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\$25 Billion Trade by 2030



India-UK
Free Trade Agreement



Trade and Culture



India-Nepal
Faith Beyond Borders



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CHIEF EDITOR DESK



Dear Readers,

On behalf of National Awareness Times (India's National Weekly), the editorial board and the team of our journal would like to wish all the readers a wonderful week ahead to all .

India and Vietnam are entering a new phase in their relationship,

shaped by expanding economic cooperation, strategic alignment, and growing cultural exchanges.

From 19 to 28 June, Nepalese spiritual traveller and interfaith advocate Pradeep Khanal undertook a remarkable pilgrimage across Pakistan, visiting some of the region's most revered Hindu temples, Sikh Gurudwaras and sacred heritage sites.

The implementation phase of the India-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement (FTA) marks a defining moment in the economic relationship between the two nations.

Deepak Singh,
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INDIA–VIETNAM TARGET \$25 BILLION TRADE BY 2030

By Editor – Gaurav Singh



India and Vietnam are entering a new phase in their relationship, shaped by expanding economic cooperation, strategic alignment, and growing cultural exchanges. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressing India's aim to raise bilateral trade with Vietnam to US\$25 billion by 2030, both countries are working toward a future defined by stronger economic integration and shared regional influence. This ambition reflects not only rising trade figures but also a deeper trust between two fast-growing Asian economies that are increasingly aligned in their development priorities.

Over the past few decades, India and Vietnam have transformed their relationship from traditional diplomatic engagement into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Regular high-level visits, defence cooperation, and increasing business interactions have strengthened mutual

confidence. The partnership spans multiple sectors including trade, investment, technology, education, healthcare, renewable energy, and cultural exchange. This broad cooperation reflects a shared understanding that long-term stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific depend on strong regional partnerships.

Trade has become one of the most important pillars of this relationship. Bilateral trade between the two countries has grown steadily, making Vietnam one of India's key partners in Southeast Asia. The target of reaching US\$25 billion by 2030 represents the next stage of this economic journey. It signals a commitment from both sides to deepen commercial engagement, reduce barriers, and create stronger supply chains that benefit businesses and consumers alike. India exports pharmaceuticals, machinery, steel, chemicals, cotton, agricultural goods, and automobile

components to Vietnam. Vietnam exports electronics, smartphones, textiles, footwear, coffee, seafood, spices, and industrial machinery to India. This complementary structure of trade highlights how both economies support each other rather than compete directly, creating a balanced and mutually beneficial exchange.

Manufacturing is expected to play a central role in achieving this target. Vietnam has become a major manufacturing hub due to its skilled workforce and competitive industrial environment, attracting global companies in electronics and textiles. India, with its expanding industrial base and policy focus on domestic production, offers strong opportunities for collaboration in engineering goods, automobile components, and machinery. Joint ventures can help both countries strengthen their positions in global supply chains.

The electronics sector is another



fast-growing area of cooperation. Vietnam has emerged as a global centre for smartphone and electronics production, while India is rapidly scaling up its own manufacturing ecosystem. Cooperation in semiconductors, components, and assembly can help build more resilient supply chains and reduce global dependencies, making this sector a key driver of future trade growth. Healthcare and pharmaceuticals are equally important. India is widely recognised as a global leader in affordable medicines and vaccines. Vietnam benefits from access to these products, while Indian

companies gain opportunities in Vietnam's expanding healthcare market. Collaboration in biotechnology and medical research can further strengthen this partnership and improve healthcare outcomes in both countries. Agriculture continues to be a major area of exchange. India exports cereals, spices, and agricultural machinery, while Vietnam supplies coffee, pepper, cashew nuts, seafood, and tropical fruits. Both countries are also focusing on food processing and climate-resilient farming techniques to improve productivity and ensure food security in changing environmental

conditions. Renewable energy is another key area of cooperation. India and Vietnam are investing heavily in solar, wind, and clean energy projects as part of their sustainability goals. Collaboration in green technology, battery storage, and hydrogen energy can accelerate their transition toward low-carbon economies while creating new investment opportunities.

The digital economy is rapidly emerging as a defining feature of the partnership. Information technology, fintech, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity are opening new avenues for collaboration. India's strong IT sector and Vietnam's growing tech startup ecosystem complement each other, creating opportunities for innovation and digital growth. The benefits of this partnership are significant for both countries. For India, Vietnam offers access to ASEAN markets and strengthens the Act East Policy. It supports export growth, industrial expansion, and job creation. For Vietnam, India provides access to a large consumer base and investment opportunities in infrastructure, manufacturing, and technology. Consumers in both nations benefit from better products, improved quality, and competitive pricing. Beyond economics, India and Vietnam share a strong strategic vision for a free, open, and stable Indo-Pacific region. Cooperation in maritime security, defence, and regional connectivity strengthens mutual trust. Vietnam's strategic location and India's regional influence make this partnership important for maintaining stability in Asia.

Despite strong progress, challenges such as logistics costs, regulatory differences, and infrastructure gaps remain. Both governments are working to simplify trade procedures, improve connectivity, and encourage greater private-sector participation. Continued reforms will be crucial to achieving the US\$25 billion target by 2030.



Vietnam: Culture, Tourism and Music

Beyond its economic rise, Vietnam is a country rich in culture, natural beauty, and artistic tradition. It has become one of Southeast Asia's most attractive tourist destinations, offering a blend of scenic landscapes, history, and modern urban life. From Ha Long Bay's limestone formations to the lantern-lit streets of Hoi An, Vietnam provides unforgettable travel experiences. Cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City combine colonial heritage with modern development, bustling markets, and vibrant street culture.

Vietnam's cultural identity remains deeply rooted in tradition. Festivals, crafts, and family values continue to play a central role in society. The Ao Dai, Vietnam's traditional dress, symbolizes elegance and national pride. Traditional crafts such as silk weaving, pottery, and bamboo art reflect centuries of cultural heritage that continue to thrive today.

Music is an essential part of Vietnamese culture. Traditional forms like Ca Tru and Quan Ho are still performed at cultural events, while modern Vietnamese pop blends global influences with local traditions.



One of the most prominent modern artists is Hoàng Thùy Linh, who has played a key role in bringing Vietnamese music to global audiences. Starting as an actress, she later became a successful singer known for combining pop music with Vietnamese folklore, mythology, and traditional aesthetics. Her artistic style reflects a strong connection to cultural identity while appealing to modern audiences.

Her viral hit "See Tinh", released in 2022, became an international sensation. Inspired by the culture of the Mekong Delta, the song blends upbeat pop rhythms with traditional Vietnamese musical elements. It gained massive popularity on social media, with dance challenges spreading worldwide and introducing Vietnamese pop culture to a global audience. The success of the song highlighted how music can cross language barriers and act as a powerful cultural bridge.

Vietnamese cuisine also adds to its global appeal. Dishes such as pho, banh mi, and fresh spring rolls are loved worldwide for their freshness and flavor. Vietnam is also famous for its coffee culture, known for strong and distinctive brews that attract visitors from across the globe.

As India and Vietnam strengthen their partnership, cultural exchange is becoming just as important as trade.

Tourism, music, education, and people-to-people connections are bringing the two nations closer. The rising popularity of Vietnam among Indian travelers and the global reach of Vietnamese artists like Hoàng Thùy Linh reflect the growing cultural bond between the countries.

The India-Vietnam relationship today is not just about trade figures. It is a partnership built on shared economic goals, cultural respect, and regional cooperation. As both nations move toward their US\$25 billion trade target by 2030, they are also strengthening a deeper human connection that will define their relationship for years to come.

Together, India and Vietnam are shaping a future that blends commerce, culture, and cooperation into a shared vision of progress and friendship.

EVENTS



President Tô Lâm led a nationwide conference to launch Resolution 10, aimed at attracting high-quality foreign investment and boosting Vietnam's economic competitiveness.

Vietnam unveiled Hanoi's 100-year development plan, focusing on smart infrastructure, sustainable growth, and long-term urban modernization.



India moved forward with implementing the India–UK Free Trade Agreement, strengthening trade, investment, and economic cooperation.





Nepal reaffirmed its commitment to resolving border issues with India through peaceful dialogue and stronger bilateral cooperation.

PM holds bilateral talks with the President of the Republic of Seychelles, Dr. Patrick Herminie followed by delegation-level discussions between the two sides, in Seychelles.



Prime Minister Keir Starmer advanced reforms focused on public services, economic growth, and national security.

PRADEEP KHANAL: FAITH BEYOND BORDERS



From 19 to 28 June, Nepalese spiritual traveller and interfaith advocate Pradeep Khanal undertook an extraordinary pilgrimage across Pakistan, visiting some of the country's most revered Hindu temples, Sikh Gurudwaras and sacred heritage sites. More than a religious journey, the pilgrimage served as a powerful expression of faith, cultural preservation and interfaith harmony, highlighting the shared spiritual heritage that connects the people of South Asia beyond political borders.

The pilgrimage began in Karachi, where Khanal offered prayers at the Panchamukhi Hanuman Temple, Ratneshwar Mahadev Temple, Swaminarayan Temple, Kali Temple and the historic Jhulelal (Varun Dev) Temple. These visits showcased the resilience of Pakistan's Hindu heritage and the devotion of local communities who continue to preserve these centuries-old places of worship.

One of the most significant moments of the journey was Khanal's visit to

Hinglaj Mata in Balochistan, one of Hinduism's most sacred Shakti Peethas. Accompanied by his Mamashree Shri Ramnath Mishra Ji, Moushi Sanima and Sanaba, and cousin Kabir, he performed darshan and prayers for peace, harmony and the welfare of humanity. He also visited Anil Kund, where pilgrims traditionally take a holy bath, and Chandra Kund (Chandrakup), the sacred mud volcano where devotees seek forgiveness and spiritual purification through self-reflection.

Continuing into Punjab, Khanal paid homage at Gurudwara Shaheed Ganj in Lahore before visiting Kartarpur Sahib, where Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent the final years of his life. On 26 June, which coincided with his birthday, Khanal reached Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, at around 3:30 a.m., becoming the first pilgrim of the day to offer prayers. The Head Granthi arranged special blessings in his honour, making the occasion deeply memorable. He also visited Malji Gurudwara and Sacha Sauda

Gurudwara, reflecting on Guru Nanak's enduring message of compassion and selfless service. The pilgrimage concluded with visits to Katas Raj, where Khanal performed a holy bath and offered sacred waters collected from Kailash Mansarovar, Gangotri, Yamunotri and Muktinath, along with a 108-bead Rudraksha mala from Kathmandu, symbolically linking the sacred traditions of Nepal, India and Pakistan. He also visited the historic Krishna Temple in Rawalpindi before concluding the journey at Panja Sahib, one of Sikhism's holiest shrines.

Through this inspiring pilgrimage, Pradeep Khanal reaffirmed that shared sacred heritage, mutual respect and spiritual journeys have the power to strengthen peace, cultural understanding and interfaith coexistence, demonstrating that faith can serve as a lasting bridge across South Asia.



PLACES HE HAS VISITED



Muktinath, Nepal

Muktinath is a revered pilgrimage site in the Himalayas, respected by both Hindus and Buddhists. Known for its spiritual significance and peaceful surroundings, it attracts devotees from around the world seeking blessings and inner peace.

During his spiritual journey, Pradeep Khanal visited Muktinath, offered prayers, participated in the temple rituals, and spent time in meditation. He also interacted with local priests and pilgrims, reflecting his commitment to promoting spirituality, harmony, and shared cultural values.

Gangotri Dham

Gangotri Dham is one of the holiest pilgrimage sites in India and is revered as the sacred origin of Maa Ganga. Surrounded by the Himalayas, it is a place where devotees come to seek blessings, purity, and spiritual renewal.

During his visit to Gangotri Dham, Pradeep Khanal immersed himself in the spiritual atmosphere of the shrine by offering prayers and seeking the blessings of Maa Ganga. The visit strengthened his connection with India's ancient spiritual traditions and reinforced his message of faith, peace, and cultural unity.

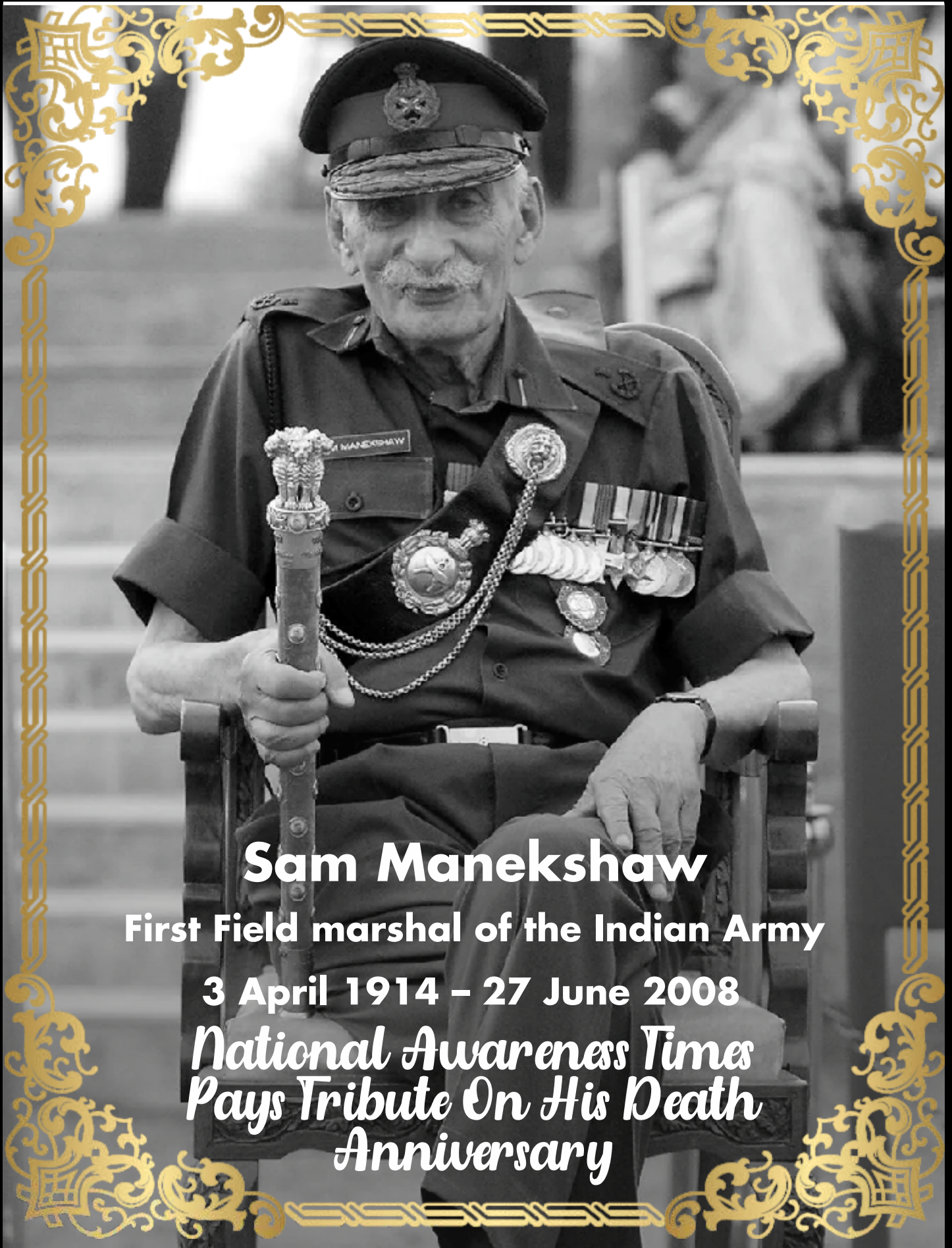


Patna Sahib Gurudwara

Patna Sahib Gurudwara is one of the most sacred Sikh pilgrimage sites and the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru. The shrine holds immense historical and spiritual significance, drawing devotees from across the world.

At Patna Sahib Gurudwara, Pradeep Khanal offered his prayers and spent time understanding the rich spiritual legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The experience inspired him to embrace the Sikh ideals of humility, service, and compassion while strengthening his vision of fostering interfaith respect and unity.





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INDIA-UK UNLOCKING GROWTH AND GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES



The implementation phase of the India-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement (FTA) marks a defining moment in the economic relationship between the two nations. Following years of negotiations, both countries moved towards operationalizing the agreement in late June 2026, signalling a shared commitment to expanding trade, investment and strategic cooperation. More than a conventional trade pact, the agreement represents a long-term framework designed to strengthen supply chains, encourage innovation and create new opportunities for businesses and consumers. For India, the FTA comes at a time when the country is seeking to diversify its export markets and deepen its engagement with advanced economies. The United Kingdom, one of India's largest trading partners in Europe, offers significant potential for Indian goods and services ranging from textiles and pharmaceuticals to engineering products, information technology and financial services. Lower tariffs and simplified customs procedures are expected to make Indian exports more competitive in the UK market. One of the biggest beneficiaries is likely to be India's labour-intensive manufacturing sector. Products such as garments, footwear, leather

goods, gems and jewellery are expected to enjoy improved market access, boosting exports and supporting employment across several states. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which form the backbone of India's manufacturing ecosystem, could also benefit from easier access to British buyers and streamlined trade procedures.

The services sector, a key pillar of India's economy, is another major winner. Indian IT companies, financial service providers, consultants and professional firms are expected to gain greater opportunities in the UK. Improved mobility provisions for skilled professionals and recognition of professional qualifications could strengthen collaboration in technology, healthcare, education and research.

The agreement is equally important from an investment perspective. British companies have long viewed India as a high-growth market, while Indian firms continue to expand their presence in the UK. By providing greater regulatory certainty and encouraging investment flows, the FTA is expected to stimulate collaboration in sectors such as clean energy, advanced manufacturing, digital technology, life sciences and infrastructure.

Beyond trade and investment, the FTA reflects a broader strategic partnership. India and the UK increasingly cooperate on defence, innovation, education, climate action and emerging technologies. Stronger economic ties complement these shared priorities and reinforce both countries' efforts to build resilient supply chains in an increasingly uncertain global economy.

However, successful implementation will require careful execution. Indian exporters must meet stringent British quality, environmental and regulatory standards to fully benefit from the agreement. Businesses, especially smaller enterprises, will need greater awareness, technical support and easier access to trade-related information. Investments in logistics, digital customs systems and export infrastructure will also be essential to maximise the agreement's potential. For consumers, the FTA could translate into greater product choices and more competitive prices. Increased competition is expected to improve efficiency, encourage innovation and strengthen business partnerships across multiple sectors.

As global trade continues to evolve amid geopolitical uncertainty and shifting supply chains, the India-UK Free Trade Agreement positions both countries for sustained economic cooperation. For India, it supports the vision of becoming a global manufacturing and services hub while expanding its footprint in international markets. For the United Kingdom, it provides stronger access to one of the world's fastest-growing major economies. The implementation of the India-UK FTA is therefore not merely the beginning of a new trade arrangement it is the foundation of a modern economic partnership that has the potential to drive growth, create jobs, attract investment and deepen strategic ties for years to come.

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE TO HAVE ONE OF THE WIDEST RELEASES



The month of June is expected to end on a comic note thanks to the release of Welcome To The Jungle. It is arguably the biggest multi-starrer of Hindi cinema and hence, the excitement is expected to be tremendous. Accordingly, the distributing partner, Star Studio18, has gone all out with the release strategy. As per the mail sent to the exhibitors, the distributor has asked for all shows in single-screen cinemas. In two-screen cinemas, they have asked for 7 or 8 shows, while they require 9 or 10 shows in three-screen cinemas. In 4-screen multiplexes, the requirement is 11 or 12 shows, while 13 or 14 shows are required in 5-screen plexes. For cinema halls with 6 screens, Welcome To The Jungle needs to be played in 15 or 16 shows. Finally, in multiplexes with more than 6 screens, the studio has asked them to play 3 shows of the comic caper per screen.

A trade source told Bollywood Hungama, "Welcome To The Jungle is a grand film meant for the big screen. Due to the humour quotient and sprawling star cast, the film should open with a bang and hence, the studio is intending for a wide release."

It now remains to be seen whether the demand for all shows in single-screens and 7-8 shows in two-screen cinemas causes any issue, especially regarding the holdover releases. The trade source explained, "Cocktail 2 has a decent hold while Main Vaapas Aaunga refuses to slow down. Some Gujarati and Marathi releases have also put up fair numbers. Also, Hollywood superhero flick Supergirl and the much-awaited Punjabi film, Carry On Jatta 4, are up for release this Friday as well. These films will also require sufficient shows and hence, let's see how things unfold in the next 48 hours."

Welcome To The Jungle stars Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Disha Patani, Jacqueline Fernandez, Arshad Warsi, Jackie Shroff, Paresh Rawal, Raveena Tandon, Lara Dutta, Farida Jalal, Johny Lever, Shreyas Talpade, Tusshar Kapoor, Rajpal Yadav, Krushna Abhishek, Kiku Sharda, Daler Mehndi, Aftab Shivdasani, Mukesh Tiwari, Yashpal Sharma, Kiran Kumar, Zakir Hussain, Vindu Dara Singh, Urvashi Rautela, Hemant Pandey, Brijendra Kala, Feroze Khan (Arjun), Late Pankaj Dheer Ji, Puneet Issar, Sudesh Berry, Jeetu Verma, Vrihi Kodvara, Adityaa Singgh and Bhagya Bhanushali.

JANHVI KAPOOR FRONTS OPPO INDIA'S NEW CAMPAIGN FOR RENO16 SERIES



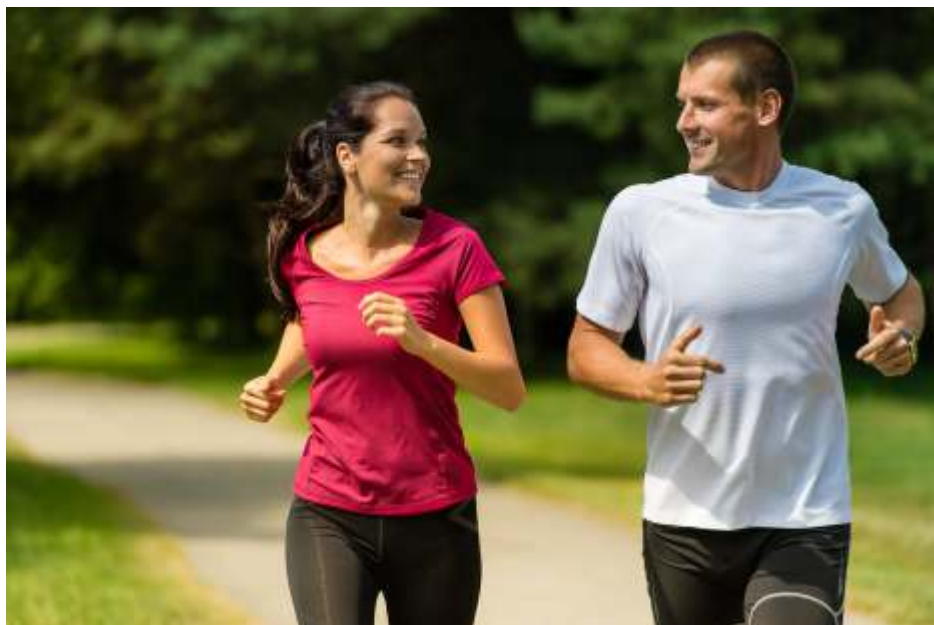
OPPO India has unveiled its latest #LiveItYourWay campaign to introduce the all-new OPPO Reno16 Series, celebrating creativity, individuality, and the courage to follow one's passion. Featuring actor Janhvi Kapoor, the campaign tells the inspiring story of Rhea, an aspiring musician who struggles with self-doubt after sharing her singing video online. Encouraged by a heartfelt message and childhood memory shared by her father, she regains confidence and takes a bold step toward pursuing her dream.

Adding emotional depth to the campaign is a reimagined version of the iconic Jugni, symbolizing freedom, self-discovery, and self-belief. The

film highlights how the OPPO Reno16 Series supports creators with AI-powered features such as AI Remix Collage and OPPO Bubble, enabling users to capture, edit, and share stories effortlessly. It also showcases the OPPO Enco Air5, whose 52dB Active Noise Cancellation helps users immerse themselves in music and creativity without distractions.

Through this campaign, OPPO reinforces its commitment to empowering today's generation with intelligent technology that enhances creative expression. The Reno16 Series combines advanced imaging capabilities, AI-driven editing tools, seamless performance, and premium design, making it easier for users to transform everyday moments into meaningful stories and truly live life their own way. The campaign is being promoted across digital platforms, cinemas, OTT, and outdoor media nationwide.

POWER WALKING: A SIMPLE STEP TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH



Power walking is one of the easiest and most effective forms of exercise that people of all ages can incorporate into their daily routine. Unlike a casual walk, power walking involves walking at a brisk pace while maintaining proper posture and swinging the arms naturally. It is a low-impact activity that offers numerous physical and mental health benefits without requiring expensive equipment or a gym membership.

One of the greatest benefits of power walking is improved heart health. Regular brisk walking strengthens the heart, improves blood circulation, lowers blood pressure, and helps reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. It also burns calories efficiently, making it an excellent exercise for weight management and reducing body fat.

Power walking helps strengthen muscles and bones, improving flexibility, balance, and overall stamina. It can lower the risk of

osteoporosis, especially in older adults, while also enhancing joint mobility. For people with diabetes or those at risk, regular power walking helps regulate blood sugar levels and improves insulin sensitivity. Beyond physical health, power walking has remarkable mental health benefits. It reduces stress, anxiety, and symptoms

of depression by stimulating the release of endorphins, often called the body's "feel-good" hormones. Spending time outdoors while walking can further enhance mood, improve concentration, and promote better sleep.

Health experts recommend at least 30 minutes of power walking on most days of the week to enjoy its full benefits. Wearing comfortable shoes, staying hydrated, and maintaining a steady pace are essential for preventing injuries. Power walking is more than just exercise it is a simple lifestyle habit that promotes long-term health and well-being. Whether done in a park, on a walking track, or around the neighborhood, this affordable and accessible activity can significantly improve physical fitness, mental resilience, and overall quality of life. Every step taken today is an investment in a healthier tomorrow.



**PIC OF
THE WEEK**

DUA LIPA

Mr & Mrs

Source: Instagram

20 June, 2026

DEPRESSION IN INDIA A GROWING MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS



Depression has emerged as one of the fastest-growing mental health concerns in India, affecting millions of people across all age groups. From students facing academic pressure to professionals coping with workplace stress and elderly individuals experiencing loneliness, depression is becoming increasingly common. However, it is important to understand that depression is not simply sadness or a temporary emotional setback. It is a medical condition that affects a person's emotions, thoughts, behaviour, and physical health, often making everyday tasks feel overwhelming. Common symptoms of depression include persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, fatigue, changes in sleep or appetite, difficulty concentrating, feelings of hopelessness, and, in severe cases, thoughts of self-harm. Early recognition of these signs is essential because timely treatment can lead to recovery.

Several factors contribute to the rising number of depression cases in India. Academic and career pressure, financial challenges, family conflicts, social isolation, unhealthy lifestyles, excessive use of social media, and the fast-paced nature of modern life all increase emotional stress. Many people also hesitate to seek help because of stigma or fear of being judged, allowing the condition to worsen. Preventing depression begins with taking care of both the mind and body. One of the most effective ways to reduce negative thoughts is to stay engaged in meaningful work and productive activities. Keeping yourself busy through work, studies, exercise, volunteering, or hobbies helps create a sense of purpose, reduces overthinking, and boosts self-confidence. At the same time, it is important to maintain a healthy balance by getting enough sleep, eating nutritious food, exercising regularly, and spending time with family and friends.

Most importantly, anyone experiencing persistent symptoms of depression should seek support from a qualified mental health professional. Depression is not a sign of weakness, and asking for help is a sign of strength.

As awareness about mental health grows, India must continue to encourage open conversations, reduce stigma, and ensure access to quality mental healthcare. A supportive society, healthy lifestyle, and timely intervention can help individuals overcome depression and lead happier, more fulfilling lives.

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