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# PRAVASI INDIANS

₹ 200/-

— The India Connection —

## WEST ASIA CRISIS THE WAR AFTER THE WAR

**RELATIONSHIP**  
WHY IT FADES  
SO QUICKLY

**THE SWADES EFFECT**  
WHY ARE NRIS  
RETURNING HOME

**THE CO-ORDINATION CLUB**  
45 YEARS OF SELFLESS  
EMPOWERMENT

**INDIA MOMENT**  
IN A FRACTURED  
GLOBAL ECONOMY

विक्टिम कार्ड की राजनीति  
इस मानसिकता से बाहर  
निकलना होगा



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## LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



## Across Borders, Beyond Boundaries

Dear Readers,

The Indian story today stretches far beyond geographical boundaries. From the cultural lanes of global cities to the social and intellectual debates unfolding at home, the lives of Indians are increasingly shaped by movement, memory and change. The April edition of *PRAVASI INDIANS* reflects this evolving landscape through voices that explore diaspora life, geopolitics, social thought and personal reflection.

In our Diaspora section, **RAJEEV KUMAR**, a Teaching Fellow at Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul (Türkiye), continues his reflections on his first journey to London. Walking through some of the city's most evocative intellectual and cultural landmarks—from the Aga Khan Library and the British Museum to the ISKCON temple and the Bengali neighbourhoods of Whitechapel—he blends personal memory with observation. Museums provoke reflections on history and preservation, while encounters with diaspora communities reveal the layered realities of faith, identity and empire in one of the world's most complex cities.

Yet the global Indian experience is also shaped by shifting geopolitical currents. Senior journalist **ANJANI KUMAR** examines how rising tensions in the Middle East are beginning to unsettle the long-standing sense of stability associated with the Gulf. For millions of Indian migrants in Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia—and their families back home—recent developments serve as a reminder that prosperity in the region has always been intertwined with strategic uncertainty.

Our Cover Story by former Indian diplomat **SANJAY KUMAR VERMA** places these developments within a broader international context. He observes that while missile exchanges and military manoeuvres dominate headlines, the deeper consequences of conflicts in West Asia often emerge after the guns fall silent—reshaping energy markets, intensifying great-power rivalries and influencing India's strategic interests.

The issue also reflects on the complexities of modern relationships. **RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI** explores why bonds that begin with warmth and promise sometimes dissolve into quiet disappointment. In an age of instant connections and digital distractions, he invites readers to rediscover the emotional and spiritual foundations that sustain lasting relationships.

Migration itself is also changing direction. **DR. VENKATESH GANAPATHY** examines the phenomenon of reverse migration among Indians abroad. After decades of outward movement, many professionals are returning—drawn by family ties, cultural belonging and the expanding opportunities of India's growing economy. He describes this emerging trend as the "Swades Effect."

Closer home, **SATISH SINGH** highlights an inspiring initiative from Bihar. For forty-five years, the Co-ordination Club has quietly supported young aspirants through peer learning, mentorship and collective effort. Its motto—*Help us to help you*—captures the enduring strength of community solidarity.

From an economic perspective, our South India Bureau Chief **B. SHEKHAR** assesses India's position in a turbulent global environment. While many economies grapple with inflation, debt and supply disruptions, India continues to display resilience with steady growth, even though energy and geopolitical shifts remain challenges.

This issue also features thoughtful Hindi contributions. **SUDHANSHU RANJAN** revisits debates around caste and victimhood in contemporary politics, urging society to move beyond grievance towards confidence and social harmony.

As always, **ACHARYA DINAIK**'s horoscope column offers insights into life's rhythms through the traditional lens of astrology.

We conclude with poetry. **LALITPRASAD MATHURADUTT JOSHI**'s stirring lines remind readers that even amid life's fiercest storms, one must hold courage and never abandon the path.

Happy reading *PRAVASI INDIANS!*

*Rashmi*  
CEO and Publisher

We would love to hear from you. We also invite diaspora members to write for us and share their experiences

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# PRAVASI INDIANS

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April **2026**

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A well-acclaimed spiritual educator and columnist with over 9,500 articles to his credit, **RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI** reflects on a question that increasingly troubles modern life: why do relationships that begin with so much promise so often fade into quiet disappointment. One moment there is a candlelit dinner on the first anniversary, laughter rising with a toast to "forever." A few years later, those same chairs gather dust, replaced by solo Netflix binges and unanswered messages. In a swipe-right world chasing the dream of eternal love, relationships frequently slip away like sand through open fingers. Nikunj Ji explores the deeper spiritual and emotional reasons behind this paradox of modern love.

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affairs, **ANJANI KUMAR** reflects on how rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East are beginning to unsettle the long-held sense of security in the Gulf. The growing uncertainty is affecting millions of Indian migrants in Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, as well as their families back home. Recent skirmishes have reminded expatriate communities that the region's prosperity is closely tied to a volatile strategic environment—prompting many to question whether the Gulf remains the safe haven even now it once appeared to be.

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## ECONOMY

Our Bengaluru-based South India Bureau Chief, **B, SHEKHAR**, observes that at a time when much of the world is grappling with economic uncertainty—driven by wars, supply-chain disruptions, rising debt and inflation—India has emerged as a relatively stable and fast-growing economy. With growth projected in the range of 6–7 percent, India stands out among major economies and is increasingly viewed as an important bridge between the developed world and the Global South. Yet, he cautions, challenges such as energy dependence, volatility in global markets and regional geopolitical tensions continue to test the country's long-term economic resilience.



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**RAJEEV KUMAR**, a Teaching Fellow at Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul (Türkiye), continues his reflections on his first journey to London. Moving through some of the city's most compelling intellectual and cultural spaces—from the Aga Khan Library and the British Museum to the ISKCON temple and the Bengali neighbourhoods of Whitechapel—he weaves together personal memory and observation. Museums evoke reflections on history and preservation, while encounters with diaspora communities reveal the layered realities of faith, identity and empire in one of the world's most complex cities.

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A Mumbai-based columnist and banker, **SATISH SINGH** reflects on the remarkable journey of the Co-ordination Club, a unique initiative that has been quietly countering Bihar's chronic job scarcity for the past 45 years. Celebrating the power of collective effort, he writes that this volunteer-driven platform has helped shape more than 1,000 careers through peer learning, mentorship and a spirit of enduring camaraderie. "Guided by its simple yet powerful motto—*Help us to help you*—the Club stands as a testament to how community solidarity can create opportunity where systems often fall short," he adds.

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### विक्टिम कार्ड की राजनीति

वरिष्ठ पत्रकार और स्तंभकार **सुधांशु रंजन** अपनी रिपोर्ट में लिखते हैं कि भारत में जाति का प्रश्न इतिहास, राजनीति और सामाजिक न्याय से गहराई से जुड़ा रहा है। लेकिन क्या केवल अतीत के अन्यायों की पुनरावृत्ति ही समाधान है, या अब समय आ गया है कि समाज पीड़ित मानसिकता से आगे बढ़कर प्रतिस्पर्धा, आत्मविश्वास और सामाजिक समरसता की दिशा में सोचे?

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ज्योतिष आचार्य **दिनायक** के अनुसार, ज्योतिष को प्रायः केवल भविष्य की घटनाओं की भविष्यवाणी से जोड़कर देखा जाता है, जबकि यह मानव जीवन के पैटर्न और प्रवृत्तियों को समझने की एक पारंपरिक पद्धति भी है। जन्म कुंडली किसी व्यक्ति के जन्म के समय ग्रह-नक्षत्रों की स्थिति का मानचित्र मानी जाती है। ज्योतिषी इन ग्रहों की स्थितियों का विश्लेषण कर जीवन में संभावित प्रवृत्तियों, चुनौतियों और अवसरों का संकेत देते हैं। इस परंपरा में मंत्र-जप, दान, उपवास तथा विशेष रत्न धारण करने जैसी विधियों को जीवन में संतुलन स्थापित करने और ब्रह्मांडीय ऊर्जा के साथ सामंजस्य बनाने के उपाय माना जाता है।

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### कविता

**ललितप्रसाद मथुरादत्त जोशी** हिंदी साहित्य में निरंतर सक्रिय रहते हुए अपनी कविताएँ प्रकाशित करते रहे हैं। उनके दो काव्य-संग्रह—**बढ़ता भारत** और **मानव किस ओर बढ़ रहा है**—पहले ही प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं। अपनी कविता "तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत" में वे संघर्ष के क्षणों में धैर्य और साहस का संदेश देते हुए लिखते हैं: "कोई न हो साथ अगर तो, तू मुश्किलों से घबराना मत... तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत। ये आँधी-तूफान थम जाएँगे, कष्टों के बादल ढल जाएँगे; तू लौटकर पीछे की ओर आना मत, तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।"



## WEST ASIA CRISIS

# THE WAR AFTER THE WAR

Missile exchanges and military manoeuvres dominate headlines during conflicts in West Asia the true consequences often emerge only after the guns fall silent. A confrontation involving Iran could reshape global energy markets, great-power rivalry, and India's strategic interests in West Asia. For millions of Indian expatriates living across the Gulf, the crisis is also a reminder that the prosperity of the region remains closely tied to one of the world's most volatile geopolitical theatres.



**BY SANJAY KUMAR VERMA**

With a diplomatic career spanning 37 years, the author served as India's Ambassador to Sudan, Japan, and Canada. Until recently, he was Chairperson of the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a leading think tank, focused on the Global South and international economic issues. His interests lie in foreign policy, security, technology, and the global economy.

Sirens pierced the calm evening in the Gulf. Residents in Doha looked up as air defence systems intercepted missiles streaking across the sky. For many expatriates—among them thousands of Indians who have long regarded the Gulf as a zone of stability and prosperity—the moment was unsettling. It served as a reminder that beneath the region’s glittering skylines lies one of the world’s most volatile geopolitical landscapes.

Wars in West Asia rarely conclude with decisive victories. They seldom erase grievances or redraw civilisations overnight. What they leave behind instead are altered alliances, disrupted energy routes and societies struggling to restore political and economic stability.

The conflict involving Iran, whether limited or prolonged, will eventually subside, as all wars do. Yet its consequences will extend far beyond the immediate military operations’ fall-out. From global energy markets and great-power rivalry to the lives of millions of migrant workers in the Gulf, the ripple effects of the crisis are likely to shape international politics for years to come.

Much of the commentary surrounding the Iran conflict has understandably focused on its tactical dimensions—missile exchanges, air strikes, naval manoeuvres and the security of strategic installations. These dramatic developments capture headlines and dominate policy debates.

History, however, suggests that the true consequences of wars in West Asia often emerge only after the fighting fades.

From the oil shocks of the 1970s to the geopolitical realignments that followed the Gulf Wars, conflicts in the region have repeatedly reshaped global economic systems, altered

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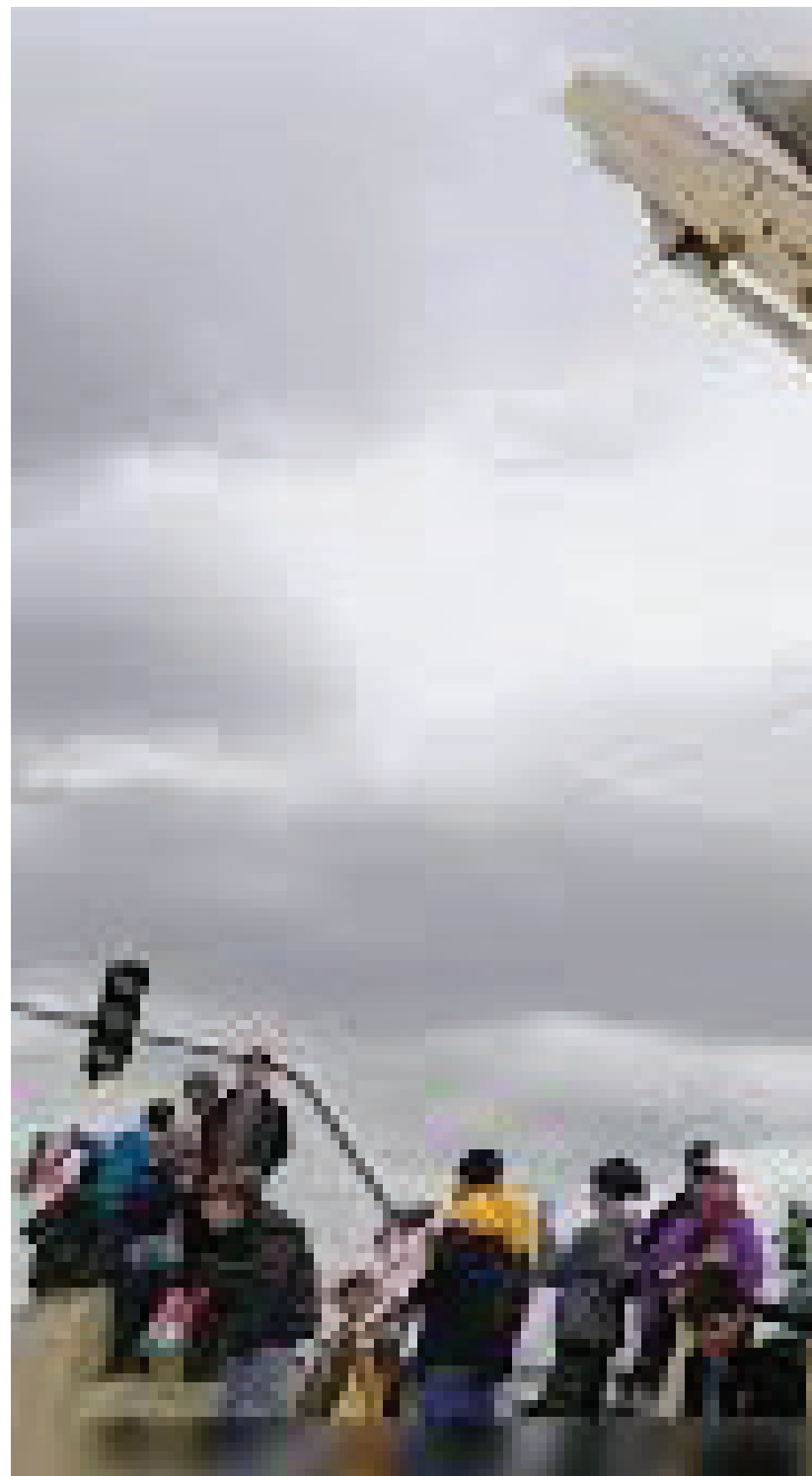
**Even the hint of instability around the Strait of Hormuz can send global energy markets into turmoil. A conflict involving Iran could reshape oil supply chains and accelerate the world’s search for energy alternatives.**

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the balance of power among major states and influenced the strategic calculations of countries far removed from the Middle East.

The Iran conflict may well follow a similar trajectory.

The world that emerges after the crisis will likely be shaped by three interconnected developments: the vulnerability of the global energy system, the recalibration of influence among major powers, and the strategic responses of regional actors and countries like India whose interests remain deeply intertwined with developments in West Asia.



### Global Energy Shock

The first ripple of any conflict involving Iran is felt in global energy markets. Iran occupies a central position in one of the world’s most sensitive energy corridors. The Strait of Hormuz, the narrow maritime passage between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, serves as the gateway for a substantial share of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments. Even the perception of instability in this chokepoint has historically been enough to trigger volatility in global energy prices.

A war involving Iran reinforces a familiar reality: the glob-



al energy system remains deeply vulnerable to geopolitical shocks. Oil prices respond rapidly to disruptions—or even perceived threats—to supply.

For importing economies, particularly in the developing world, sudden increases in energy prices translate into inflationary pressures, higher transportation costs and slower economic growth.

The Iran conflict therefore highlights the close relationship between energy security and geopolitical stability. Governments across Asia and Europe are likely to intensify efforts to

diversify suppliers, expand strategic petroleum reserves and invest in alternative energy sources.

Countries that depend heavily on Gulf oil—including India, China, Japan and South Korea—have already begun exploring new supply arrangements to reduce long-term vulnerability.

Yet diversification alone cannot eliminate risk. The Gulf region will remain central to global energy markets for decades to come. Ensuring the safety of maritime routes and maintaining cooperative security arrangements in this corridor will therefore remain a critical international priority.



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**With deep ties to Israel,  
Iran and the Gulf monarchies,  
India faces the delicate challenge  
of protecting its interests while  
maintaining its long-standing policy  
of strategic autonomy.**

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#### **Hydrocarbons and the Energy Transition**

The conflict also highlights a deeper structural question concerning the future of energy.

For more than a century, hydrocarbons have formed the backbone of the global economy. Modern transportation, industrial production and international trade have depended on abundant and relatively affordable fossil fuels.

Despite growing global attention to climate change and sustainability, hydrocarbons still account for a large share of global energy consumption. Even the most ambitious renewable energy strategies recognise that oil and gas will remain essential components of the global energy mix for decades.

The Iran conflict exposes a paradox at the centre of contemporary energy politics. Governments across the world

are investing heavily in renewable technologies such as solar and wind power. Advances in battery storage, electric mobility and hydrogen-based fuels are gradually reshaping energy systems.

Yet the global economy continues to depend heavily on hydrocarbon supply chains concentrated in geopolitically sensitive regions.

For many countries the lesson from repeated disruptions in energy markets is clear: energy security requires diversification. A resilient strategy must combine conventional fuels, renewable capacity, technological innovation and secure infrastructure.

India occupies an important place in this evolving landscape. As one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, its demand for energy will continue to rise significantly in the coming decades. At the same time India has emerged as a leading advocate of renewable initiatives, particularly solar power through efforts such as the International Solar Alliance.

New Delhi's approach seeks to shape the global energy transition while ensuring that developmental priorities remain central.

The future of energy will therefore not be defined by a sudden departure from hydrocarbons but by a gradual balancing between traditional fuels and emerging technologies.

#### **Recalibration of Influence**

The Iran conflict has also revealed how major powers are ad-

justing their strategic outreach in West Asia. The responses of the United States, China and Russia illustrate different approaches to influence in a changing geopolitical environment.

### The United States

For the United States, the conflict has highlighted the evolving nature of its global leadership.

In earlier crises in West Asia, Washington often succeeded in mobilising broad international coalitions. The Gulf War remains one of the clearest examples of this ability to bring together allies in support of a shared objective.

The present crisis, however, has unfolded in a far more fragmented international environment.

Several NATO allies and traditional partners have shown reluctance to align themselves fully with Washington's pos-

ture toward Iran. While many governments have expressed concern about regional stability, there has been limited enthusiasm for direct involvement in a confrontation carrying uncertain outcomes and economic risks.

European governments remain preoccupied with security challenges closer to home following the Russia–Ukraine war. Domestic political pressures and economic concerns have also made many states cautious about becoming involved in another Middle Eastern conflict.

Coalition building therefore no longer occurs automatically. Even long-standing allies now assess their participation through the lens of national interest. The Iran conflict reflects a broader shift in which American influence remains powerful but increasingly contested in a more multipolar international system.

### China

China approaches West Asia from a different perspective. Beijing's engagement with the region has been driven largely by economic priorities including energy imports, trade expansion and infrastructure investment through the Belt and Road Initiative.

West Asia supplies a significant share of China's crude oil imports and serves as a key link in maritime routes connecting Asia, Europe and Africa. Chinese firms have invested heavily in ports, industrial zones and energy infrastructure across the Gulf.

Diplomatically, China has cultivated relations with a wide range of regional actors including Iran, Saudi Arabia and the

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**More than nine million Indians  
live and work across the Gulf. For  
them, geopolitical tensions are not  
abstract diplomacy but a reminder  
that prosperity in the region remains  
closely linked to fragile stability.**

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United Arab Emirates.

This multidirectional diplomacy allows Beijing to maintain access to energy resources while avoiding overt alignment with regional rivalries.

Yet the Iran conflict also exposes the limitations of a strategy driven primarily by economic engagement. As China's dependence on Middle Eastern energy deepens, disruptions in the region increasingly affect its strategic interests.

Over time Beijing may find it difficult to remain only an economic actor without assuming greater diplomatic or security responsibilities.

### Russia

Russia's approach reflects a combination of opportunism and pragmatic diplomacy.

Moscow re-established its presence in the region through its military intervention in Syria in 2015, demonstrating its willingness to influence the Middle Eastern balance of power.

Since then, Russia has cultivated relationships with multiple actors including Iran, Israel and several Gulf states. Unlike the rigid alignments of the Cold War period, Moscow today maintains dialogue with competing actors simultaneously.

Energy politics also plays an important role in Russia's strategy. As a major hydrocarbon exporter, Russia often benefits economically from rising oil prices during periods of instability in the Middle East.

Russia's strategy therefore combines diplomatic flexibility

with selective engagement.

### India's Strategic Balancing

For India the Iran conflict presents a complex diplomatic and economic challenge.

Few countries maintain such extensive relationships across West Asia. India enjoys strong ties with Israel, deep economic partnerships with the Gulf monarchies and long-standing historical connections with Iran.

This engagement reflects India's broader foreign policy philosophy of strategic autonomy. Rather than aligning itself with rigid geopolitical blocs, India has sought to maintain pragmatic partnerships with multiple actors.

Energy security remains central to India's interests in the region. A significant portion of India's oil and gas imports originates from the Gulf, making stability in maritime routes essential for India's economic trajectory.

During the recent crisis, India's diplomacy demonstrated a measure of quiet effectiveness. Even while tensions remained high in the Strait of Hormuz, New Delhi worked through diplomatic channels with regional governments and major powers to ensure that some LNG and LPG shipments linked to India could continue to pass through the narrow waterway.

In an active conflict environment, such movement of energy cargo was not merely a logistical achievement but also a reflection of sustained diplomatic engagement.





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**Even after the fighting ends, the aftermath may unfold through cyber warfare, proxy confrontations and shifting alliances—shaping the strategic landscape of West Asia for years to come.**

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#### **The Human Dimension**

Another critical dimension concerns the Indian diaspora in the Gulf.

More than nine million Indians live and work across West Asia, forming one of the largest expatriate communities in the world. These individuals contribute significantly to the economic development of their host countries while sending substantial remittances back to India.

In recent years India has received well over one hundred billion dollars annually in remittances, with roughly half originating in the Gulf region.

Beyond economics, the diaspora also serves as a vital bridge between India and West Asia, strengthening cultural, social and commercial connections.

Any prolonged instability in the region therefore carries implications not only for energy markets and geopolitics but also for millions of families whose livelihoods depend

on the Gulf's economic stability.

#### **The War After the War**

Conflicts in West Asia rarely remain confined to their immediate geography. They reverberate across global markets, reshape diplomatic alignments and influence the strategic calculations of states around the world.

Even if the military outcome of the present conflict eventually favours the United States and Israel, it would be premature to assume that Iran will disappear as a strategic actor.

Iranian statecraft has historically relied on asymmetric strategies, including networks of regional partners and non-state actors.

The aftermath of the conflict may therefore witness a shift from conventional confrontation to a prolonged phase of low-intensity competition carried out through cyber operations, covert activities and proxy networks.

The geopolitical consequences of the Iran conflict may thus unfold over many years rather than months.

For the world, the crisis may accelerate shifts in energy systems and great-power competition. For West Asia, it may reshape regional alignments.

For India, it presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

When the war fades from the headlines, the real test will begin. Nations will have to navigate the strategic landscape that emerges afterward.

For India the task will not be choosing sides but sustaining its role as a balanced and responsible actor in a region whose history, economy and future remain closely connected with its own. ■

# WHY IT FADES SO QUICKLY

A candlelit dinner on your first anniversary, laughter echoing as you toast to “forever.” Fast-forward five years—those same chairs gather dust, replaced by solo Netflix binges and unanswered texts. We chase eternal love in a swipe-right world, yet watch it slip away like sand through open fingers. Why do modern relationships, brimming with promise, so often dissolve into echoes of what might have been?



**BY RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI**  
(nikunjji@gmail.com)

Writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist, who has written 9500+ articles/columns till date across India, Nepal & UK.

In our hyper-connected world, where a single click opens endless possibilities and relationships bloom at the swipe of a finger, it's profoundly ironic that so many bonds crumble under the weight of time. We yearn deeply for enduring love—those life-long partnerships that weather every storm—yet countless connections flicker out, leaving trails of disillusionment and quiet heart-ache. What invisible forces pull them apart? Despite our sincerest efforts and heartfelt desires, why do even the most promising unions falter?

One core culprit lies in the relentless pace of contemporary life. Our society, wired for instant gratification and bombarded by constant stimulation, has rewired our approach to love itself. Consider how streaming services deliver binge-worthy shows in seconds, food apps bring meals to your door in minutes, and dating apps promise matches on demand. Patience, once a virtue, now feels like an archaic relic. True relationships, however, thrive on sustained investment: shared quiet evenings, thoughtful gestures, and unwavering commitment. In the grind of careers, commutes, and endless notifications,



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**In a world of instant everything, patience is the missing ingredient for love that lasts.**  
● ●

carving out that space becomes a Herculean task. Newly married couples, full of initial bliss, often find themselves ensnared in this cycle of busyness—rushing from meetings to meals to bed,

with little emotional bandwidth left to truly nurture their growing bond. No one disputes this; it's the unspoken epidemic of our era.

The digital revolution compounds the issue with a seductive paradox. Technology bridges distances like never before—video calls span oceans, texts keep flames flickering, social media shares life's highlights in real time. Yet this creates a shimmering illusion of closeness, fooling us into equating pixels with profound intimacy. Nothing rivals the raw power of face-to-



face connection: the subtle shift in a partner's eyes during vulnerability, the warmth of a reassuring touch, the unspoken language of shared silence. Virtual exchanges, for all their convenience, skim the surface—like sipping watered-down coffee when you crave the bold, steaming brew. This double-edged sword erodes depth, leaving relationships vulnerable when real-life trials demand authentic resilience.

Equally damaging is our collective fear of vulnerability. In a culture that lionizes rugged independence and flawless self-sufficiency—think Instagram feeds of solo adventures and motivational quotes preaching “You complete you”—opening up feels risky. The dread of rejection or pain builds towering emotional walls, blocking the full-hearted investment needed for longevity. Vulnerability isn't frailty; it's courage, the very cornerstone of genuine connection. Imagine a garden: without exposing roots to soil and rain, nothing grows. By hiding innermost thoughts, quirks, and scars from the one we love, we doom ties to superficiality, ill-equipped for life's inevitable gales.

Unrealistic expectations cast another long shadow. We enter partner-

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**Poor communication isn't just talking less—it's hearing nothing at all.**

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**Vulnerability isn't weakness—it's the secret glue of forever relationships.**

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**Stop chasing soulmates; embrace flaws for love that endures.**

ships laden with Hollywood-fueled fantasies—a soulmate who intuitively fulfills every whim, from perfect romance to flawless conflict resolution. Social media amplifies this, showcasing airbrushed “couple goals” that ignore the messiness of humanity.

When reality intrudes—mismatched habits, differing ambitions—disappointment breeds resentment. Rather than leaning into imperfections, we chase illusory perfection, forever eyeing “greener pastures.” Lasting love demands acceptance: celebrating quirks, forgiving slips, building mutual support. That's the secure haven where bonds deepen.

Finally, lackluster communication undermines it all. Misunderstandings bubble unchecked, unvoiced needs fester, expectations clash silently. Communication isn't mere chatter; it's active listening, empathetic validation, courageous honesty. In daily chaos, it gets sidelined—texts replace talks, assumptions fill voids—leaving partners isolated in the same home.

The question “Why don't relationships last?” unravels a tapestry of societal haste, tech illusions, guarded souls, lofty ideals, and muted voices. Yet one truth endures: profound connections aren't born flawless but hammered in empathy's forge, sustained by dedication amid chaos. Let's answer the call—embrace raw vulnerability, listen with our whole hearts, accept flaws as features. In doing so, we craft the life-long loves we truly deserve. ■

# THE GULF DREAM UNDER SHADOW

For decades, the Gulf region symbolized economic opportunity and stability for millions of Indian migrants. From construction workers to corporate professionals, expatriates helped build the prosperity of countries such as Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia while securing better livelihoods for families back home. But rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East are beginning to shake that long-held sense of security. Recent missile strikes and regional conflicts have reminded expatriate communities that the prosperity of the Gulf is closely tied to a volatile strategic environment, leaving many migrants wondering whether the region remains the safe haven it once seemed.



BY ANJANI KUMAR

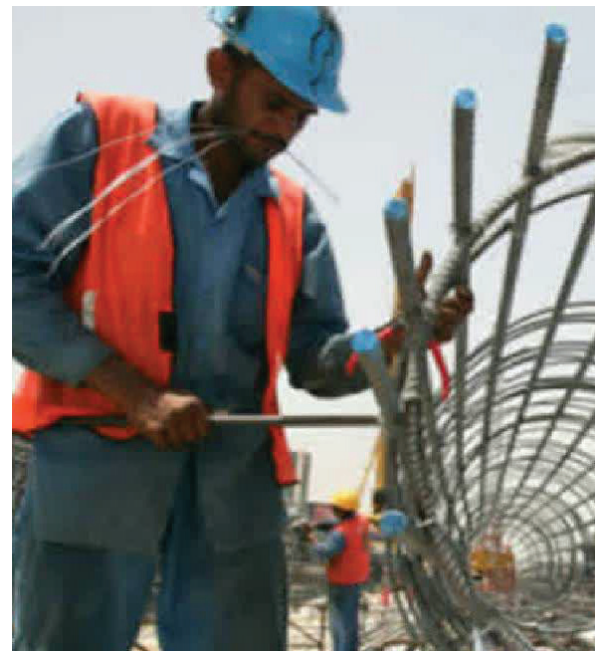
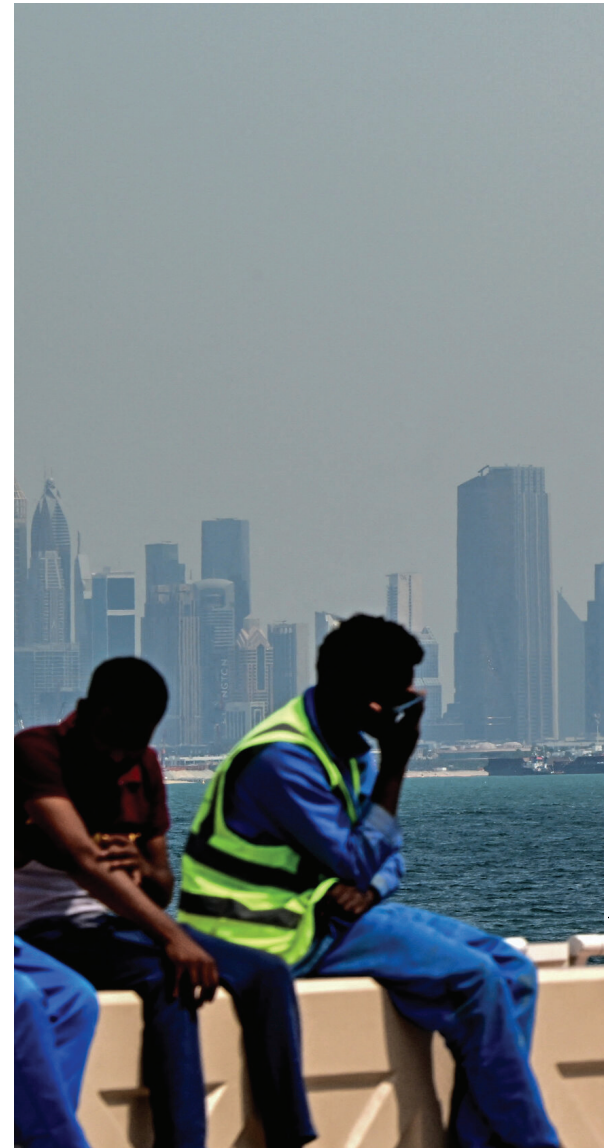
A Delhi-NCR-based senior journalist, the author is known to focus on presenting a comprehensive and balanced analysis of the international issues.

For decades, the Gulf region has been regarded as one of the most attractive overseas destinations for millions of Indian workers. From construction labourers to financial professionals, migrants from India and other South Asian countries have played a crucial role in building and sustaining the oil-driven economies of the Gulf states. Tax-free

incomes, modern infrastructure, and relative stability made countries such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia appear as islands of prosperity in a turbulent region.

However, that security today is increasingly being questioned. Recent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have triggered fresh anxieties among expatriate communities across the Gulf. Among the millions of migrant workers who form the backbone of these economies — and who together constitute nearly half of the Gulf’s population — growing regional instability has raised difficult questions about safety, long-term settlement, and the future of employment in the region.

Qatar, often ranked among the saf-





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**Nearly half  
of the Gulf's  
population consists  
of foreign workers,  
many from South  
Asia, whose  
labour has powered  
the region's  
spectacular  
economic growth for  
decades.**

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est countries in the Arab world, has long attracted large numbers of foreign workers. Many expatriates have enjoyed not only tax-free salaries but also a comfortable lifestyle shaped by the region's modern amenities and relatively mild winter climate.

That normalcy was abruptly disrupted when tensions escalated in the region, culminating in missile strikes targeting a major US military installation in Qatar. Although most of the missiles were intercepted by air defence systems and no casualties were reported, the incident sent shockwaves through expatriate communities.

Residents in Doha reported hearing loud explosions while emergency sirens echoed across parts of the city. At the luxurious Villaggio Mall, one of

the capital's most popular shopping centres, frightened shoppers rushed toward exits as security alarms blared. Video footage circulating on social media captured scenes of confusion and panic, including abandoned belongings left behind by people scrambling for safety. Parents were seen trying to calm terrified children as uncertainty spread across the usually tranquil city.

For many expatriates, especially those who have lived in the region for several years, such incidents evoke memories of earlier regional tensions. Attacks on energy infrastructure in 2019 and 2022 by Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen had already raised concerns about the vulnerability of Gulf states to regional conflicts. Those incidents affected key facilities in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, briefly disrupting global oil markets and reminding expatriates that geopolitical tensions could have direct consequences on their daily lives.

The Gulf's foreign workforce is diverse. It includes highly paid executives in finance and energy sectors as well as millions of labourers, primarily from South Asia, who construct and maintain the region's ambitious infrastructure projects. For many of them, employment in the Gulf represents a crucial economic lifeline —

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**For millions of Indian migrants, the Gulf continues to offer prosperity—but the region's volatile geopolitics is raising new concerns about security and long-term stability.**

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not only for themselves but also for families back home who depend on remittances.

Yet for many newcomers, the recent tensions represent their first close encounter with the realities of Middle Eastern geopolitics.

A banker living in the UAE reflected on how perceptions of risk differ among expatriates depending on how long they have lived in the region. "The reaction depends on how long you've been here," he said. "Some people who arrived recently were genuinely shocked. Even in Dubai, some newcomers were saying, 'Oh my God, I didn't sign up for this.'"

In response to the rising tensions, Gulf monarchies have called for restraint and diplomatic engagement to prevent a wider regional conflict. With numerous American military bases located across the Gulf, regional governments are keen to avoid being drawn into escalating confrontations between major powers.





Despite the missile incident, daily life in Qatar resumed quickly. Government services, including electricity and internet connectivity, remained uninterrupted, and authorities reassured residents that the situation was under control.

Still, the psychological impact was noticeable.

One expatriate living in Doha joked that if the spectacle of missiles streaking across the sky was meant as a display of military power, he would prefer “a safe London-type theatre performance instead.” Another expatriate described the atmosphere the following morning as “tense but relieved.”

“For a moment we were all wondering what was happening,” said a Palestinian-British-Canadian resident of the city. “But by the morning things seemed calm again, and the authorities managed the situation well.”

Some residents also pointed out that the incident, though alarming, was

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**Sirens, explosions, and panic in Doha briefly disrupted the calm of a city long seen as one of the safest in the Middle East.**

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minor compared to the devastation seen in other parts of the region, particularly in Gaza.

Nevertheless, uncertainty lingers. A British expatriate who has lived in Doha for more than two decades said that many of his colleagues were deeply unsettled by the events. “Fortunately, the US military base is located quite far from the city. But it is still unsettling. The uncertainty about the future is

definitely on everyone’s mind,” he said.

Several companies informed employees that business would continue as usual the following day, encouraging staff to report to work as normal. Yet behind the scenes, concerns about emergency preparedness were evident. In Dubai, some expatriates reportedly discussed contingency plans, including the possibility of travelling by road to neighbouring Oman if tensions escalated further.

For millions of migrant workers in the Gulf, such developments serve as a reminder that economic opportunity in the region is closely intertwined with geopolitical realities. The Gulf may continue to offer prosperity and employment to Indian migrants and other expatriates for decades, but its stability — once taken for granted — now appears more fragile than before. For Indian migrants and other expatriates, the question is no longer simply about opportunity, but more about security. ■

# INDIA'S MOMENT IN A FRACTURED GLOBAL ECONOMY

At a time when much of the world is facing economic uncertainty due to wars and supply chain disruptions, rising debt and inflation, India is emerging as a relatively stable and fast-growing economy. With growth rates of around 6–7 %, India today stands out among major economies and is increasingly seen as an important bridge between developed nations and the Global South. Yet this rise also comes with challenges. Imported energy, global market fluctuations and regional geopolitical tensions continue to test India's economic resilience. How India manages these pressures while sustaining growth will play a crucial role in shaping not only its own future but also the direction of the global economy.



BY B SHEKHAR

The author, based in Bengaluru, is our South India Bureau Chief.

In an era marked by geopolitical turbulence, fractured supply chains and persistent economic uncertainty, India has emerged as a rare point of stability. While advanced economies grapple with inflationary pressures and several developing nations confront mounting debt distress, India's trajectory stands out—not merely for its growth, but for the resilience that underpins it.

Today, India is widely viewed both as a major economic opportunity and as a geopolitical stabiliser. As the world's fifth-largest economy, it continues to post growth rates in the range of 6–7 percent, a pace that institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank regard as among the strongest for large economies. This performance is not accidental. It is sustained by strong domestic consumption, expanding public investment in infrastructure and a steady inflow of foreign capital—over \$90 billion annually in recent years.

Global advisory firms such as McKinsey & Company and PwC increasingly describe India as a “bridge economy.” It occupies a distinctive position between the developed world and the Global South. India participates actively in groupings like BRICS while simultaneously deepening strategic engagement through frameworks such as the Quad. This dual engagement reflects a broader evolution in India's foreign policy—from

traditional non-alignment toward a more pragmatic strategy often described as “multi-alignment.”

Such a posture has enabled India to navigate global fault lines with notable agility. Close engagement with Western economies continues to facilitate access to capital, technology and markets. At the same time, enduring ties with partners such as Russia have helped ensure continuity in areas like energy and defence during periods of global disruption. In a polarised international system, this diplomatic flexibility has become an important strategic asset.

**India is widely viewed both as a major economic opportunity as well as a geopolitical stabiliser. As the world's fifth-largest economy, it continues to post growth rates in the range of 6–7 %, a pace that institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank regard as among the strongest for large economies.**

Yet beneath this narrative of strength lie structural vulnerabilities that cannot be overlooked.

India's dependence on imported energy remains one of its most significant challenges. A substantial share of its crude

oil and liquefied natural gas requirements is sourced from abroad. Consequently, fluctuations in global energy prices—often triggered by geopolitical conflicts—have immediate consequences for inflation, fiscal balances and current account stability. Institutions such as the International Energy Agency have repeatedly highlighted this exposure.

Supply chain dependencies represent another layer of risk. From rare earth minerals to active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), India remains connected to complex global production networks. While the country is actively positioning itself as an alternative manufacturing hub—particularly as multinational firms seek to diversify away from China—it remains vulnerable to disruptions in global supply chains. Currency volatility and regional geopolitical tensions, especially along its northern borders with China, further complicate the strategic landscape.

Recognising these challenges, India has begun to pursue a deliberate strategy aimed at strengthening economic security. A central element of this approach is the push for self-reliance under the *Atmanirbhar Bharat* initiative. The objective is not economic isolation, but resilience—building domestic capacity in critical sectors such as defence manufacturing, electronics and semiconductors while remaining integrated

### The Rise of a 'Bridge Economy'

India's global position today reflects a rare blend of economic momentum and geopolitical agility. As the world's fifth-largest economy, it is projected to maintain 6–7 percent growth through the decade, according to estimates from institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Analysts at McKinsey & Company and PwC highlight several structural advantages driving this resilience:

- A large and expanding domestic market
- A young workforce and rising productivity
- Sustained infrastructure investment
- Rapid digital adoption

Annual foreign direct investment exceeding \$90 billion underscores continued global confidence in India's growth story.

Beyond economics, India is increasingly viewed as a "bridge economy"—linking advanced economies with the Global South. Its engagement in platforms such as BRICS and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue reflects a diplomatic approach that balances strategic partnerships across multiple geopolitical spheres



with global markets.

Energy diversification forms another important pillar of this strategy. India is rapidly expanding its renewable energy capacity, particularly in solar power, while also investing in emerging technologies such as green hydrogen. These initiatives are aligned with global sustainability goals promoted by institutions like the United Nations and aim to gradually reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Infrastructure development has likewise assumed strategic significance. Massive investments in highways, ports, rail-

way networks and logistics corridors are improving economic efficiency while enhancing India's integration into global trade flows. Initiatives such as the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor seek to establish new commercial routes linking Asia, the Middle East and Europe, offering alternatives to existing trade pathways and strengthening economic connectivity across regions.

Equally important is India's growing focus on digital sovereignty. Its digital public infrastructure—ranging from identity systems to real-time payment platforms—has been



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**Global advisory firms such as McKinsey and PwC increasingly describe India as a “bridge economy.” It occupies a distinctive position between the developed world and the Global South. India participates actively in BRICS and the Quad.**

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widely recognised as a model for scalable and inclusive development. By building robust digital ecosystems and strengthening control over data frameworks, India is addressing new dimensions of economic security that extend beyond traditional economic indicators.

Parallel to these efforts, India is deepening technology partnerships with advanced economies. Through initiatives linked to the Quad and other bilateral collaborations, the country is engaging in joint research and development in critical and emerging technologies, including semiconductors, artificial intelligence and telecommunications. The recent AI Impact Summit 2026 hosted by India reflected this ambition—to encourage domestic innovation while strengthening international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement in shaping the future of AI.

India’s growing prominence must also be understood against the backdrop of a shifting global economic order. Europe’s energy vulnerabilities, China’s structural economic

#### **The Road Ahead: Balancing Openness and Security**

India’s central challenge is balancing openness with resilience—remaining attractive to global capital and technology while safeguarding economic security. Key priorities include:

- Aligning foreign investment with national security concerns
  - Strengthening domestic institutions and regulatory capacity
  - Expanding trade partnerships across Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Africa, and Latin America
  - Ensuring growth remains inclusive and socially cohesive
- Ultimately, economic security is not only about growth numbers; it is about protecting livelihoods, social stability and long-term national resilience.

adjustments and fiscal stress across many developing economies have created strategic openings in the global system. According to assessments by institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, India is likely to play a central role in sustaining global economic momentum in the coming decade.

However, sustaining this trajectory will require careful calibration. India must continue attracting foreign investment while ensuring that such inflows remain aligned with national security priorities. It must deepen trade relationships across diverse regions—from ASEAN to Africa—while maintaining domestic macroeconomic stability. Perhaps most importantly, the benefits of growth must remain broadly distributed, safeguarding not only economic outcomes but also social and cultural cohesion.

Economic security, in this broader sense, extends beyond traditional macroeconomic indicators. It encompasses

### Building Resilience: India's Strategic Playbook

Recognising its exposure to global shocks—from energy volatility to supply-chain disruptions—India is pursuing a multi-layered strategy to strengthen economic security while remaining globally integrated.

**Self-Reliance with Openness:** Through the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, India is expanding domestic manufacturing in sectors such as defence, electronics and semiconductors, while continuing to welcome foreign investment and technology partnerships.

**Energy Transition:** Rapid expansion of solar power and new investments in green hydrogen aim to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels, aligning with global climate efforts supported by institutions like the United Nations.

### Why India Matters Now

The shifting global landscape has amplified India's significance.

- Europe continues to grapple with energy insecurity.
- China faces structural economic slowdown.
- Several developing nations are struggling with rising debt burdens.

Against this backdrop, India's combination of economic growth, political stability and strategic autonomy makes it a rare outlier.

Policy assessments by institutions such as the Asian Development Bank suggest that India could play a decisive role in sustaining global growth over the coming decade.

### Fault Lines Beneath the Growth Story

India's economic rise, though impressive, is not without vulnerabilities.

**Energy Dependence:** India still imports a large share of its crude oil, leaving the economy exposed to global price shocks—a concern frequently highlighted by the International Energy Agency.

**Supply Chain Exposure:** Despite efforts to expand domestic manufacturing, India remains tied to global production networks that can be disrupted by geopolitical tensions, particularly involving China.

**Currency Stability:** Managing exchange-rate volatility amid shifting global financial conditions continues to test policymakers.

**Regional Pressures:** Strategic rivalry with China adds another layer of economic and technological complexity.

**Infrastructure Push:** Massive investments in highways, ports, railways and logistics corridors are strengthening India's trade capacity. Initiatives such as the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor seek to create alternative routes linking Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

**Digital Backbone:** India's digital public infrastructure—often highlighted by the World Bank—is enabling financial inclusion, secure digital identity and efficient service delivery at scale.

**Technology Partnerships:** Cooperation through platforms like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue is deepening collaboration in semiconductors, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies.

**"When global growth is at 3 per cent, the economies of G7 countries are somewhere near 1.5 per cent. India is the model of high growth and low inflation. We are at a juncture where the world has seen many ups and downs - financial crisis, global pandemic. These situations in some way or the other challenged the world... today the world is full of uncertainties, but amid this our India is appearing in a different league. India is full of self-confidence. When the world talks about a slowdown, India tells stories of growth. When it faces a trust crisis, India becomes a pillar of trust"**

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi**



the ability of a nation to shield its citizens from external shocks, to provide stable livelihoods and to preserve its social fabric amid rapid global change.

India's journey, therefore, is not simply one of economic expansion. It is an exercise in

strategic balance—between openness and self-reliance, between global integration and national resilience. In an increasingly uncertain world, that balance may well become its greatest strength.

India's emergence as an economic anchor is neither accidental nor guaranteed. It is the outcome of deliberate policy choices, institutional continuity and pragmatic diplomacy.

For a world searching for stability, India presents a compelling model: not of isolation, but of strategic integration—anchored in self-reliance, diversified partnerships and adaptive governance. Whether it can sustain this balance will shape not only its own future, but potentially the contours of the global economic order as well. ■

## LONDON

# A JOURNEY THROUGH LIBRARIES, FAITH AND EMPIRE

Arriving in London from Exeter, the author embarks on a journey through some of the city's most compelling intellectual and cultural spaces— from the Aga Khan Library and the British Museum to the ISKCON temple and the Bengali neighbourhoods of Whitechapel. Along the way, libraries evoke memories of home, museums prompt reflections on history and preservation, and encounters with diaspora communities reveal the layered realities of faith, identity and empire in one of the world's most complex cities.

**BY RAJEEV KUMAR**

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The author is a researcher and a teaching fellow at Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul (Türkiye).



**M**y London adventure began when I arrived at Waterloo Station from Exeter. From there, I travelled to King's Cross, eager to explore some of the city's most significant cultural and intellectual landmarks.

#### **Aga Khan Library**

My first stop was the Aga Khan Library, a place that left me deeply impressed. Although I have visited many libraries before, this was the first time I witnessed such meticulous archiving and preservation of scholarly resources. The care taken to catalogue, protect, and present these collections was inspiring. Every shelf and archive seemed to reflect a commitment to safeguarding intellectual heritage.

From there, I made my way to the nearby British Library. The building itself felt like a temple of knowledge. Its grand architecture, expansive halls, and quiet scholarly atmosphere conveyed the scale of learning that it housed. It was fascinating to realise how much history, memory, and knowledge were preserved within those walls.

#### **Gandhi, Protest, and SOAS**

After spending some time there, I walked towards the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). On my way, I passed Gandhi Park and the statue of Mahatma Gandhi. Nearby, a peaceful protest advocating for Palestine was taking place in the park, positioned almost symbolically between the church and the university.

The scene struck me as profoundly London: historical memory, political activism, and academic inquiry coexisting in the same space. It reminded me that this city constantly brings the past and present into conversation with one another.



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**This was the first time I witnessed such meticulous cataloguing, archiving and preservation of scholarly resources at the Aga Khan Library. Every shelf reflected a commitment to safeguard intellectual heritage.**  
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#### **A Story at the Aga Khan Library**

Earlier that day, while at the Aga Khan Library, I wrote to my mentor, Professor Bruce B. Lawrence. He had asked me to keep him informed about my travels so that he could guide me. Though he was in North Carolina in the United States, his intellectual presence felt close.





My email was simple:

“Today I am in London and have come to visit the Aga Khan Library. Please let me know if you have any suggestions.”

Within minutes, he replied:

“Dear Rajeev,

If you are visiting the Aga Khan Library, try to meet Omar Ali-de-Unzaga, the Academic Coordinator of the Qur’anic Studies Unit at the Institute of Ismaili Studies. He is a wonderful scholar and a great human being, as are most of the folk at the Ismaili Institute.”

Unfortunately, Omar Ali-de-Unzaga was not there that day, so I could not meet him. As for Professor Bruce himself, I could say so much about him that it might fill an entire book.

At the library I met Imran Visram. I was immediately struck by his name—so beautifully syncretic, reflecting the cultural texture of South Asia. Imran had also participated in the Exeter workshop but had left a day earlier, promising that we would meet in London.

Having lived in the city while completing his PhD at Oxford, he knew the place well. He kindly guided me through the library and introduced me to several staff members.

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**The nearby British Library felt like a temple of knowledge. Its grand architecture and expansive halls were fascinating to realise how much history, memory, and knowledge were preserved within those walls.**

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We then walked to a cultural exhibition on the ground floor. The display focused on the Aga Khan and his trustees, as well as Ismaili literature—particularly the *Ginān Sharif*, devotional compositions originally written in Gujarati.

One of the volumes was titled *Ginān Sharif*, echoing the familiar reverence associated with *Qur’an Sharif*. As we stood there, a soft recording played through a speaker: a woman’s voice singing a *ginān* without musical accompaniment.

It was Yasmin Rayani’s “*Sahebji Tu(n) More Man Bhaave.*”

Her voice reminded me of my mother. Something about the softness of the recording and the purity of the voice touched something deep within me. Suddenly I was transported back to my home in Bihar—memories of my mother singing quietly while doing household work, calling out to me.

For a moment, London disappeared. I realised how far away I was from her, yet how close she remained in my thoughts.

### The British Museum

My next destination was the vast British Museum. I was curious to see how the British had collected and preserved artifacts from around the world—an enterprise that has often

drawn criticism but is undeniably impressive in scale.

I was also reminded of how writers such as Percy Bysshe Shelley had drawn inspiration from these ancient civilizations when composing poems like *Ozymandias*.

Inside the museum, I explored galleries dedicated to Chinese, Korean, Indian, and Greek civilizations. The Egyptian and Mesopotamian sections were particularly captivating. The Assyrian artifacts, with their detailed reliefs and monumental presence, seemed to bring ancient empires back to life.

One fascinating section displayed the evolution of watches and timekeeping devices. Many of these centuries-old watches were still functioning, quietly ticking away as if preserving the continuity of human ingenuity.

The ancient chess sets also caught my attention. They



showed how a game that originated in South Asia had evolved across cultures and centuries.

The scale of the museum’s architecture was overwhelming. Its interiors were vast, with monumental facades and galleries that seemed endless. As I walked through the exhibits, I found myself reflecting on the British commitment to preservation and documentation.

At times I thought: perhaps we in South Asia have not always preserved our history with the same institutional discipline. We often live intensely in the present, while archives and preservation demand a long-term vision.

Despite its enormous scale, the museum is open to the public free of charge—an extraordinary gesture for such a global institution.



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**Inside the British Museum, I explored galleries dedicated to Chinese, Korean, Indian, and Greek civilizations. The Egyptian and Mesopotamian sections were particularly captivating.**  
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#### **The ISKCON Temple**

After leaving the museum, I visited the ISKCON temple, guided by a friend. The temple was lively and welcoming, filled with devotional music and community interaction.

I enjoyed a simple but delicious Indian meal there. Later, I joined a bhajan session where devotees sang together with great enthusiasm. The atmosphere was powerful: British, African, European, and Indian participants were all immersed in the same spiritual rhythm.

For my research, this visit was valuable. Watching the rituals and performances in person revealed nuances that no video recording could capture.

The next morning I attended a storytelling session followed by a question-and-answer discussion. While I appreciated the spiritual teachings, I also noticed how fundraising activities were woven into the programme. It made me reflect on how religious institutions often balance spiritual missions with practical financial needs.

I spoke with several devotees. Interestingly, when I asked them about the Bhakti movement, many were unfamiliar with the term. But when I mentioned Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, they immediately recognised the reference.

I had a long conversation with a devotee from the Philip-





pires and later with an Indian devotee who argued that the Vedas represent the ultimate source of knowledge. According to him, true understanding and the right path could only emerge from Vedic wisdom.

I asked him a philosophical question: if our senses can deceive us and fail to provide reliable knowledge, how can we be certain that we correctly understand even the Vedas?

Our discussion was becoming increasingly engaging, but I had to leave for another meeting. We exchanged phone numbers so the conversation could continue later.

One thing I appreciated was that no one asked me my surname.

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**My next destination was the vast British Museum which had curiously collected and preserved artifacts from around the world—an enterprise that has often drawn criticism but is undeniably impressive in scale.**

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#### **Whitechapel and the Bengali Diaspora**

Later I travelled to Whitechapel to meet a Bengali acquaintance named Nayeem. Although we had known each other from a distance, this was our first meeting in person.

As soon as I stepped out of Whitechapel Station, I noticed Bengali signs and heard Bengali conversations around me. Even the station walls carried writing in the Bengali script. It felt like entering a different cultural zone within London.

Nayeem showed me around the neighbourhood, explaining the history of the Bengali diaspora there. Diaspora communities, I realised, often recreate cultural spaces that preserve their identity while integrating into the larger city.

The East London Mosque stood at the centre of this community. It is among the largest mosques in Europe and was built largely through the efforts of the Bengali diaspora.

Next to the mosque stood a large complex owned by the mosque itself. It generates revenue through shops, guest accommodations, and conference facilities, helping sustain the institution.

Inside, several programmes were underway. A Somali women's group was conducting courses, while another hall hosted an exhibition on the Bosnian genocide.

The atmosphere reflected a community actively engaged with both faith and social concerns.

#### **Reflections on Spiritual Communities**

During my travels, I noticed different approaches to distributing religious texts.

At one place, copies of the Qur'an were freely offered along with water and snacks. Many young people willingly picked up copies. The experience felt welcoming and open.

At another place, the Bhagavad Gita appeared to be distributed freely but later involved a request for donations. It made me reflect on the different ways communities sustain their activities.

These observations led me to think about how religious communities negotiate the line between spiritual commitment and institutional sustainability.

#### **The Architecture of Empire**

As my London journey came to an end, I felt both admiration and reflection.

The scale of the city was overwhelming: enormous buildings, carefully designed streets, and structures that seemed to embody administrative power. Many of these buildings were constructed even before the Industrial Revolution, yet they were already monumental and functional.

Some were built to house military officers, others to manage administrative systems or train soldiers. Each structure seemed to serve a clear purpose within the machinery of empire.

Standing before these buildings, I realised something profound: civilizations are not built only through ideas. They are also built through space, architecture, and the confidence to create enduring structures.

The British possessed this confidence. Their architecture, institutions, and planning reflected a belief in their own civilizational mission.

It helped me understand how imperial powers once justified ideas such as the "white man's burden." Whether one agrees with that worldview or not, it was supported by visible structures of authority and organisation.

Seeing London in person was therefore more than sightseeing. It was an encounter with history, power, and the material forms through which civilizations express their ambitions.

As I stood there, I found myself thinking: architecture becomes thought, and thought becomes power. ■

## THE SWADES EFFECT

# WHY ARE NRIS RETURNING HOME

For decades, India's brightest minds left for global opportunities. Now, a reverse migration is underway—NRIs are returning, drawn by family, culture, and India's booming economy. This is the Swades Effect: a profound shift where home becomes the ultimate destination.



BY DR VENKATESH  
GANAPATHY

Based in Bangalore, the author is a management educator.

For decades, the trajectory of Indian migration seemed clear and unwavering: gifted students and ambitious professionals would leave their homeland in pursuit of top-tier education, high-paying jobs, advanced infrastructure, and expansive global opportunities. India's brightest talents—engineers, doctors, researchers, and entrepreneurs—found themselves increasingly settling in North America, Europe, Australia, and the Gulf, building successful careers and raising families far from the land of their birth. Yet something remarkable and unexpected is happening now. A growing number of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), once firmly rooted abroad with little intention of leaving, are not just contemplating a return home—many are actively acting on it. A subtle but meaningful reversal, known as the Swades Effect, is taking shape: Indians are returning to India, drawn by deep family ties, rich cultural heritage, emerging opportunities, and an evolving sense of national identity that feels more compelling than ever.

## A Shift in Global Indian Priorities

Recent surveys paint a compelling and data-driven picture of this emerging trend. A significant proportion of NRIs living in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Singapore now state that



returning to India is an integral part of their retirement plans or broader life strategies. For instance, in one detailed survey, around 70–80% of NRIs from these countries indicated they were seriously considering moving back home in the long term, particularly as they plan for retirement, closer family

life, and an overall better quality of life that aligns with their roots.

This is not merely nostalgic rhetoric or idle daydreaming. Many NRIs are taking concrete steps toward permanent relocation: investing in property across India's growing cities, enrolling their children in reputable Indian schools, or architecting careers that effectively straddle global expertise and domestic markets. There are compelling practical reasons fueling this shift. India's rapid and sustained economic growth has positioned it as one of the world's fastest-expanding major economies, with GDP projections continuing to outpace global averages. Sectors like information technology, e-commerce, digital finance, healthcare innovation, and the booming startup ecosystem now offer career opportunities that rival—and in some cases exceed—those found abroad, complete with competitive salaries and equity stakes. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a global catalyst, triggering a widespread reassessment of life priorities for Indians overseas. It pushed many to prioritize family closeness, strong community connections, and a genuine sense of



rooted identity over the isolation of distant career ambitions and professional ladders.

For many NRIs, the primary motivator remains proximity to aging parents and the chance to engage in meaningful family life on a daily basis. Common themes in personal accounts from returnees include a profound yearning for home-cooked meals infused with traditional spices, participation in cultural traditions and festivals, and a simpler, more uncomplicated life free from the constant visa uncertainties, high costs of living, and subtle cultural alienation abroad. Stories shared on platforms like LinkedIn, Reddit, and Instagram by NRIs who have moved back from the United States frequently highlight tangible benefits such as quality time with parents, enjoying affordable lifestyle amenities like domestic help and fresh produce, and reconnecting with the deep-rooted cultural values that provide emotional anchor.

#### **The Cultural Mirror: Swades**

The Indian film *Swades*, starring Shah Rukh Khan, tells a fictional but deeply resonant story that mirrors this

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**Aging parents, home-cooked meals, and cultural festivals attract NRIs back to the country, without any visa woes, foreign degrees' attraction, and travel costs.**

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very phenomenon. In the film, Mohan Bhargava, a successful Indian scientist working at NASA, returns to his remote village in India to find his childhood nanny and soon confronts the harsh realities of rural life, including poverty and lack of development. Instead of returning to his prestigious job and global lifestyle, he chooses to stay, dedicating himself to initiatives like rural electrification, education, and social upliftment that transform the community.

This narrative—artfully balancing personal ambition with a profound sense of duty to one's homeland—

strikes a deep chord with the contemporary reality of returning NRIs. Like the protagonist of *Swades*, many find that the emotional rewards of being home, surrounded by community, and contributing directly outweigh the allure of international prestige, higher compensation, and material comforts. The film's emotional core lies in its nuanced portrayal of identity: being Indian is far more than a passport status; it is a lived experience encompassing a bundle of relationships, shared memories, and inescapable responsibilities that many NRIs ultimately cannot—or choose not to—relinquish. This explains why the idea of returning, whether after a distinguished career abroad or after raising children overseas, increasingly appeals to so many. The Swades Effect resonates so powerfully because it reflects a universal human truth: home is not merely a physical location on a map but a vital space of belonging, purpose, and authentic fulfillment.

#### **Real-World Returnees: From Corporate Careers to Social Innovation**

While *Swades* offers cinematic inspiration, reality delivers even more

impactful examples of Indians returning from abroad to make significant contributions. One prominent figure is Ramesh Ramanathan, who left a successful career in investment banking in New York and London in the late 1990s. Together with his wife Swati, he founded Janaagraha, an organization based in Bangalore dedicated to improving urban governance and quality of life in Indian cities through citizen-centric reforms. The core idea was profoundly

vast and dynamic market potential. Others focus on education reform, healthcare accessibility, environmental sustainability projects, or rural development initiatives. Although comprehensive data on individual returnees is still emerging from ongoing studies, media reports and surveys consistently highlight family, culture, and opportunity as key drivers. For example, at least one affluent family planned to relocate back to Coimbatore after 25

ing—economically vibrant, socially dynamic, and culturally influential. With its status as a major global economy, robust democratic framework, and expanding middle class, India now provides fertile ground for NRIs to build fulfilling lives and careers without permanent settlement abroad.

Second, the return of skilled professionals in technology, business, healthcare, and policy significantly bolsters India's human capital. These individuals bring back international know-how, valuable networks, and diverse perspectives that enrich institutions and spur industry upgrades, acting as bridges for international partnerships.

Third, the trend marks a transformation in Indian aspirations: success is increasingly defined domestically rather than by foreign validation. As India ramps up investments in higher education, research hubs, startup ecosystems, and lifestyle infrastructure, the incentives to stay or return grow ever stronger.

However, real challenges persist, including infrastructure inconsistencies, bureaucratic hurdles, and socio-cultural readjustments for long-term expats. Professional skills often need localization, and family dynamics may require time to realign. Still, these are increasingly outweighed by India's economic surge, entrepreneurial freedoms, and evolving social environment.



simple yet ambitious: apply international experience and professional rigor to foster systemic change at home, from better public services to participatory urban planning. Janaagraha has evolved into a leading voice advocating for transparency, accountability, and effective public participation in civic matters.

This story exemplifies a burgeoning group of Indian returnees who not only choose to live in India but serve as catalysts for social innovation and nation-building efforts. Their unique ability to bridge global best practices with local contexts drives meaningful progress across various fields.

There are countless other notable stories as well. Many NRIs return armed with global business networks, launching startups that integrate world-class technology with India's

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### India's economic surge in IT, start-ups, e-commerce, and healthcare now rivals global opportunities, pulling talent back.

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years in the United States, mainly to be closer to aging parents and ensure their children receive a grounded Indian upbringing steeped in tradition.

#### Is the Trend a Good Sign for India?

The growing inclination among NRIs to return is a positive signal across multiple dimensions. First, it underscores India's strengthening global position-

#### The Swades Effect: Identity, Impact, and Belonging

The Swades Effect surpasses simple homesickness. It represents a rebalancing of priorities: global pursuits versus rooted identity, career peaks versus family depth, individual wins versus communal purpose.

NRIs returning to raise families, care for parents, start ventures, or drive change reflect a cultural shift. Diaspora life is fluid now, with India's pull intensifying.

To be Indian once meant abroad success was paramount. Today, impact in India is equally aspirational.

In a competitive world, NRI returns affirm India's rising confidence, culture, and capabilities. Home is a deliberate choice. ■

## THE CO-ORDINATION CLUB

# 45 YEARS OF SELFLESS EMPOWERMENT

For 45 years, the Co-ordination Club has defied Bihar's job scarcity with selfless peer power. Born in 1981 from a founding octet's grit, this free, volunteer-driven hub has empowered 1,000+ careers through rotating learning, unbreakable camaraderie, and a motto: "Help us to help you."

Discover how coordination conquers odds.



BY SATISH SINGH

A Mumbai-based columnist, the author currently serves as an Assistant General Manager with SBI.

The Co-ordination Club embodies coordination at its core—nurturing harmonious relationships, promoting deep mutual understanding, and

sparking collective growth among its diverse members. These foundational elements have sustained the club's vibrant energy and propelled its progressive mission forward through economic hardships, venue shifts, societal changes, and internal tests of resolve over four remarkable decades. What began as a small act of defiance against Bihar's job scarcity has blossomed into a beacon of self-reliance, proving peer power can rival any institution.

### Born from Bihar's Harsh Realities

Bihar's persistent underdevelopment—scarce industries, migration pressures, and heavy reliance on government jobs—creates a pressure cooker for ambitious youth. In 1981, against this unforgiving backdrop, a determined band of lower- and middle-class students united with a dual mission: targeting competitive exams for railways, banking, paramilitary forces, state services, and civil services, while building eloquent communica-



tion, magnetic personalities, and iron-clad confidence. Their timeless motto, “Help us to help you,” distills this philosophy of reciprocal empowerment—give knowledge, receive growth.

The founding octet—Mr. Amrit Pal Singh, Mr. Sanjaya Nand, Mr. Nessar Ahmed, Mr. Amresh Narayan Lal, Mr. Ajay Kumar Srivastava, Mr. Arun Kumar Singh, Mr. Thakur Kausal Rama, and Mr. Ravi Shankar—spotted a painful void. Elite coaching centers with fees running into thousands locked out the masses. Driven by equity and urgency, they created a free, community-led platform that has launched over 1,000 careers.

**The Inaugural General Secretary: A Beacon of Selfless Vision**

Enter Mr. Amrit Pal Singh, whose pivotal role defined the dawn. Not an exam aspirant himself, he stepped up as first General Secretary, fueled by pure passion for collaborative learning. “When talents converge, barriers crumble,” he often declared during those early huddles. By pooling strengths—math whiz teaching calculus, English champ drilling essays—the club bridged divides from day one. Rapid successes followed: early members securing railway tickets and bank clerkships, then mentoring the next wave.

**A Lineage of Elected Leaders Driving Evolution**

Member-elected General Secretaries became the heartbeat. Pioneers Mr. Sanjaya Nand and Mr. Arun Kumar Singh cemented bedrock operations—regular attendance, resource pooling. Mr. Nessar Ahmed revolutionized engagement with “Mr. Quiz” (high-energy trivia sharpening recall under pressure) and “Mr. Eloquent” (speech clinics battling stage fright). Subsequent leaders layered sophistication: mock interviews mimicking UPSC interrogations, subjective essay marathons, full-day simulations with scorecards. “Those pressure-cooker mocks felt like the real exam; they built my mental armor,” recalls alumnus Mr. Deepak Kumar, now an IPS officer leading anti-corruption drives.



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**In 1981, eight determined students from modest backgrounds from Bihar launched a free platform against elite coaching barriers. Targeting railways, banking, and civil services, they built confidence and skills via pooled talents—launching over 1,000 careers, proving equity unlocks potential.**  
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**Venue Odyssey: Grit Through Adversity**

Humble origins unfolded in cramped homes, then open-air parks. Space limits forced a shift to Vir Kunwar Singh Park beside Patna Railway Station. Picture it: monsoon downpours soaking notes, blistering summers sapping energy, relentless train whistles drowning debates. Yet this forged unbreakable camaraderie. Breakthrough arrived in 1982: Gait Public Library & Institute granted a proper hall. The March 1, 1982 kickoff session ignited exponential growth—attendance doubling quarterly.

Surging numbers prompted Mr. Sanjaya Nand’s savvy proposal: an evening wing launched September 12, 1983, laser-focused on spoken English fluency, body language mastery, and interview poise. Dual tracks now serve hundreds weekly, blending civil service rigor with banking precision.



### The Heart: Revolutionary Rotating Participatory Learning

Ditch passive lectures—the club’s genius is rotation. Each session’s volunteer host crafts dynamic agendas: multiple-choice blitzes on general knowledge, fiery debates on policy hot buttons, probing group discussions on ethics, lightning impromptu speeches, collaborative brainstorms. “Sharing isn’t loss; it’s multiplication,” runs the lore. Shy newcomers evolve into confident anchors; everyone tastes leadership. Forty-five years on, it adapts fluidly—pivoting to Zoom during COVID, incorporating AI ethics debates today.

### Tribute and Milestones: The Vikas Memorial Legacy

Heartbreak struck in 1988: vibrant leader Mr. Vikas Kumar’s sudden passing left a void. In tribute, the annual marquee event reborn as “Vikas Memorial Quiz & Debate”—a high-stakes, 200-participant clash now refining logic, rhetoric,

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**Cramped homes to monsoon-soaked parks by Patna Station, then a 1982 library breakthrough. Dual day/evening wings now serve hundreds weekly, blending UPSC mocks with interview mastery—forging resilience through blistering summers and train-whistle debates.**

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**No lectures, just rotation: volunteer hosts lead quizzes, debates, ethics GDs, and impromptu speeches. Shy newcomers become leaders; it pivoted to Zoom in COVID and AI ethics today. “Sharing isn’t loss; it’s multiplication”—pure peer alchemy, zero fees.**

and teamwork. Beyond the event, it’s ritual—alumni return yearly, bridging eras. Founding DNA—cooperation, discipline, self-help—pulses through young stewards, even as pioneers retire.

### “Automatic Mode”: Free, Instructor-Free Excellence

Pure alchemy: no paid faculty, zero fees—just volunteer firepower. This “automatic” engine empowers the un-

derprivileged, landing 25–30 jobs yearly in government (railways, postal) and rising private sectors as Bihar industrializes. Self-funded for 45 years—no grants, no donors. “Our club, our rules,” members affirm proudly.

### Galaxy of Alumni Stars Lighting the Way

Tangible proof: 1,000+ employed, shattering barriers. Standouts include Mr. Ashok Chandra (MD & CEO, Punjab National Bank, crediting debate drills for boardroom command); Mr. Deepak Kumar (IPS); Mr. Sanjeev Kumar (Indian Postal Service); Shri Awadhesh Kumar Singh (Retd. Additional Commissioner, EPFO); globe-trotting entrepreneurs Shri Amrit Pal Singh (Ludhiana factories) and Thakur Kaushal Rama (New Zealand ventures); banking giants Ranjeev Kumar (Chief GM, Canara Bank), Ritesh Sinha (GM, SBI), Mritunjay Kumar (Sr. VP, Axis Bank), Rajesh Jha (Retd. Patna Head, Axis Bank), Keshava Kumar (Retd. DGM, Bank of India). Their rags-to-ranks tales fuel hope.

### Strategic Reunions: Battling Modern Hurdles Head-On

No permanent roof? Waning newbie fire? Alumni strike back via pan-India reunions: debut Mumbai, then Patna, Delhi, Gandhinagar, fifth at BKS Bandra (East) on January 24, 2026. Storytelling circles recharge: veterans share war stories—“We started broke, like you”—offering mentorship, funds, networks to the neediest.

### Enduring Relevance: Why This Model Conquers

This grassroots powerhouse prioritizes hands-on, career-ready learning—dual student-educator roles slashing rural unemployment. Retiree-led online classes (live mocks, 24/7 doubt forums) herald national scale. Outshining Super Thirty or Khan Sir? Deeper roots—no fees, no celebrity gurus, pure peer democracy. It ignites self-reliance, stabilizes families, elevates society from Bihar’s villages upward. Coordination crafts miracles—proving empowered communities conquer any odds. ■

# इस मानसिकता से बाहर निकलना होगा

भारत में जाति का प्रश्न इतिहास, राजनीति और सामाजिक न्याय—तीनों से गहराई से जुड़ा है। हाल में जेएनयू की कुलपति शांतिश्री धुलिपुड़ी पंडित के बयान ने इस बहस को फिर तेज कर दिया है कि क्या सामाजिक प्रगति के लिए केवल अतीत के अन्यायों को दोहराना पर्याप्त है, या अब समाज को पीड़ित मानसिकता से आगे बढ़कर प्रतिस्पर्धा, आत्मविश्वास और समरसता की दिशा में सोचना होगा। यह विमर्श इसी जटिल प्रश्न को नए संदर्भों में देखने का प्रयास करता है।



सुधांशु रंजन

लेखक एक वरिष्ठ पत्रकार, स्तंभकार, विपुल लेखक हैं जो हाल ही में दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी से सेवानिवृत्त हुए हैं और कई किताबें जिनमें *जस्टिस*, *ज्यूडोक्रेसी*, *एंड डेमोक्रेसी: बाउंड्रीज़ एंड ब्रीचेज़ (रूटलेज)* और *जस्टिस वर्सेज ज्यूडिशियरी: जस्टिस एन्थ्रोन्ड ऑर एंटैगल्ड इन इंडिया (ऑक्सफोर्ड)* प्रमुख हैं लिख चुके हैं।



**भा**रत में जाति एक अत्यंत संवेदनशील और विस्फोटक विषय है। इस विषय पर की गई कोई भी बयान/टिप्पणी अक्सर तीखी प्रतिक्रियाओं को जन्म देती है। हाल में जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय की कुलपति शांतिश्री धुलिपुड़ी पंडित के एक साक्षात्कार में दिए बयान ने एक नए विवाद को खड़ा दिया है। उन्होंने विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग द्वारा प्रस्तावित 'उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों में समानता को बढ़ावा देने के नियम, 2026' को अनावश्यक बताते हुए कहा कि दलित और अश्वेत समुदाय हमेशा स्वयं को पीड़ित बताकर या 'विक्टिम कार्ड' खेलकर आगे नहीं बढ़ सकते।

कुलपति के इस बयान की व्यापक आलोचना हुई और उनके इस्तीफे तक की मांग उठी। जवाब में उन्होंने कहा कि वे स्वयं बहुजन पृष्ठभूमि से आती हैं। यह पूरा विवाद एक बार फिर इस प्रश्न को सामने

लाता है कि क्या जाति संबंधी विमर्श को केवल अतीत के अन्यायों तक सीमित रखा जाना चाहिए, या उसे भविष्य की सामाजिक समरसता और आत्मनिर्भरता के संदर्भ में भी देखा जाना चाहिए।

जातीय व्यवस्था भारतीय समाज का एक गंभीर, निर्विवाद और दुखद अध्याय रहा है। जातिगत भेदभाव ने समाज के बड़े हिस्से को लंबे समय तक सामाजिक, आर्थिक और

शैक्षिक अवसरों से वंचित रखा। इससे हुए अन्याय और अत्याचारों की कठोरतम शब्दों में निंदा भी होती रही।

यह भी ध्यान देने योग्य बात है कि भारत की सामाजिक संरचना और इतिहास पश्चिमी समाजों से भिन्न है। बतौर उदाहरण, अमेरिका में दासप्रथा और नस्लीय व्यवस्था लंबे समय तक संस्थागत रूप में मौजूद था। वहां स्कूलों, बसों और सार्वजनिक



स्थानों पर श्वेत और अश्वेत लोगों के लिए अलग-अलग व्यवस्थाएँ थीं। बसों में बाकायदा बोर्ड लगा दिए जाते थे जिनके पीछे अश्वेतों को बैठना पड़ता था, और यदि श्वेत यात्रियों की संख्या बढ़ जाती तो उन्हें अपनी सीटें छोड़नी पड़ती थी।

अमेरिकी सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसलों में भी ये दोहरा आचरण दिखता है। 'ड्रेड स्कॉट बनाम सैंडफोर्ड' (1857) में अदालत ने भी गुलामी की व्यवस्था को संवैधानिक ठहराया। बाद में 'प्लेसी बनाम फर्ग्यूसन' (1896) के फैसले में नस्लीय पृथक्करण को 'अलग लेकिन समान' सिद्धांत के आधार पर वैध माना गया। लेकिन अंततः 'ब्राउन बनाम बोर्ड ऑफ एजुकेशन' (1954) में सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने इस व्यवस्था को असंवैधानिक घोषित कर दिया। तब इस निर्णय सुनाने वाले मुख्य

न्यायाधीश अर्ल वॉरेन का इतना विरोध हुआ कि उनके पुतले तक जलाए गए।

इन सब के विपरीत अमेरिकी अश्वेत समाज धीरे-धीरे अपने अंदर आत्मविश्वास और प्रतिस्पर्धा की भावना को मजबूत करता गया। पूर्व अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति बराक ओबामा भी अक्सर इस बात पर जोर देते रहे हैं कि पीड़ित मानसिकता किसी समुदाय को स्थायी प्रगति नहीं दे सकती। ओबामा फाउंडेशन द्वारा जारी एक वीडियो संदेश में उन्होंने कहा कि "विक्टिमहुड कोई मुद्रा नहीं है; सफलता उपहार के रूप में नहीं मिलती, उसे प्रयास और परिश्रम से अर्जित करना पड़ता है।"

ऐसा नहीं कि ओबामा ने अपने जीवन में भेदभाव का सामना नहीं किया। उन्होंने कई

बार कहा कि उन्हें लोग होटल में बैरा या नौकर समझ लिया करते थे। उन्होंने अपने अनुभवों को विभाजन की राजनीति की तौर पर नहीं बल्कि सामाजिक एकता के लिए इस्तेमाल किया। 27 जुलाई 2004 को बोस्टन में आयोजित डेमोक्रेटिक सम्मेलन में अपने प्रसिद्ध भाषण में उन्होंने कहा था "अमेरिका केवल नस्लों का समूह नहीं है — यह न तो 'ब्लैक अमेरिका' है, न टव्हाइट अमेरिका, बल्कि यह 'यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स ऑफ अमेरिका' है।" उनके इसी भाषण ने उन्हें वैश्विक पहचान भी दिलाई।

पर यहाँ पर प्रश्न ये है कि क्या भारत केवल बीते अत्याचारों का बार बार जिक्र कर जातिविहीन समाज बन पाएगा। यह सच है कि जातीय व्यवस्था ने कई तरह के अन्याय और अमानवीय व्यवहार

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इतिहास के अन्यायों को स्वीकार  
करना जरूरी है, परंतु केवल अतीत  
की पीड़ा को दोहराते रहने से  
जातिविहीन समाज नहीं बन सकता।  
● ●

को जन्म दिया पर समय के साथ साथ सामाजिक परिस्थितियाँ भी बदली है।

स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन के दौरान इस परिवर्तन की झलक दिखाई देने लगी थी। जवाहरलाल नेहरू ने 1937 में लिखा था कि भारतीय समाज तेजी से बदल रहा है — रेल यात्रा जैसे सार्वजनिक स्थानों पर अलग-अलग जातियों और वर्गों के लोग साथ बैठकर यात्रा करने लगे हैं। मतलब पारंपरिक सामाजिक ढांचा धीरे-धीरे ढीले पड़ने लगा है।

इतिहासकार पी. वी. काणे ने अपनी प्रसिद्ध पुस्तक धर्मशास्त्र का इतिहास में उल्लेख किया है कि वैदिक काल में जन्म के आधार पर जाति व्यवस्था उतनी कठोर नहीं थी जितनी बाद के समय में दिखाई देती है। उन्होंने देवापि और शंतनु का उदाहरण देते हुए बताया कि एक ही परिवार के दो पुत्रों ने अलग-अलग सामाजिक भूमिकाएँ निभाई — एक राजा बना और दूसरा पुरोहित। इससे यह यह प्रतीत होता है कि उस समय सामाजिक व्यवस्था पूरी तरह जन्म आधारित नहीं थी।

आधुनिक भारत में जाति प्रश्न पर चर्चा अक्सर राजनीतिक और वैचारिक ध्रुवीकरण का रूप ले लेती है। लेकिन यह भी विचार योग्य है कि यदि समाज को जातिविहीन बनना है, तो क्या केवल जातिगत संघर्षों और शिकायतों को दोहराते रहने से यह लक्ष्य प्राप्त होगा?

1969 में इंदिरा गांधी सरकार ने जी. पार्थसारथी की अध्यक्षता में एक समिति का गठन किया था जिसका उद्देश्य शिक्षा के माध्यम से राष्ट्रीय एकता को मजबूत करना था। समिति का विचार था कि स्कूलों के पाठ्यक्रमों से उन तथ्यों को कम किया जाए जो समाज में विभाजन को



बढ़ावा देते हैं। उस समिति के सदस्य रहे लेखक एस. एल. भैरप्पा ने अपने संस्मरणों में लिखा कि उन्होंने इस प्रस्ताव पर प्रश्न उठाया था कि क्या इतिहास के सत्य को छिपाना उचित होगा।

यह प्रसंग एक व्यापक सवाल उठाता है कि इतिहास और सामाजिक विमर्श में संतुलन कैसे बनाया जाए? यदि सांप्रदायिक घटनाओं को समाज में विभाजन का कारण मानकर पाठ्यक्रम से कम किया जाता है, तो जातिगत संघर्षों की निरंतर पुनरावृत्ति भी समाज में वैमनस्य पैदा कर सकती है।

इसका अर्थ यह नहीं है कि जातीय उत्पीड़न के इतिहास को भुला दिया जाए। पर आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि उसे सुधार और सामाजिक परिवर्तन के संदर्भ में देखा जाए, न कि स्थायी पीड़ित पहचान के रूप में।

आरक्षण व्यवस्था ने वंचित समुदायों को शिक्षा और सरकारी नौकरियों में प्रवेश का अवसर प्रदान किया जो की सामाजिक न्याय की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम है। लेकिन केवल आरक्षण के आधार पर उत्कृष्टता या नेतृत्व की भावना विकसित नहीं होती। समाज के हर वर्ग के युवाओं को प्रतिस्पर्धा, परिश्रम और आत्मविश्वास के माध्यम से आगे बढ़ना होगा।

आज उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों में छात्रों की आत्महत्या जैसी दुखद घटनाएं भी सामने आती रहती हैं। कई मामलों में इसे तुरंत जातीय दृष्टि से देखा जाता है, जबकि आंकड़े बताते हैं कि विभिन्न सामाजिक पृष्ठभूमियों के छात्र इन समस्याओं का सामना कर रहे हैं। इसलिए आवश्यक है की प्रत्येक घटना के सामाजिक, आर्थिक और मनोवैज्ञानिक कारणों की गहराई से

● ●  
**भक्ति आंदोलन से लेकर आधुनिक  
भारत तक, अनेक आवाजों ने यह  
कहा है कि मनुष्य की पहचान उसकी  
जाति नहीं, बल्कि उसकी क्षमता और  
कर्म से होनी चाहिए।**  
● ●

जांच किया जाए।

भारतीय समाज में जाति के विरुद्ध सबसे प्रभावशाली आवाजों में से एक भक्ति आंदोलन भी था। उस दौर में समाज अपेक्षाकृत अधिक रूढ़िवादी था, फिर भी संत कवियों ने समानता और भक्ति को जाति से ऊपर रखा। कबीर, संत रविदास (रैदास), नामदेव, चोखामेला, जनाबाई, सेन, धन्ना, पीपा और नाभादास जैसे संतों ने अपने काव्य और जीवन के माध्यम से यह संदेश दिया कि ईश्वर के सामने सभी मनुष्य समान हैं।

कबीर का प्रसिद्ध पद “जात-पात पूछै नहीं कोई, हरि को भजै सो हरि का होई” सदियों से भारतीय समाज को समानता का संदेश देता आया है।

इतिहास यह भी बताता है कि लोग सामाजिक अड़चनों के बावजूद अपनी प्रतिभा और मेहनत के बदैलत ऊंचाइयों तक पहुंचे। यह केवल किसी एक जाति या समुदाय तक सीमित नहीं रहा। हर समाज में ऐसे उदाहरण मिलते हैं जहां एक ही परिवार के कुछ सदस्य अत्यधिक सफल होते हैं जबकि कुछ पीछे रह जाते हैं।

इसलिए आवश्यक है की सामाजिक न्याय

के साथ-साथ आत्मविश्वास और प्रतिस्पर्धा की भावना को भी प्रोत्साहित किया जाए। समाज के वंचित वर्गों में यह विश्वास जगाने की आवश्यकता है की उनका भविष्य केवल अतीत की पीड़ाओं से निर्धारित नहीं है, तो इस से नई संभावनाओं के द्वार भी खुलेंगे।

साथ ही, सरकार और समाज दोनों को यह सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि किसी भी प्रकार का जातीय भेदभाव न हो। संविधान के अनुच्छेद 17 ने अस्पृश्यता को समाप्त कर दिया, जो भारतीय लोकतंत्र की एक महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि है। भविष्य में समाज को ऐसी दिशा में बढ़ना होगा जहां जाति का सामाजिक और राजनीतिक महत्व धीरे-धीरे कम हो जाए।

कुछ विशेषज्ञों का यह भी मानना है कि जातिसूचक उपनामों का सार्वजनिक प्रयोग कम हो जी इस दिशा में एक प्रतीकात्मक कदम हो सकता है। लेकिन उससे भी अधिक महत्वपूर्ण है शिक्षा, आर्थिक अवसर और सामाजिक संवाद के माध्यम से समानता की संस्कृति को मजबूत करना।

अंततः भारत की शक्ति उसकी विविधता में है। जाति का प्रश्न तब ही कम हो सकता है जब समाज भी अतीत के अन्यायों को स्वीकार करते हुए भविष्य की समानता और सहयोग की दिशा में आगे बढ़े। पीड़ित मानसिकता से बाहर निकलकर आत्मविश्वास, प्रतिस्पर्धा और सामाजिक समरसता की भावना को अपनाया ही एक विकशील भारत का सपना हाँसील कर सकता है जहां व्यक्ति की पहचान उसकी जाति से नहीं, बल्कि उसकी क्षमता और योगदान से तय हो। ■

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## UNDERSTANDING LIFE THROUGH THE STARS

Astrology is often viewed not merely as a means of predicting future events, but as a traditional system for interpreting patterns within human life. A Janam Kundli, or birth chart, is understood to map the positions of celestial bodies at the moment of a person's birth. Astrologers study these planetary alignments to suggest possible tendencies, challenges, and opportunities that may shape an individual's journey. Within this tradition, practices such as chanting mantras, offering charity, observing fasts, and wearing particular gemstones are recommended as ways to cultivate balance and harmonise one's life with the perceived rhythms of cosmic influence..



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With over fifteen years of dedicated practice in astrology, the author brings a deep engagement with classical astrological principles, offering interpretations that are thoughtful, grounded, and insightful.

## अप्रैल-2026 राशिफल

### मेष (Aries)

करियर: मेहनत का फल मिलेगा, रुका धन वापस आ सकता है।  
प्रेम: रिश्तों में सुधार होगा, साथी का सहयोग मिलेगा।  
स्वास्थ्य: तनाव से बचें।  
इस महीने आर्थिक उन्नति के अच्छे योग बन रहे हैं ॥

### वृषभ (Taurus)

करियर: कार्यक्षेत्र में बदलाव संभव।  
प्रेम: परिवार में शांति बनाए रखें।  
स्वास्थ्य: गुस्से पर नियंत्रण रखें।  
धैर्य से काम लेने पर सफलता मिलेगी।

### मिथुन (Gemini)

करियर: प्रमोशन या नई जिम्मेदारी मिल सकती है।  
प्रेम: रिश्तों में मधुरता बढ़ेगी।  
स्वास्थ्य: मानसिक संतुलन रखें।  
करियर में उन्नति के संकेत मजबूत हैं

### कर्क (Cancer)

करियर: काम में उतार-चढ़ाव रहेगा।  
प्रेम: परिवार का सहयोग मिलेगा।  
स्वास्थ्य: सेहत का ध्यान रखें।  
इस महीने स्वास्थ्य थोड़ा कमजोर रह सकता है।

### सिंह (Leo)

करियर: अचानक धन लाभ के योग।  
प्रेम: रिश्तों में सुधार होगा।  
स्वास्थ्य: तनाव से बचें।  
आर्थिक लाभ के अच्छे अवसर बन सकते हैं

### कन्या (Virgo)

करियर: मेहनत का पूरा फल मिलेगा।  
प्रेम: जीवनसाथी से सहयोग।  
स्वास्थ्य: सामान्य रहेगा।  
योजनाबद्ध काम करने से सफलता मिलेगी।

**तुला** (Libra)

करियर: नई योजनाएं सफल होंगी।  
 प्रेम: संबंध मजबूत होंगे।  
 स्वास्थ्य: संतुलित जीवनशैली रखें।  
 गुरु की कृपा से लाभ के योग।

**वृश्चिक** (Scorpio)

करियर: नए अवसर मिलेंगे।  
 प्रेम: प्रेम संबंध मजबूत होंगे।  
 स्वास्थ्य: मानसिक शांति रहेगी।  
 रचनात्मक कार्यों में सफलता मिल सकती है।

**धनु** (Sagittarius)

करियर: व्यापार में वृद्धि होगी।  
 प्रेम: परिवार में खुशी का माहौल।  
 स्वास्थ्य: अच्छा रहेगा।  
 संपत्ति व धन लाभ के योग।

**मकर** (Capricorn)

करियर: मेहनत ज्यादा करनी पड़ेगी।  
 प्रेम: रिश्तों में समझ जरूरी।  
 स्वास्थ्य: थकान हो सकती है।  
 खर्च अधिक रह सकते हैं।

**कुंभ** (Aquarius)

करियर: आय के नए स्रोत बनेंगे।  
 प्रेम: रिश्तों में सुधार।  
 स्वास्थ्य: सामान्य रहेगा।  
 आय वृद्धि के मजबूत योग।

**मीन** (Pisces)

करियर: प्रमोशन व सफलता।  
 प्रेम: रिश्तों में नजदीकी बढ़ेगी।  
 स्वास्थ्य: पुरानी बीमारी उभर सकती है।  
 पारिवारिक व करियर में अच्छे परिणाम मिलेंगे।

**निष्कर्ष**

अप्रैल 2026 में कई राशियों के लिए धन लाभ, करियर ग्रोथ और रिश्तों में सुधार के योग हैं, लेकिन कुछ राशियों को स्वास्थ्य और खर्चों पर ध्यान देना होगा।



ललितप्रसाद मथुरादत्त जोशी

कवि हिंदी में निरंतर अपनी कविताएँ प्रकाशित करते रहे हैं जिनकी कविताएँ 'साहित्यनामा' एवं 'अमर उजाला' में प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त, इनके दो काव्य-संग्रह *बढ़ता भारत* और *मानव किस ओर बढ़ रहा है* प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं।

## तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत

पथरीली है राह अगर तो,  
कोई न हो साथ अगर तो,  
तू मुश्किलों से घबराना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

भले ही दिशाएं तुझसे रूठी हो  
है आस अगर कुछ टूटी हो,  
तू उत्साह में कमी दिखाना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

यह घिरा अंधेरा कुछ पल का है,  
यह थमा सन्नाटा कुछ क्षण का है,  
तू यह अवसर खो जाना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

ना ही किसने तुझे राहें दिखायी हो,  
ना ही कभी तेरी पीठ थपथपायी हो,  
कर्तव्यों को अपने भूल जाना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

यह मिला अवसर क्षणार्थ है,  
मिलेगा जो परिणाम वही यथार्थ है,  
तू उसके लिए अभी से टूट जाना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

ये आँधी-तूफान थम जाएँगे,  
कष्टों के बादल ढल जाएँगे,  
तू लौटकर पीछे की ओर आना मत,  
तू राह छोड़कर जाना मत।

# BEAT THE HEAT WITH COOL GETAWAYS OF MADHYA PRADESH



Every summer, as the temperature of the plains climbs relentlessly, regular hill stations are rapidly packed with teeming millions, traffic snarls and rushed itineraries. For those seeking sanctuary from a sweltering summer, Madhya Pradesh offers a clutch of restorative choices - a collection of cool, forested highlands and elevated plateaus where the air is gentler, the landscapes expansive, and the experience deeply soothing. From forest towns to hidden valleys, the heart of India has destinations ideas for families, wellness seekers, and travellers craving calm over crowds.



## 1 Pachmarhi, Narmadapuram

Pachmarhi, nestled in the Satpura range, remains the state's most loved hill retreat. At a higher elevation, surrounded by dense forests and open meadows, it stays pleasantly cool even through peak summer. Forest walks punctuated by viewpoints like Dhoopgarh, gentle climbs, picnics near the Bee and Apsara Vihar Waterfalls, heritage-era stays, eco-resorts, and welcoming homestays make visitors wish for longer stays.

## 2 Satpura Tiger Reserve

Make the most of the off-season with a jeep-safari in the Satpura Tiger Reserve, with chances of tiger spotting much higher in the dry season. The adventurous can try their hand at canoe rides on the Denwa River, rock climbing, ATV bike rides and paragliding.

## 3 Tamia, Chhindwara

If Pachmarhi is the queen, Tamia is the secret sanctuary. Perched quietly on a ridge, Tamia offers uninterrupted

views, pine-scented air, and near-total escape from crowds. Life slows to nature's rhythm—birdsong at dawn, forest walks by day, tribal culture in the afternoon and glowing sunsets at Sunset Point. Tamia is ideal for wellness travel, with yoga-friendly surroundings and eco-resorts focused on simplicity and silence.

## 4 Patalkot, Chhindwara

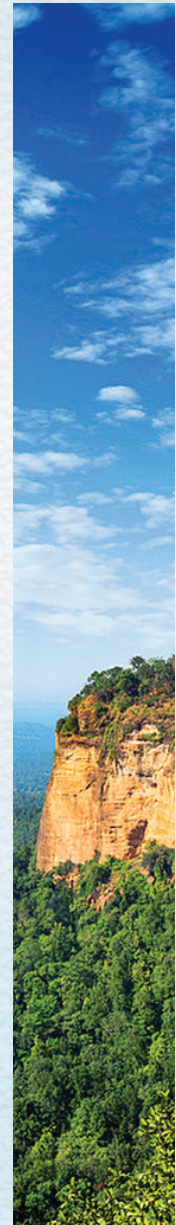
Nearby, Patalkot valley offers a naturally cool environment shaped by dense forests and geography. Take a trek to Raja Khoh. Nearby, the forested highlands around Seoni and the Pench region provide shaded landscapes, riverside breezes, and eco-resorts suited to relaxed summer breaks.

## 5 Amarkantak, Anuppur

Eastward, in the Maikal Hills lies Amarkantak, where spirituality and nature coexist effortlessly. Known as the origin of the Narmada, Son, and Johila rivers, its elevation and forest cover keep

summers mild. Morning walks, forest trails, and great viewpoints make it ideal for reflective, family-friendly, and wellness-driven holidays supported by eco-conscious stays and ashram-style lodges. A defining advantage of Madhya Pradesh's summer destinations is convenience, with easy access from Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and even Nagpur or Prayagraj—making them ideal for short, efficient vacations.

*As May marks vacation season, advance planning is essential. The best eco-resorts, luxury accommodation, homestays, and forest lodges fill quickly. Plan ahead using great itineraries curated by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board and ensure better choices, better views, and a calmer, more rewarding escape. For travelers who seek to skip the crowds, and seek a summer that is truly memorable, the hills of central India are all set to act as a balm for the soul.*



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