri says, "It's one thing to liberate yourself; if you're willing to snap off the major ties in your life with your parents, then you're home free. But you also have to keep tending to the ties that you're not willing to break and you shouldn't be breaking. So, it's a compromise. What do you optimise?"

A Room in Bombay reminds us that there are no optimal solutions; there is finally only compromise and love. ■

—Nandini Nair

SURI WROTE THE BOOK BASED ON THE 2,700 LETTERS THAT HE EXCHANGED WITH HIS PARENTS. MUCH OF IT FOCUSES ON HIS MOTHER PREM

duty and selfhood, freedom and guilt. Suri wrote the book based on the 2,700 letters (which made it to The Limca Book of Records) that he exchanged with his parents.

The copious letters hint at the devotion between parents and son. Much of the book focuses on Suri's mother Prem who, from her marriage onwards, was forced to lower

says, "My father's character was something that I learned the most about while writing this book and just sifting through the past and re-examining this person in the light of the larger story."

Suri—who was trained as a mathematician at Carnegie-Mellon University and has taught at University of Maryland Baltimore County



NO AMOUNT OF LOVINGLY DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THIS FEUDAL LIFE CAN MASK ITS ESSENTIAL BRUTALITY

rather his characters, from upending the whole edifice. Because no amount of carefully, even lovingly, detailed exegesis of this feudal life can mask its essential brutality. "The world is governed more by chance than intention," observes Saqib, the main character in the last, longest eponymous section

of *This is Where the Servant Lives*, "as if a madman or a child were sovereign."

But the feudal world Mueenuddin itemises is inert. The one character who does transcend his circumstances is Bayazid, found on the street in Rawalpindi in the 1950s. Bayazid flees Rawalpindi because he is foolish enough to hope for love with a girl above his station, but winds up as the trusted driver to successive generations of Atar patriarchs.

Even Bayazid, though, goes only so far and appears content (except for a brief squall of protest at the

very end of the novel) with how far he goes. Bayazid and Saqib bookend *This is Where the Servant Lives*, similar characters of different generations whose charisma, competence and ambition lead them in different directions. Readers will yearn for Saqib to triumph, for Pakistan to make the transition from the Atars to the Saqibs—but for that to happen, democracy would have had to succeed. And it's not a spoiler to say that democracy, a shared post-Independence dream in both Pakistan and India, is at best contained, at worst on the verge of being stamped out. ■

—Shougat Dasgupta

In Good Shape

AN EXHIBITION IN MUMBAI PAIRS SCULPTURES BY **SANKHO CHAUDHURI** AND **D.L.N. REDDY**, TRACING DISTINCT APPROACHES TO FORM AND MATERIAL

Two of modern Indian sculpture's most distinctive voices take centre stage at Mumbai-based Chatterjee & Lal's newest exhibition, *Late Assembly: Play in Two Acts*. Bringing together the works of Sankho Chaudhuri (1916-2006) and D.L.N. Reddy (1949-), the exhibition examines how both artists continued to push the possibilities of their chosen medium well into the 1990s and 2000s, producing works that are as inventive as they are revealing.

Though linked by their engagement with sculpture, the two artists arrived at markedly different outcomes.

Chaudhuri, a faculty member of the sculpture department at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (in the early 1950s), remained invested in the formal concerns that defined much of his practice. His late works emerged from an attentive observation of everyday life—metal moulded into shapes of birds or abstract standing forms in brass, bronze and marble. The resulting sculptures retain a sense of balance

and compression while embracing a spirit of curiosity and play. Also on view are rare watercolours and sketches by Chaudhuri, all of which are being shown for the first time in India.

Based largely in Hyderabad, Reddy was a student in the print-making department at Baroda from 1970 to 1971. His work involved transforming hardware store finds, scrap materials and discarded objects into assemblages marked by improvisation and surprise. By cutting, bending and reconfiguring everyday materials, he sought to give them new identities and meanings. "Their spirit is so different—Chaudhuri is more restrained while Reddy has an exuberant energy," says the gallery's co-founder, Mortimer Chatterjee. Together, these works offer a compelling view of sculpture as a site of ongoing inquiry, where experimentation, material transformation and formal invention remained central to artistic practice.

While painting dominated much of the critical art discourse of the 20th century, the contributions of sculptors have often received less attention. By focusing on these late works, the exhibition argues that they are not merely concluding notes in two distinguished careers, but significant artistic statements in their own right. ■

—Prachi Joshi

On view until Aug. 22

The exhibition examines how both artists continued to push the possibilities of their chosen medium well into the 1990s and 2000s



STUDIES IN FORM L-R, Chaudhuri's bird (brass repoussé); Reddy's untitled wooden assemblages



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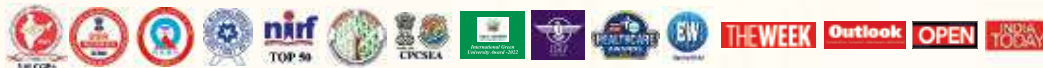


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UPCOMING MUSICAL PERFORMANCES YOU SHOULD NOT MISS

▼ KOLKATA | Nazrul Mancha | Aug. 2

Park Street to Bombay

A tribute to the remarkable career of Usha Uthup, celebrating her journey from Kolkata's legendary Park Street music scene to becoming one of India's most recognisable voices. The concert honours her enduring connection with the city she proudly calls home while revisiting many of her best-loved songs.



► HYDERABAD | Quake Arena | Aug. 22

JAVED ALI LIVE

Playback singer Javed Ali brings his acclaimed live show to Hyderabad for an evening of soaring melodies and chart-topping favourites. Best known for songs such as 'Arziyan' and 'Kun Faya Kun', Ali's performances span romantic ballads, devotional classics and energetic hits.

SPANNING GENRES Shubha Mudgal and Ao Naga Choir will perform at Baarish S2



FESTIVAL ▼

MONSOON MOODS

BAARISH SEASON 2 BRINGS TOGETHER ARTISTS, PERFORMERS AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS TO CELEBRATE THE RAINS

With the rain gods finally smiling on the capital, it is time for music, storytelling, textiles, crafts and sensory experiences to come together at the second chapter of Baarish. Excurators, the culture-led experiences company, is instrumental in bringing this experience that celebrates the monsoon as a living cultural tradition.

"For us, rain is much more than weather. It is one of India's greatest cultural storytellers. It lives in our ragas and folk songs, in our handwoven textiles, in our puppetry traditions, in our poetry and in the memories that connect generations," says Minhal Hasan, founder & MD, Excurators, adding that it is this belief that shapes every chapter of Baarish. "We don't curate performances in isolation; we curate conversations between traditions."

Master puppeteer Md Shameem and Puppetshala Performing Arts will kick-start the edition with 'Garaj and Baras', a performance that celebrates the joy of the rains, while the Ao Naga

Choir will present rain songs and choral traditions rooted in the oral heritage of the Ao Naga community of Nagaland.

A curated conversation by Aadyam Handwoven will explore India's diverse weaving traditions. There will also be a wine appreciation masterclass by Grover Zampa. The evening will conclude with a performance by Shubha Mudgal and her ensemble. The veteran musician shares, "Baarish or rain has always been a source

of inspiration for poets, artists and musicians in India. It has been a catalyst for rejuvenation, fertility and re-energising. I have been fortunate to have sung about *baarish* on many occasions and in many styles and genres. I look forward to sharing some of this

repertoire at Baarish Season 2 and hope that, this year, the rains will also clear the clouds of injustice, violence and barbarity that we have been witnessing." ■

—Deepali Dhingra

Baarish Season 2 will be held on Aug. 8 at The Tivoli, Chattarpur, New Delhi, 6.30 pm onwards

MASTER PUPPETEER MD SHAMEEM WILL KICK-START THE EDITION WITH 'GARAJ AND BARAS'



◀ **MUMBAI** | *The Grand Theatre* | Aug. 1

CHARAN SPARSH

Created by Shantanu Moitra and Kaushiki Chakraborty, *Charan Sparsh* is a celebration of the guru-shishya tradition that reimagines respect as a shared musical journey rather than a hierarchy. Presented as part of NMACC's annual festival, the performance features Kaushiki Chakraborty, Aruna Sairam, Rakesh Chaurasia, Jayanthi Kumaresh, Ambi Subramaniam and others. Solo performances lead into a large collaborative production, bringing together generations, traditions and instruments in an uplifting evening of music.

▶ **DELHI** | *Yashobhoomi Convention Center* | Aug. 22

PIYUSH MISHRA LIVE IN CONCERT

Piyush Mishra presents an evening where poetry, music and storytelling come together in his distinctive style. Featuring celebrated works including 'Aarambh Hai Prachand', 'Husna' and 'Ik Bagal', the performance blends theatre, literature and cinema into an intimate live experience. Accompanied by a live band, Mishra explores themes of love, rebellion, humour and social reflection.



CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

▼ **MUMBAI** | *Shanmukhananda Hall* | Aug. 22

Soul India

Hariharan's *Soul India* celebrates the richness and diversity of Indian music through a programme that

extends far beyond his celebrated film songs and ghazals. The concert moves effortlessly between folk, thumri, ghazal, classical, Bollywood and fusion, highlighting the breadth of India's musical traditions. With his expressive voice and effortless versatility, Hariharan offers audiences an evening that bridges genres while honouring the country's rich musical heritage.



— **Compiled by Nikhil Sardana**

DOSE OF PRAGG-MATISM

"It's great how chess's popularity has grown in the last six years"



SPORTS ▼

STRIKING A **BALANCE**

*Fresh off one of the biggest wins of his chess career, **R. Praggnanandhaa** reflects on success, setbacks and learning to switch off*

Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa is learning to loosen up. These days, he posts short recaps of his tournaments and shares light-hearted videos, like a viral one of making an omelette. The soon-to-be 21-year-old says he is "much more confident in front of the camera". This year, as world champion D. Gukesh has struggled with form, it is Praggnanandhaa and his older sister Vaishali Rameshbabu who made the right moves and won two top-tier tournaments in the Norway Chess and Candidates, respectively.

Praggnanandhaa, aka Pragg, does not mind the spotlight. "It is great how chess's popularity has grown in the last six years," he says. "Earlier, only major tournaments would be covered.

Nowadays, Norway Chess gets so much coverage." The tournament saw Pragg wowing audiences as he beat five-time world champion Magnus Carlsen twice in the classical format. "Throughout, I was playing good quality games. I realised I have to work on time management, (the lack of) which led to mistakes and cost me games."

It's not just time management on board; players also have to manage a busy tournament calendar, which is

packed with games across formats like freestyle and rapid and blitz. He credits his sponsor Adani for backing him—with training and travel—when the going got tough with a dip in form.

Pragg and his team have been more mindful balancing between play and rest and it has reflected in the results so far, including a tied first finish in rapid chess at the Grand Chess Tour in Croatia. Candidates 2026 didn't pan out the way he wanted—he finished seventh in a field of eight—but what helped him overcome the setback was seeing his sister, Vaishali, win the women's title. So, would he be helping her prep for the World Championship? "I'd be more helpful as a brother than as a chess player, like not do things that annoy her," he says with a smile. ■

—Suhani Singh

Pragg beat world champion Magnus Carlsen twice in the classical format of the Norway Chess tournament



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SPORTS ▼

For the Record

AFTER BREAKING ANJU BOBBY GEORGE'S NATIONAL LONG JUMP RECORD, **ANCY SOJAN** IS GOING FOR THE SEVEN-METRE MARK—AND AN ASIAN GAMES GOLD

As early as her schooldays, Ancy Sojan was picking up national medals. It was around the time she first heard of Anju Bobby George's exploits—the 2003 World Championship bronze and fifth place at the Olympics a year later. When she looked up the national record, it was Anju's name that came up again. The 6.83-metre mark became a fixation. The medals were coming, the record would be the next step in her long jumping career.

Ancy's silver at the 2022 Asian Games was a sign of things to come. But for long, her personal best remained third in India behind Anju and Shaili Singh (6.76 m). That changed with her fifth attempt at the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships

in Bhubaneswar in June. The 6.88-metre mark helped the Reliance Foundation athlete eclipse Anju's national record from 2004. "Just a month earlier, I had jumped 6.75 metres, my personal best. I knew I had the range and continued working towards my goal," Ancy says.

Ancy started the year with a bronze at the Asian Indoor Championships in February. Two gold medals in the domestic circuit in April added to

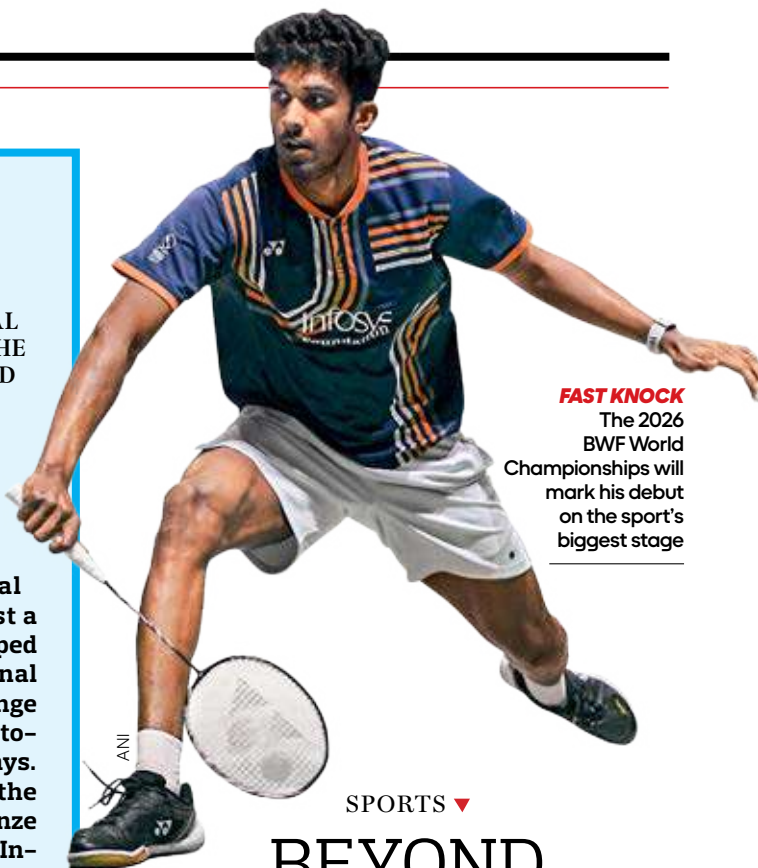
her confidence, until she leaped into the record books. Her mark is the best by an Asian athlete this season and augurs well for the Asian Games in September. "I want to attain the seven-metre mark at the Asian Games," Ancy says. And perhaps land a gold along the way. ■

—Shail Desai

For long, her personal best
**TRAILED BEHIND
ANJU'S 6.83 m JUMP.**
That changed in
June with the
6.88 m leap



MAKING THE MARK Anju's mark is the best by an Asian athlete this season



FAST KNOCK

The 2026 BWF World Championships will mark his debut on the sport's biggest stage

SPORTS ▼

BEYOND JUNIOR GLORY

From backyard dreams to the world stage, **Ayush Shetty** has had a remarkable rise in badminton

For Ayush Shetty, his badminton journey didn't begin in a training academy but in his backyard in Sanoor, Karnataka. At the age of eight, he was introduced to the sport by his father. "As I gained interest and started to enjoy the game, my family decided to move to Bengaluru so that I could get better training," says Ayush.

It was the family sacrifice that transformed a young dreamer into one of India's brightest badminton stars. Ayush made his mark on the international stage by winning a bronze at the 2023 BWF World Junior Championships. His rise to the senior circuit has been equally remarkable. In 2025, the 21-year-old won his maiden BWF World Tour title at the US Open Super 300 and became the first Indian men's singles player since 1965 to reach the Badminton Asia Championships final. He had displayed a rigorous training mindset.

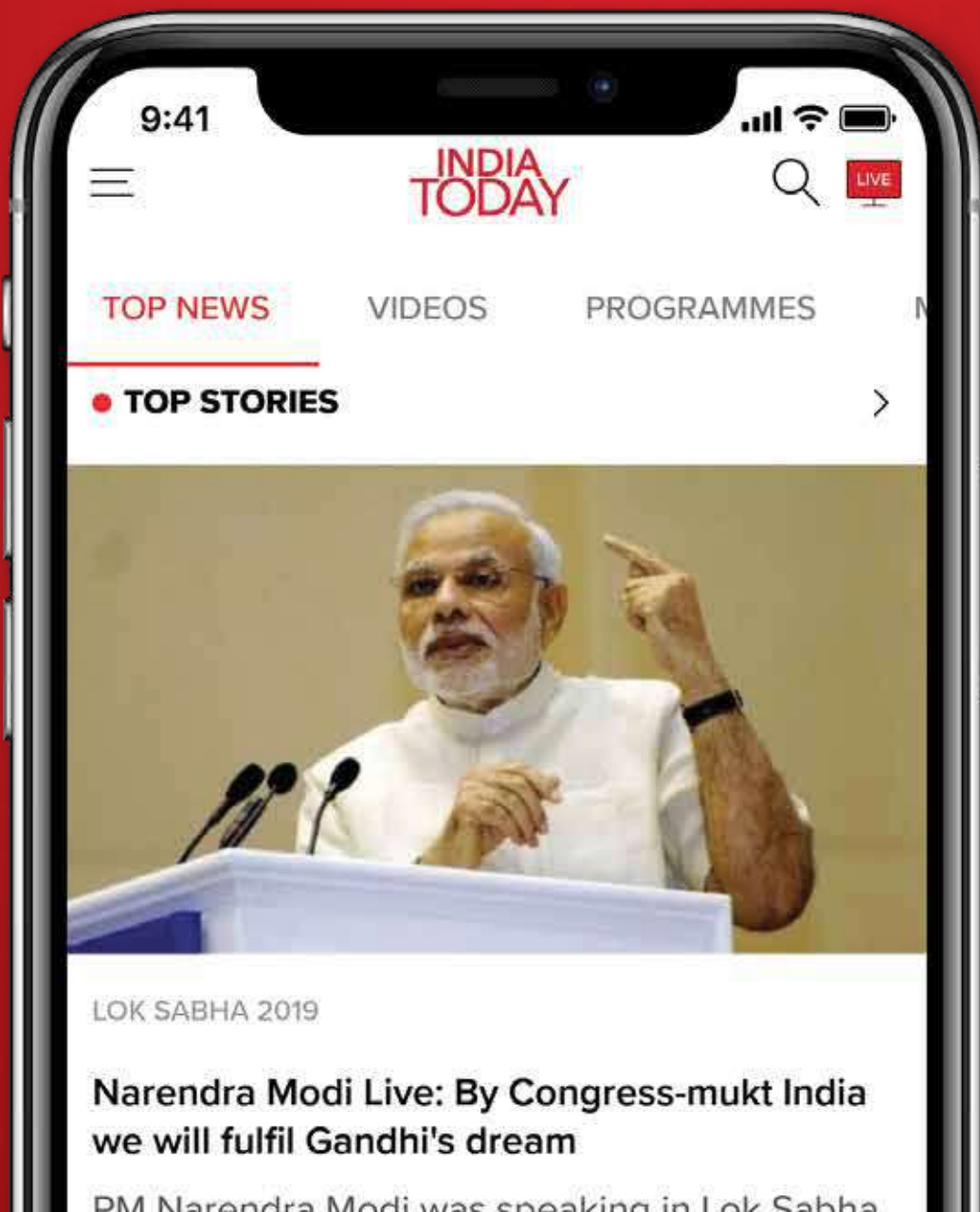
Shetty is now spending longer hours on the court and focuses on improving his defence, physical strength and staying patient during longer rallies. The 2026 BWF World Championships (Aug. 17-23) will mark another milestone in his career—and his debut at badminton's biggest stage. India hosting the tournament after 17 years makes the occasion even more special. "Like every young badminton player, I've dreamed of one day competing on that stage," he says. ■

—Akshita Jolly

INDIA
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Equations to Emotions

ACTOR **AMOL PARASHAR** SPEAKS ABOUT CHOOSING ACTING OVER AN IIT DEGREE, THE MAGIC OF THEATRE AND THE LATEST SEASON OF *GRAM CHIKITSALAY*

Q. You gave up an IIT degree and a corporate career for acting. What gave you the confidence to take that leap?

It probably looked more confident from the outside than it felt from the inside. An IIT degree gave me a safety net. Acting and engineering aren't as different as people imagine. Both require curiosity, problem-solving and a willingness to keep learning.

Q. What can viewers expect from the new season of *Gram Chikitsalay*?

The script has a lot of heart. It is an honest story about how ordinary people can be heroes. The relationships have evolved this season. The people, the village, the challenges, they all feel more layered. It's funnier, still warm, but it also asks a few tougher questions without ever becoming preachy.

Q. You've also explored one-man theatre with *Besharam Aadmi*. What does the stage give you that films and web series can't?

The stage is terrifying in the best possible way. There's no cut, no retake, no editor coming to rescue you. It's just you and the audience breathing in the same room. That immediacy is addictive. Every show is different because every audience is. Sometimes, they'll laugh at places you never expected; sometimes, they'll go completely silent, and you learn to trust that silence.

Q. Was there a performance or filmmaker that changed the way you look at cinema?

What has shaped me is watching people who bring honesty to their work. Life is the biggest acting school. The more you observe, the more conversations you have, the more you travel, fail, fall in love or get your heart broken; the richer your toolkit becomes. Technique matters, but empathy does more.

—with **Deepa Natarajan Lobo**

Photograph by **BANDEEP SINGH**

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