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EXCLUSIVE

THE SILENT ECONOMIC SLUMP Faulty Policies, Vanishing Self-Reliance and the Great Indian Slowdown

Cover story

Greedy Trump's Disastrous Gamble: Iran Shows Its Might as America Faces Siege in the Gulf War

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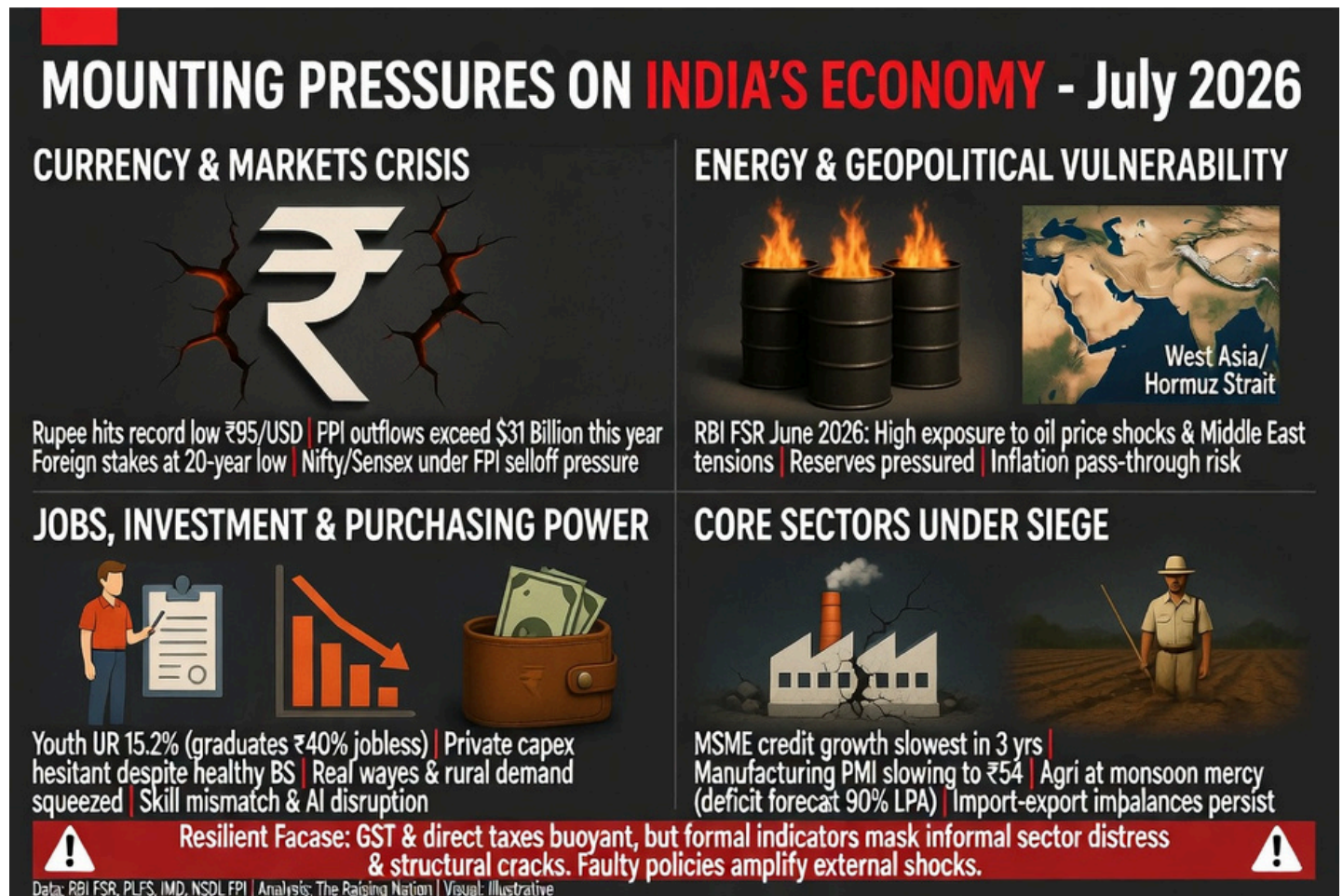


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THE SILENT ECONOMIC SLUMP Faulty Policies, Vanishing Self-Reliance and the Great Indian Slowdown

By Suresh Unnithan



"Making India self-reliant, five things are necessary — intent, innovation, investment, inclusion, infrastructure."

This was the vision Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out to steer India towards genuine Atmanirbhar Bharat. Six years later, India stands as the world's sixth-largest economy by nominal GDP. On paper, the growth story remains impressive, with official estimates placing real GDP expansion at around 7.6% for FY26. Yet the five pillars the Prime Minister himself identified as essential for self-reliance are steadily vanishing.

Intent has given way to policy inconsistency. Innovation remains aspirational. Investment, especially private capital expenditure, is hesitant.

Inclusion has been replaced by extreme wealth concentration, where a minuscule minority — less than one percent of the population — controls a disproportionate share of the economy. Infrastructure push continues, but its multiplier effect on jobs and productivity is limited. Worse, trust — the invisible foundation of any economy — is eroding rapidly. Corruption scandals, including repeated paper leaks in competitive examinations, have shattered the aspirations of millions of youth and damaged India's image as a merit-based society. This, combined with visible policy volatility and governance failures, has led both domestic and foreign investors to develop cold feet. Private investment remains subdued despite strong corporate balance sheets, while foreign portfolio investors have pulled out over \$31 billion this year alone.

At the grassroots, rural distrust is rising sharply. Farmers facing monsoon failures, stagnant incomes, and inadequate policy support are losing faith in the system. This distrust threatens not only social stability but also fiscal health, as it reduces compliance, increases demand for subsidies and waivers, and weakens the consumption base that has long supported headline growth.

This cover story examines how the five pillars have eroded, how specific EXIM policy failures have turned India into a consumer market for China, and how collapsing trust across rural India, youth, and investors is amplifying every economic stress.

The Vanishing Five Pillars of Self-Reliance

When the Prime Minister outlined the five essentials, the intent was to build a resilient, productive and inclusive economy. Today each pillar is under visible strain. Intent has been undermined by policy volatility and inconsistent signalling. Innovation remains weak, with low R&D spend and a widening skill mismatch. Investment has not materialised at scale. Private capex remains hesitant. Inclusion has been damaged by extreme wealth concentration in the hands of less than one percent of the population. Infrastructure, while visible, has not created broad-based employment or competitive ecosystems for MSMEs.

Wealth Concentration and Faulty Distribution

India's growth has produced a striking paradox: rising aggregate wealth alongside deepening inequality. A tiny fraction of the population now controls a commanding share of national wealth and economic decision-making power. This concentration has narrowed the consumption base, reduced the multiplier effect of growth, and left large sections — especially in rural and informal sectors — with stagnant or declining real incomes.

Fast-Growing Unemployment and the Collapse of Job Creation

Unemployment is rising at an alarming pace. PLFS data show the overall rate climbing to 5.5% in May 2026, with youth unemployment (15-29 years) at 15.2% and female youth rates higher still.

Among graduates, close to 40% are unemployed or underemployed. This is classic jobless growth. The economy is expanding on paper but failing to generate sufficient quality employment.

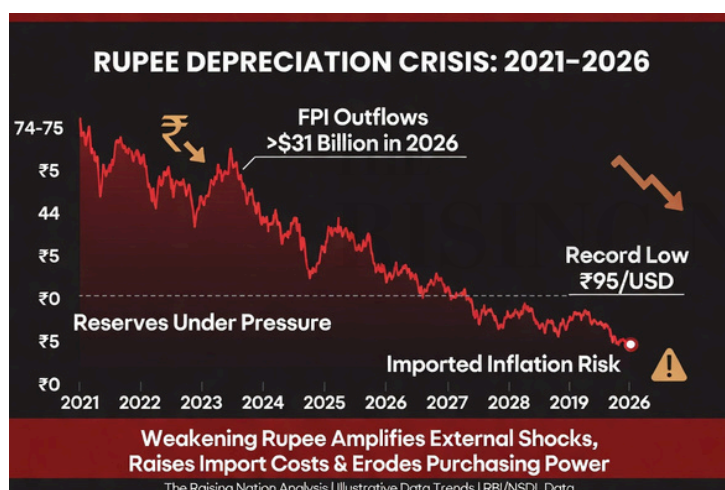
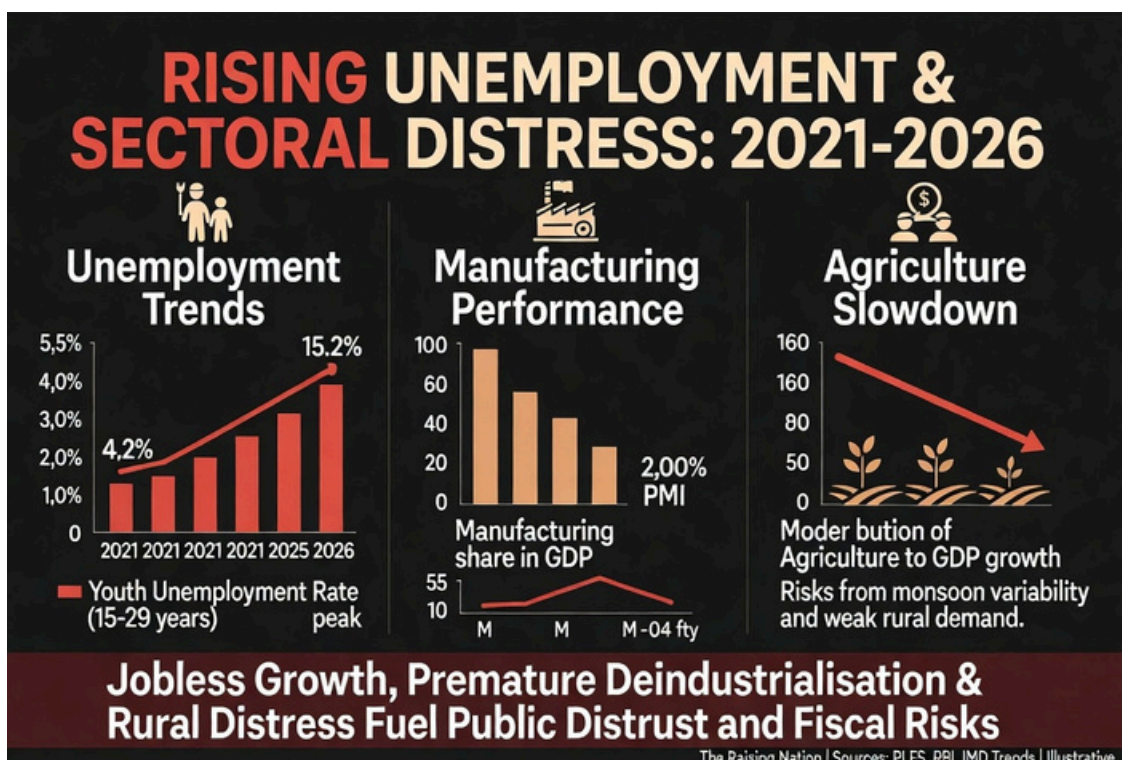
Agriculture Slowdown, Rural Distress and Rising Distrust

Agriculture, which still employs over 40% of the workforce, has slowed considerably. Structural problems — fragmented holdings, low productivity, inadequate irrigation and market access — combined with the current monsoon deficit forecast have created acute stress in rural India.

Farmer incomes are under pressure from rising input costs and uncertain output prices. Rural demand has weakened visibly. More dangerously, rural distrust in the system is increasing. When successive governments fail to deliver meaningful structural reforms and instead rely on reactive measures (MSP hikes, subsidies, waivers), farmers lose faith. This distrust has direct fiscal consequences: it fuels demands for larger subsidies, loan waivers and income support, straining state and central finances at a time when revenue growth is already under pressure from slowing consumption and investment. A disillusioned rural base also reduces voluntary compliance and weakens the political consensus needed for difficult reforms.

Manufacturing Distress and Premature Deindustrialisation

Manufacturing has been the weakest link. Its share in GDP has remained stuck around 15-16%. In several sub-sectors growth has turned negative or near-negative. PMI readings have slowed. India is witnessing premature deindustrialisation — shifting towards services and consumption even before building a robust industrial base. This has direct consequences for employment and for the viability of MSMEs that depend on manufacturing value chains.



EXIM Policy Failures: Turning India into a Consumer Market for China

One of the clearest signs of eroding self-reliance is India's growing dependence on imports, particularly from China. We import not only finished consumer goods but also capital goods, machinery, electronics components and critical raw materials for pharmaceuticals and medical formulations.

Specific EXIM policy failures have driven this outcome:

Currency Depreciation and External Vulnerability

The Indian Rupee has weakened dramatically, touching record lows near ₹95 per US dollar by 2026. This depreciation has been driven by sustained foreign portfolio investor (FPI) outflows exceeding \$31 billion this year alone. The weaker rupee has raised the cost of imports, amplified imported inflation, and put pressure on foreign exchange reserves as the RBI intervened to manage volatility.

This currency weakness directly erodes purchasing power, increases the burden on households and businesses dependent on imported goods and intermediates, and adds to the overall sense of economic vulnerability. It is both a symptom and an accelerator of the broader slump.

Wealth Concentration and Faulty Distribution

Inverted duty structures persist across sectors, making domestic manufacturing uncompetitive. Over-reliance on final assembly without upstream ecosystems — PLI boosted mobile and solar module assembly, but India continues to import 88-95% of critical components and remains heavily dependent on China for APIs (nearly 70% of requirements, exceeding 90% for several critical molecules). Ineffective response to Chinese pricing aggression — Chinese manufacturers countered PLI with targeted 30-33% price cuts on supported molecules. Weak and inconsistent export incentives — RoDTEP rates were halved in early 2026, and FTAs have produced large trade deficits.

High dependence on imports of capital goods and critical inputs continues to prevent the emergence of strong domestic ecosystems.

These failures have turned India into a major consumer market for Chinese manufacturing while weakening domestic production capabilities and hurting MSMEs and small traders.

Taxation Structure and Compliance Burden on MSMEs

The GST framework has imposed heavy burdens on small businesses through frequent changes, complex input tax credit rules, and aggressive scrutiny. Inverted duty structures and delayed refunds further block working capital, putting MSMEs at a disadvantage compared to larger players.

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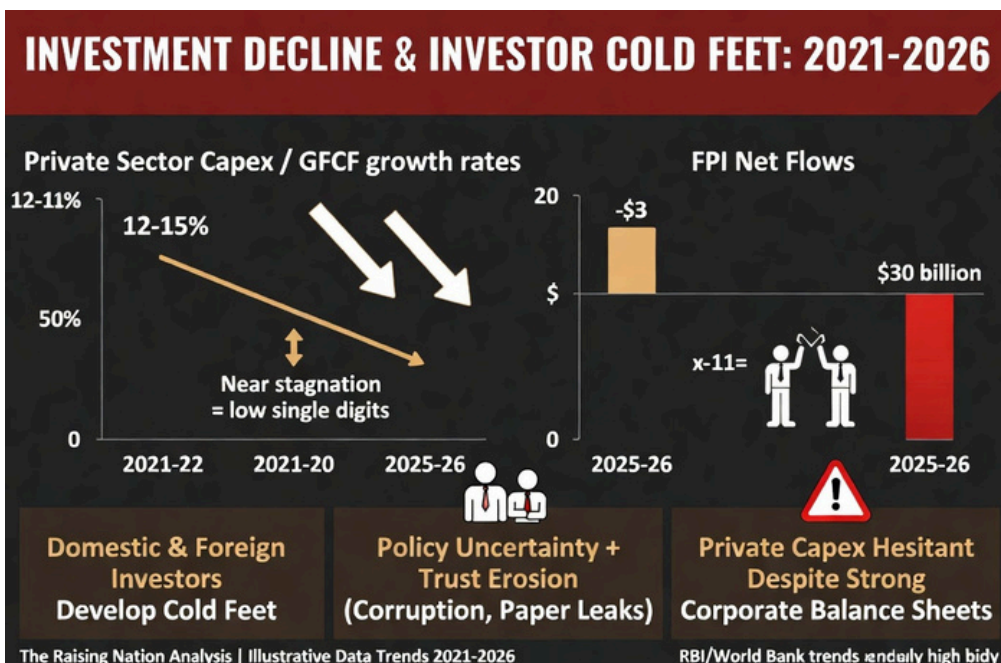
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Investor Cold Feet: Domestic and Foreign

Both domestic and foreign investors have developed cold feet. Private sector capex plans have moderated or dropped despite healthy corporate balance sheets. Policy uncertainty, regulatory unpredictability, weak demand signals, and eroding trust have made CEOs cautious. Foreign portfolio investors have withdrawn over \$31 billion this year, pushing FPI ownership to 20-year lows.

Corruption scandals, including repeated paper leaks in competitive examinations, have compounded this loss of confidence. They have shattered the aspirations of millions of youth and sent a signal that merit and rule of law are weakening. When investors perceive declining governance and institutional integrity, they withhold long-term capital.

The Government's Narrative Management and Diversion

Faced with these accumulating stresses, the official response has relied heavily on narrative management. Robust GST and direct tax collections are repeatedly cited as proof of resilience, even though they largely reflect formalisation of the organised sector while masking distress in the informal, rural and MSME economy.

External factors are emphasised as the main causes, while domestic policy shortcomings and the trust deficit receive less attention.

High-visibility welfare schemes and infrastructure launches are used to divert attention from structural unemployment, wealth concentration, EXIM failures, currency weakness, and eroding public trust.

Conclusion: The Reckoning Cannot Be Postponed

Prime Minister Modi's five pillars — intent, innovation, investment, inclusion and infrastructure — were the right framework. Today all five are under serious strain. Specific EXIM policy failures have increased dependence on China for capital goods and critical raw materials for medical formulations. The rupee has depreciated sharply, unemployment is rising fast, wealth is concentrating in fewer hands, agriculture is slowing, and rural distrust is deepening with direct fiscal consequences.

Corruption and institutional failures, exemplified by paper leaks, are eroding the trust of people and investors alike. Both domestic and foreign investors have developed cold feet. The current growth model is producing aggregate numbers without delivering broad-based prosperity, productive employment, or credible institutions. Unless there is an honest course correction — simplifying compliance and duties for MSMEs, protecting and promoting domestic value addition through calibrated EXIM measures, addressing wealth concentration, rebuilding trust through transparent governance, and delivering genuine structural reforms in skilling, agriculture and manufacturing — the silent slump will deepen into a broader crisis of confidence and capability.

Greedy Trump's Disastrous Gamble: Iran Shows Its Might as America Faces Siege in the Gulf War

By Suresh Unnithan & Nanditha Subhadra



Truth First, Fact Always

In the choking narrows of the Strait of Hormuz — the jugular vein of global energy — Donald Trump's insatiable greed and reckless ego have once again set the Gulf ablaze. Iran has seized the upper hand in this renewed war, not through brute conventional force, but through brilliant asymmetric naval mastery that has humbled American power projection. While Trump plays strongman on social media, the world economy burns, oil prices surge, and nations like India face an existential energy and economic crisis.

This is no distant geopolitical chess match. Attacks on commercial shipping, Iran's bold assertion of control over the strait, and the deadly cycle of U.S. strikes and Iranian retaliation have already spilled blood, strangled energy lifelines, and triggered market panic. For India — heavily dependent on Gulf oil and the hard-earned remittances of its diaspora — the fallout threatens runaway inflation, fiscal distress, and shattered livelihoods from coastal fishing communities to the farms of the hinterland and the bustling cities reliant on steady energy supplies.

The Raising Nation refuses to peddle convenient narratives. Here are the unvarnished facts.

Trump's Greed: The Spark of Renewed Conflict

President Trump's decision to escalate — abruptly declaring prior ceasefires "over," ordering fresh strikes on Iranian targets, and issuing ultimatums — stems not from strategic necessity but from personal bravado, political theatre, and a dangerous mix of ego and greed. His administration's response to incidents involving commercial vessels has only prolonged instability. Trump continues to portray Iran as weakening, yet the ground reality tells a different story: Tehran's calculated, resilient responses have handed it clear dominance in the most critical theatre — the Gulf's energy chokepoint. This is classic Trump — prioritising legacy, optics, and leverage at the expense of global stability. His self-styled "decimator" approach has backfired spectacular, turning a manageable tension into a full-blown regional crisis with worldwide repercussions.

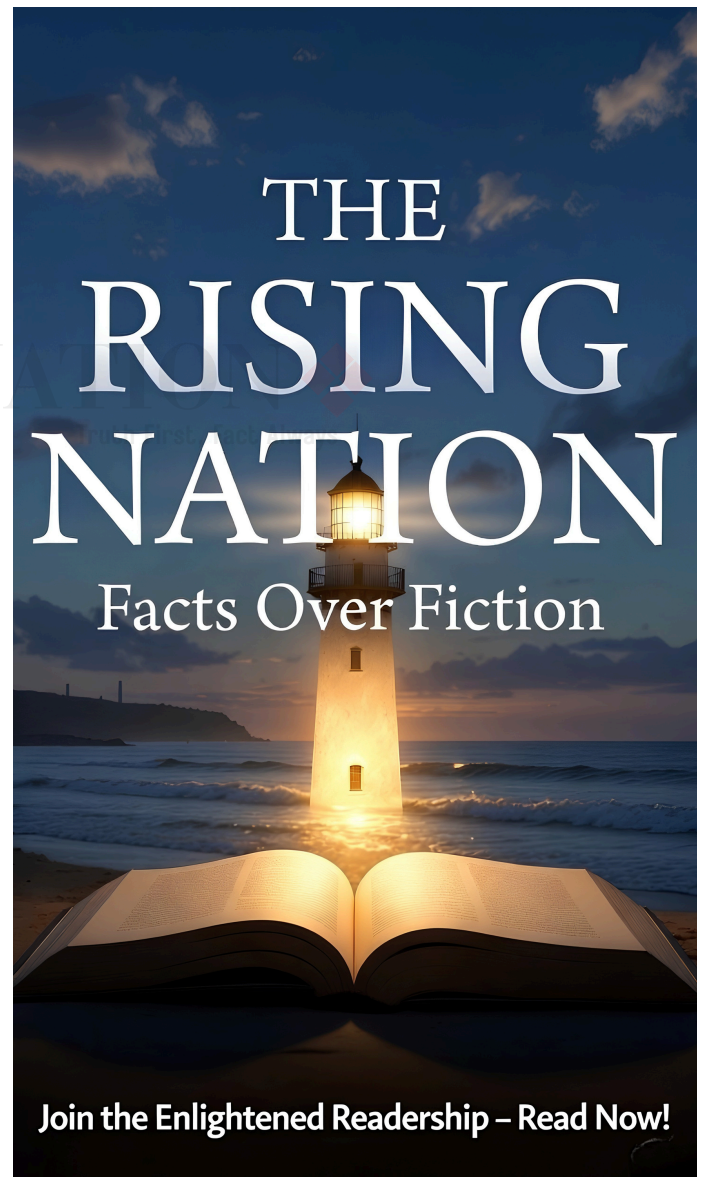
Analysts point to a pattern: decisions driven by domestic political calculations, personal vendettas, and an apparent belief that American military might can unilaterally reshape complex geopolitical realities without accounting for the asymmetric countermeasures available to determined adversaries. The result is not strength, but a cascade of unintended consequences that now threaten the fragile post-ceasefire equilibrium the world had hoped would hold.

Iran Dominates with Asymmetric Naval Mastery

Iran has taken the upper hand in the naval domain through highly effective asymmetric tactics. The IRGC deploys swarming fast-attack boats, drone swarms, coastal missile batteries, mine-laying operations, and highly mobile, low-signature forces that expertly exploit the strait's confined geography. These low-cost, high-impact methods allow Iran to threaten or disrupt major naval assets and commercial shipping while making large-scale U.S. retaliation costly and ineffective.

By asserting control over the Strait of Hormuz — through which roughly 20% of global oil and a significant share of LNG passes — Iran has transformed vulnerability into strategic strength. Recent actions, including responses to vessel attacks and restrictions on unapproved routing, vividly demonstrate this dominance. Conventional superiority in aircraft carriers and airstrikes struggles against dispersed, agile, and terrain-savvy forces. Trump's escalation has only amplified Iran's adaptability, cementing Tehran's upper hand in the ongoing confrontation.

This mastery is rooted in decades of preparation for exactly this scenario. Iran's forces have honed tactics that leverage the strait's narrow passages, where large warships become liabilities and small, fast units excel. Minefields can be laid rapidly, drones provide persistent surveillance and strike capability at minimal cost, and mobile launchers make targeting difficult. The psychological and economic impact of even sporadic disruptions far outweighs the tactical losses Iran may sustain, creating a multiplier effect on global markets.



Escalation and the Human Cost

The latest deadly cycle began with Iranian actions against shipping in the strait, prompting U.S. strikes on missile sites, command centres, and supporting infrastructure. Iran responded by targeting U.S. positions in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar. Casualties continue to climb: thousands dead in Iran with tens of thousands injured; dozens killed or wounded across Gulf states; American service members among the losses. Civilian suffering — from falling debris to damaged infrastructure — lays bare the human tragedy.

Trump's greed-driven decisions carry real blood. The lives lost in this renewed war demand accountability, not applause. Hospitals in the region are overwhelmed, supply lines for essential goods disrupted, and entire communities displaced or living under constant threat. The human cost extends

beyond immediate casualties to long-term health crises, environmental damage from oil spills or fires, and the erosion of regional stability that could take generations to rebuild.

Global Economic Inferno: Flames Fueled by Greed

The economic consequences are immediate and brutal. Disruptions in the Strait have driven oil prices sharply higher, with Brent crude surging amid fears of sustained restrictions. Global supply chains are reeling as tankers are forced into lengthy reroutes around the Cape of Good Hope, insurance premiums skyrocket, and energy markets descend into volatility.

Key Impacts:

- **Energy Shock:** Risk of oil crossing \$100+ per barrel, crippling importers worldwide and triggering secondary effects in petrochemicals, plastics, and manufacturing.
- **Inflation and Markets:** Soaring fuel, transport, and insurance costs are feeding broad-based inflation. Global growth forecasts have been slashed by major institutions.
- **Trillions at Risk:** Prolonged conflict could inflict \$1.3–3.5 trillion in annual damage to the world economy through direct losses, reduced trade, and confidence erosion.
- **Supply Chain Fragility:** Industries from aviation to agriculture face higher input costs, leading to potential shortages and price spikes in everyday goods.

Even the United States faces higher consumer prices and ballooning war expenditures, yet Trump's approach continues to favour confrontation over resolution. Stock markets have reacted with sharp volatility, safe-haven assets like gold have rallied, and currencies of oil-importing nations have come under pressure. The interconnected nature of modern finance means that a crisis in one chokepoint ripples across continents, affecting everything from pension funds in Europe to small businesses in Asia.

India Under Siege: Oil, Remittances, Rupee, and Human Impact

For India, the crisis strikes at the heart of economic stability. With nearly 60% of petroleum imports sourced from the Gulf region, disruptions in the strait directly threaten energy security. Fuel and fertiliser prices are rising rapidly, risking higher input costs for farmers already grappling with erratic monsoons and market pressures. This could push inflation toward elevated levels, squeezing household budgets and eroding the purchasing power of the middle class and the poor alike.



Small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which form the backbone of India's economy, are particularly vulnerable. Many rely on affordable diesel and petrol for operations, and any sustained spike could lead to reduced profitability, layoffs, or closures. The agriculture sector, heavily dependent on fertilisers derived from natural gas and energy-intensive processes, may see cost increases passed on to consumers, exacerbating food inflation. Power utilities facing higher coal and gas costs could impose higher tariffs or experience supply strains, impacting industrial output.

Beyond the macroeconomic indicators, the human dimension is profound. Millions of Indian workers in the Gulf countries — employed in construction, oil fields, services, healthcare, and hospitality — face mounting pressure. Escalating conflict raises serious safety concerns, with potential for direct threats to expatriate communities from spillover violence, heightened security measures, or retaliatory policies. Families worry about loved ones caught in unstable

environments, and there are growing fears of forced evacuations or restricted movements that could disrupt income flows.

Remittances from the Gulf, a critical lifeline contributing substantially to India's foreign exchange and supporting household consumption in many states, are at risk of decline. A slowdown or reversal in these inflows could strain local economies, reduce spending on education, healthcare, and housing, and increase dependence on government welfare schemes. Returnee workers would add to the domestic labour market pressures, potentially leading to higher unemployment in certain segments and social challenges in reintegration.



The Indian government is likely to face difficult choices: balancing strategic energy imports, diplomatic engagements to protect its diaspora, and fiscal measures to cushion the economic blow. Diversification of oil sources, acceleration of renewable energy adoption, and strategic petroleum reserves will be tested. However, short-term pain seems inevitable, with possible interventions like subsidies straining the fiscal deficit further. The situation underscores India's need for energy independence and resilient foreign policy that prioritises citizen safety and economic stability amid great-power rivalries.

Analysts project that a prolonged disruption could shave off significant percentage points from India's growth trajectory, with cascading effects on employment, investment, and poverty alleviation efforts. The informal sector, employing a vast majority of the workforce, would feel the pinch through reduced demand and higher living costs. Exporters to Gulf markets may also encounter logistical hurdles and reduced demand as regional economies suffer.

Broader Geopolitical and Strategic Implications

This conflict highlights the perils of great-power brinkmanship in a multipolar world. India, as a major emerging economy with global aspirations, must navigate relations with all parties carefully. Strengthening ties with alternative suppliers, investing in domestic exploration and refining capacity, and pushing for multilateral diplomatic solutions are essential. The crisis also exposes vulnerabilities in global energy governance and the urgent need for diversified, sustainable energy pathways.

Regional players in the Gulf and beyond are recalibrating alliances, with potential realignments that could reshape security architectures. For India, maintaining strong defence and economic partnerships while safeguarding its interests in the region becomes paramount. The role of international organisations in de-escalation and humanitarian aid will be closely watched.

A Call for Truth and Restraint

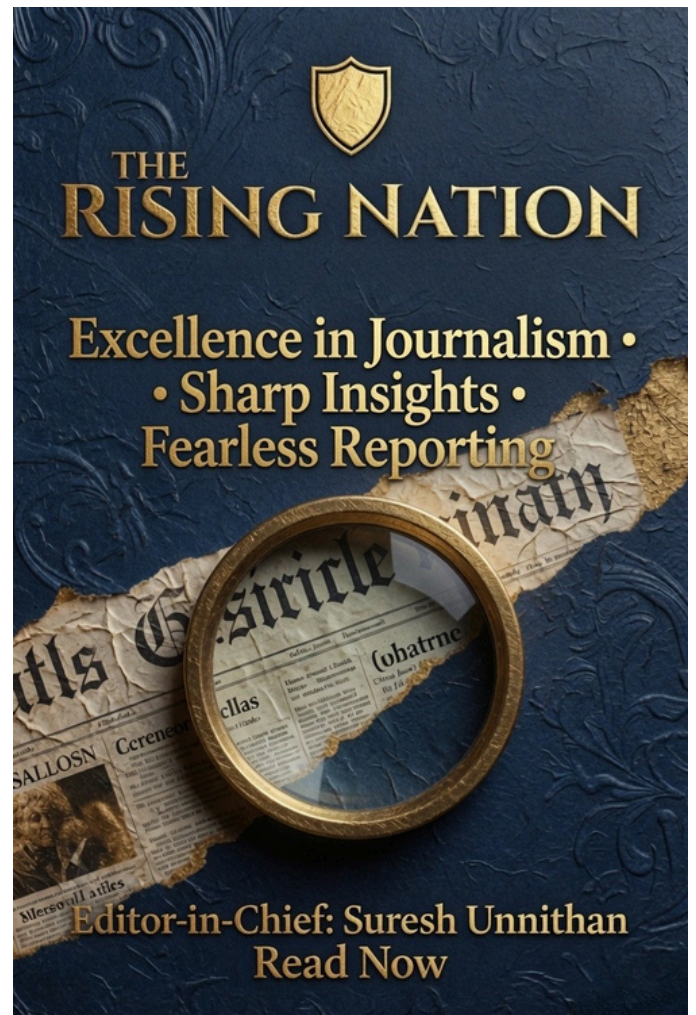
Iran's dominance through asymmetric naval mastery combined with Trump's greed-driven escalation has created this inferno.

The Raising Nation stands firm: India and the world urgently need genuine de-escalation, serious diplomacy, and accelerated energy diversification — not more empty bluster. Peace is not surrender. It is wisdom. Facts must prevail over ego.

As the situation evolves, responsible journalism demands continued scrutiny of actions by all parties, transparent reporting on impacts, and advocacy for policies that protect the vulnerable. India's policymakers, businesses, and citizens must prepare for sustained challenges while working toward long-term resilience.

The human stories emerging from the Gulf — of families separated by conflict, workers facing uncertainty, and economies under strain — remind us that behind every headline and price chart are real lives. The Raising Nation will continue to track developments, analyse implications, and amplify voices calling for accountability and peace.

Subscribe for journalism that puts people and truth first. In these turbulent times, informed citizenry and principled leadership are our strongest defences.



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Market Outlook: Navigating Geopolitical Volatility with Domestic Resilience

From Our Business Desk

Indian equity and commodity markets have remained volatile in recent months, influenced heavily by geopolitical developments in West Asia, fluctuations in global oil prices, and domestic macroeconomic factors. As of July 10, 2026, the Nifty 50 closed around 24,207 (up about 1%), while the Sensex hovered near 77,500. This came after a sharp 2%+ decline on July 8 triggered by renewed US-Iran tensions and a spike in crude oil prices.

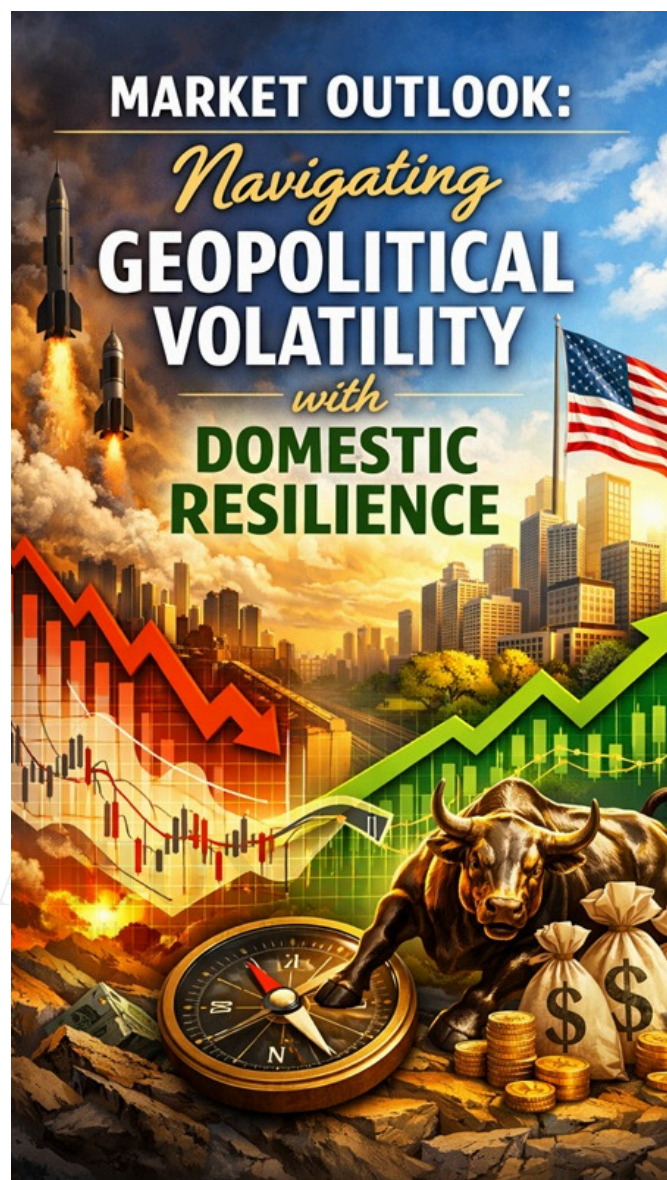
Equity Market Trends and Outlook

Equity markets have shown resilience supported by strong domestic institutional and retail participation, which has helped counterbalance periods of FPI outflows. Valuations have corrected meaningfully, bringing the Nifty's premium over emerging markets to multi-year lows and creating a more reasonable entry point for long-term investors.

Key Influences:

- **Geopolitical and Energy Pressures:** Escalations around the Strait of Hormuz have driven oil price volatility, impacting India's import bill, inflation expectations, and corporate margins. Diversification of crude sourcing has provided some relief, but sustained high energy costs remain a risk factor.
- **Policy Backdrop:** The RBI's decision to hold the repo rate at 5.25% with a neutral stance reflects caution over inflation (projected at 5.1% for FY27) and growth (revised to 6.6%). A normal monsoon could support rural demand and ease some pressures.
- **Corporate Fundamentals:** Earnings are expected to pick up in the coming quarters, driven by domestic consumption, infrastructure spending, and global demand in select areas. Broader market sentiment remains sensitive to global cues, including US policy and commodity trends.

Overall Forecast: Near-term, the market is likely to stay range-bound with continued volatility (Nifty broadly between 23,800–24,600 levels). Support zones



are visible around 23,900–24,050. Should geopolitical tensions ease and oil prices moderate, a more sustained rally could unfold in the second half of 2026, with indices potentially moving toward 27,000–28,500 by year-end in base-case scenarios. The tone remains cautiously optimistic, underpinned by India's structural growth drivers, though global risks warrant vigilance.

Commodity Market Trends, Including Bullion

Commodity markets have been dominated by energy volatility. Global prices face upward pressure from supply disruptions, though partial normalization in key shipping routes has offered intermittent relief. For India, lower sustained oil prices would be particularly beneficial given its importer status.



Commodity Outlook: Overall, commodities are expected to remain volatile in 2026, with energy and select metals offering opportunities tied to global recovery and India's capex cycle. Bullion should retain its defensive appeal, especially if equity volatility persists.

Investor Considerations

In the current environment, a balanced approach focusing on quality, diversification, and long-term horizons is advisable. Equity exposure benefits from domestic growth themes, while commodities — particularly bullion — provide a hedge. Investors should monitor Q1 earnings, global oil dynamics, and policy developments closely. Using systematic investment strategies can help navigate volatility effectively.

In summary, while short-term challenges from geopolitics and energy prices linger, India's resilient economy and improving corporate prospects point to a constructive medium-to-longer-term trajectory for both equity and commodity markets. Cautious optimism prevails, with bullion offering stability amid equity fluctuations.

- **Energy (Crude Oil):** Prices have swung sharply with geopolitical headlines. India's diversification efforts help mitigate risks, but the sector remains a key swing factor for broader markets and inflation.
- **Bullion (Gold and Silver):** Bullion has performed as a safe-haven asset amid uncertainty. Gold, in particular, benefits from inflation hedging, geopolitical risks, and a weaker rupee at times. It continues to attract investor interest as a portfolio diversifier, with steady demand expected in an uncertain global environment.

Other Commodities: Metals linked to infrastructure and renewables show structural potential, while agri-commodities will hinge on monsoon outcomes.

The Smartphone Evolution: Turning Pocket Devices into Personal Offices and Shrinking Our Global Village

By Arjun Santhosh



From the first brick-sized cellular calls in the 1980s to today's sleek, intelligent powerhouses, the mobile phone has sparked one of the most profound communication revolutions in human history. What began as a tool to make voice calls has evolved into a comprehensive "office at hand"—a gateway to knowledge, productivity, creativity, and instant global connectivity. In an increasingly digital world, smartphones have not only modernized everyday life but have dramatically shrunk the globe, turning distant continents into virtual neighborhoods and empowering billions to connect, collaborate, and create like never before.

This revolution is driven by relentless technological advancements that prioritize intelligence, versatility, and accessibility. Features such as on-device Artificial Intelligence, lightning-fast 3nm processors, flexible foldable displays, professional-grade cameras, and next-generation connectivity have redefined how we live, work, and interact. In 2026, these innovations are not futuristic dreams but everyday realities that enhance personal empowerment, economic growth, and social cohesion.

Whether enabling a journalist in Kerala to file real-time reports, a farmer to access market insights, or families separated by oceans to share life's moments seamlessly, mobile technology stands as a beacon of positive progress.

Let us delve into the groundbreaking advancements reshaping this communication powerhouse and explore their far-reaching utility in daily life.

On-Device AI: Secure Intelligence That Anticipates and Assists

Central to the modern smartphone's prowess is On-Device Artificial Intelligence. Systems like Google's Gemini Live and Samsung's Galaxy AI process sophisticated tasks directly on the device, minimizing reliance on the cloud while safeguarding user privacy through hardware enclaves such as Samsung Knox Vault.

These AI engines handle real-time translation, contextual suggestions, multi-step task automation (like organizing schedules or summarizing lengthy documents), and even creative assistance. The result is a device that feels truly personal and proactive—adapting to your routines, enhancing decision-making, and reducing friction in communication.

The utility is transformative. Professionals manage workflows efficiently during travel or in low-connectivity zones. Students receive instant tutoring, while creators generate ideas or edit content on the fly. In communication, AI dismantles barriers: live language translation facilitates global business deals, and intelligent call screening or transcription ensures clearer, more productive conversations. This revolution personalizes interactions, making them more inclusive and efficient, ultimately fostering stronger human connections across cultures and time zones.

3nm Processors and Ray Tracing: Raw Power Meets Efficiency

Fueling this intelligence are 3nm architecture processors like Qualcomm's Snapdragon 8 Elite and Apple's A18 series. These chips deliver exceptional energy efficiency alongside desktop-grade performance, powering everything from intensive multitasking to hardware-accelerated ray tracing for stunning mobile graphics.

Ray tracing brings lifelike lighting and shadows to games and AR experiences, while efficient processing extends battery life for all-day use. Users enjoy smooth 4K video editing, complex data analysis, and immersive entertainment without compromise.

This power democratizes advanced computing, enabling small businesses and individuals to compete globally. For communication, it supports high-definition video conferencing, low-latency AR collaborations, and seamless streaming—making virtual meetings as effective as in-person ones and further contracting geographical distances.

Flexible Displays: Adaptable Innovation for Dynamic Lives

The evolution of flexible screens, from foldables to near-rollable designs, has revolutionized device form factors. Samsung's Galaxy Z Flip7, with its refined zero-gap hinges, expansive cover screens, and lightweight build, exemplifies how phones now adapt to users rather than the other way around.

Unfolded, they become productivity tablets for document editing or multitasking; folded, they slip easily into pockets. Cover screens enable quick glances, selfies, and AI interactions without full deployment.

Utility shines in versatility—ideal for on-the-go professionals, content creators, and students. In communication, larger adaptive displays enhance video calls, collaborative editing, and multimedia sharing, allowing richer, more engaging interactions that strengthen relationships and teamwork worldwide.

ProVisual Cameras: Capturing and Sharing the World in Stunning Detail

Truth First, Fact Always

Photography advancements, led by Samsung's ProVisual Engine and Nightography technology, have turned smartphones into portable studios. Hybrid sensors reaching 200MP use AI for real-time noise reduction, multi-frame exposure stacking, and intelligent adjustments across all focal lengths.

Low-light mastery ensures sharp, vibrant images even at night, while AI tools assist in composition and editing. This empowers users to document news, preserve memories, or create professional content instantly.

In the communication revolution, visuals convey emotions and stories more powerfully than words alone. Social sharing, live reporting, and video messaging connect people viscerally—whether showcasing cultural events or coordinating humanitarian aid—amplifying voices and building empathy on a global scale.



Breakthrough Connectivity: Wi-Fi 7 and Satellite Reliability

Wi-Fi 7 brings multi-gigabit speeds and ultra-low latency, while satellite capabilities (Emergency SOS and messaging) ensure coverage in the most remote areas.

These features guarantee uninterrupted high-quality calls, fast data transfers, and life-saving connectivity during outages or travels.

The impact on communication is revolutionary: instant global reach, reliable remote collaboration, and resilience against infrastructure failures. Businesses operate borderlessly, families stay united, and information flows freely, knitting the world closer together.

The Human Impact: A Smaller, Smarter, More Connected World

These advancements have modernized human existence profoundly. Productivity tools in every pocket accelerate innovation and economic inclusion. Education, healthcare, and governance become more accessible. The communication revolution eliminates isolation, promotes cultural exchange, and drives collective problem-solving.

Challenges remain—such as ensuring equitable access—but the trajectory is overwhelmingly positive, with sustainability and privacy at the forefront of future designs.

Looking Ahead: An Even Brighter Connected Future

The mobile phone's communication revolution is far from over. As AI deepens, displays become more fluid, and connectivity ubiquitous, these devices will continue elevating humanity—fostering creativity, opportunity, and unity.

In the palm of our hands lies not just technology, but a powerful force for a more connected, empowered, and hopeful world. The globe has never been smaller, and human potential has never been greater.

*The author is a Master in Computer Science



Madhu: The Eternal Echo – A Living Legend Whose Voice Paints the Human Soul

By Siddharth



Beneath the golden veil of Kerala's monsoon skies, where ancient backwaters murmur secrets to the sea and fireflies weave sonnets in the velvet dark, Madhu—born Madhavan Nair on September 23, 1933, in the serene cradle of Gowreesapattom, Thiruvananthapuram—emerges as a living legend, a luminous bard of celluloid dreams. His voice, a deep, resonant river forged in the heart of tempests, carries the thunder of churning waves and the tender sigh of whispering palms. At 92, this maestro of Malayalam cinema, whose artistry has blossomed across more than six decades and over 400 films, stands as the eternal flame illuminating the human soul—his unique talent transforming fleeting shadows into timeless poetry of emotion, resilience, and quiet fire.

From a distinguished family—father R. Parameswaran Pillai, former Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram, and mother Thankamma Pillai—Madhu grew amid four sisters, nourished by Kerala's lush heritage. His education blossomed through local schools, University College Thiruvananthapuram, and postgraduate studies at Banaras Hindu University. A Hindi lecturer in Nagercoil, he answered a deeper calling at the National School of Drama in New Delhi, where rigorous training forged his gift. He debuted in 1963 with *Ninamaninja Kalpadukal*, followed by *Moodupadam*. In an era dominated by Prem Nazir and Sathyan, this erudite artist bloomed with intellectual depth and introspection.

The Poetic Alchemy of His Acting Talent

Madhu's acting is pure enchantment—a luminous fusion of intellect and primal emotion. His voice, rich as aged teak and textured like monsoon earth, thunders like ocean waves or trembles like a leaf in the breeze. It does not merely speak; it resonates, painting invisible landscapes of the heart.

His immortal performance as Pareekutty in *Chemmeen* (1965), Ramu Kariat's seafaring epic, poured forth aching vulnerability. Dialogues floated like lanterns on dark waters, etched in collective memory. The film claimed the President's Gold Medal—the first for Malayalam cinema.



In *Bhargavi Nilayam*, he commanded the frame with silent intensity. *Swayamvaram* (1972) unveiled his moral depth, earning the inaugural Filmfare Award for Best Actor – Malayalam. Across literary masterpieces by M.T. Vasudevan Nair, Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, and others, Madhu breathed life into souls both ordinary and profound. He mastered the suffering lover and flawed anti-hero with naturalism as effortless as dawn over backwaters.

His genius lay in the unspoken: a flicker like distant lightning, a pause pregnant with monsoons. Versatile as the wind, he bridged commercial hits and parallel cinema in films like *Olavum Theeravum*, his presence lingering like evening mist.

A Weaver of Dreams

Madhu directed 12 films, beginning with the trendsetting *Priya* (1970). Hits like *Sindooracheppu* and *Theekkanal* shimmered with vision. As producer of nearly 15 films, including National Award-winner *Mini* (1995) on alcoholism, he championed healing stories. Owner of Uma Film Studio, he also ventured into English cinema with *Sunrise in the West*. A generous mentor, he nurtured new talent across the industry.

He appeared in Hindi (*Saat Hindustani*, Amitabh Bachchan's debut) and Tamil films, scattering influence far and wide.

Honors include the Padma Shri (2013), J.C. Daniel Award (2004), multiple Kerala State and Filmfare Awards (including Lifetime Achievement), and centenary tributes from the President of India.

Truth First, Fact Always

Beside his late wife Jayalakshmi, Madhu cherishes daughter Dr. Uma J. Nair. In tranquil Thiruvananthapuram, he serves as president of IPTA Kerala Unit.

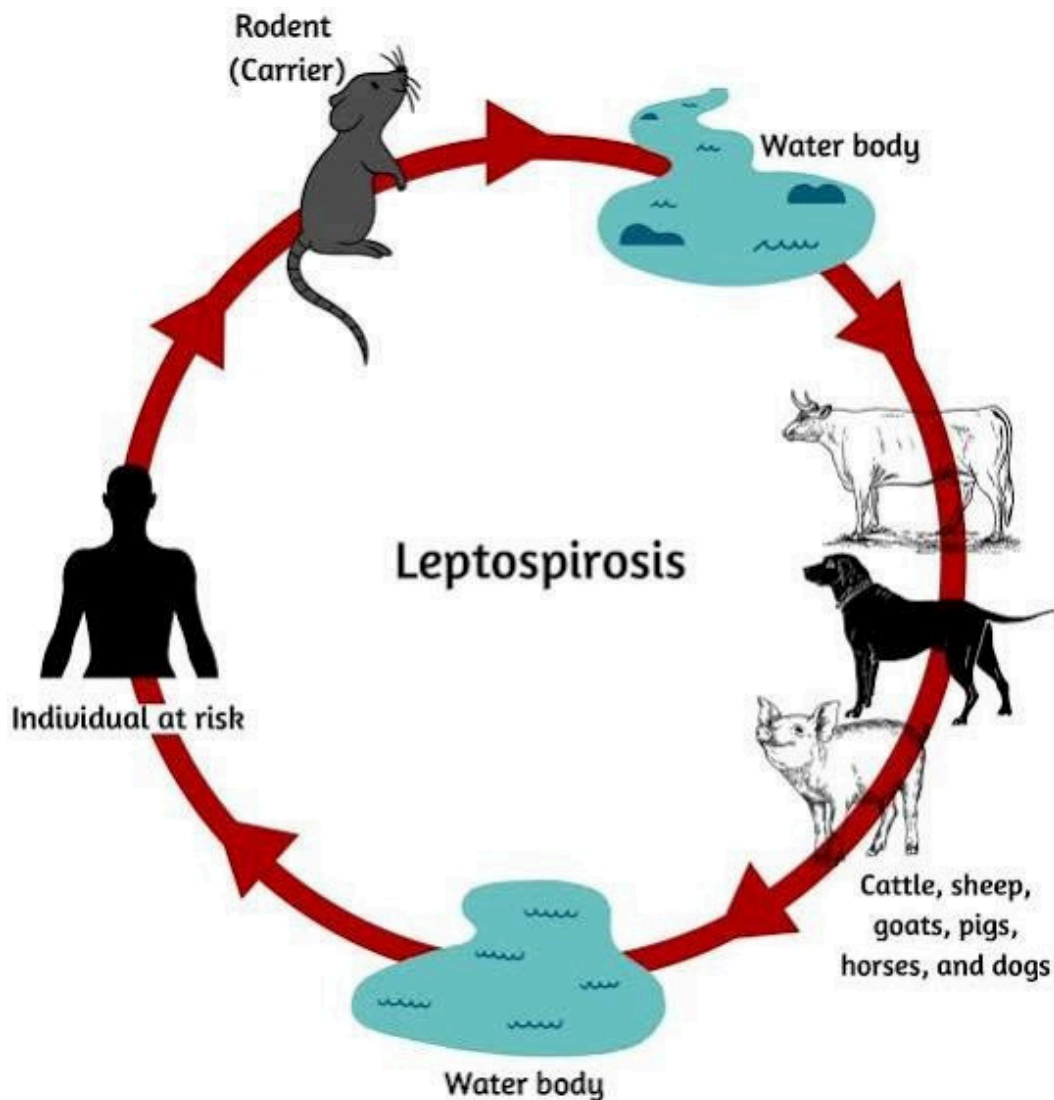
Madhu's legacy flows like a river of light through Kerala's soul—capturing monsoons of passion, valleys of longing, and mountains of courage. In an era of fleeting sparks, he is an eternal flame, reminding us that true cinema is poetry etched in light and shadow. His voice echoes across generations, painting the human heart in hues that never fade.

As the sun dips into the Arabian Sea, Madhu remains the living legend whose art continues to sing of love, loss, and the undying beauty of stories well told. The echo endures.



Leptospirosis: Monsoon's Hidden Killer – A Kerala Doctor's Clinical Perspective on Prevention and Early Care

By Dr Sailajamma (drsailaja@live.com)



As a practicing physician in Kerala with over three decades of clinical experience, I observe a predictable seasonal pattern each year with the onset of the southwest monsoon. What often starts as undifferentiated febrile illnesses rapidly escalates into a significant increase in leptospirosis cases—commonly referred to locally as “rat fever.”

From June to September, outpatient departments and inpatient wards see a surge of patients presenting with high-grade fever, severe myalgia, and headache. Many seek care late in the disease course, having initially attributed their symptoms to a self-limiting viral infection. This zoonotic bacterial illness, caused

by pathogenic *Leptospira* species, continues to be one of the most under-diagnosed yet highly preventable public health concerns during India's monsoon season.

Why Cases Surge During the Monsoon Season

The epidemiology is closely linked to environmental and ecological factors. Heavy rainfall leads to flooding of sewers, storm drains, and streets, contaminating surface water with rodent and livestock urine, organic waste, and soil. *Leptospira* bacteria can survive for weeks to months in warm, moist environments, particularly in stagnant water and saturated soil.



Transmission occurs readily through direct contact of abraded skin, cuts, or mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth) with contaminated water or soil. In urban areas, individuals wading through floodwaters, commuters navigating waterlogged roads, or two-wheeler riders are frequently exposed. Agricultural workers in paddy fields, sanitation personnel, and construction labourers in low-lying areas face heightened occupational risk due to prolonged exposure.

High-Risk Regions and Vulnerable Populations

Leptospirosis, also known as Weil's disease, is endemic in flood-prone coastal regions and areas with inadequate drainage infrastructure. States such as Kerala, Maharashtra (particularly Mumbai), Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu report consistently high incidence, with Kerala documenting thousands of cases annually during the rainy season, often peaking after heavy downpours and floods. Vulnerable groups include daily wage workers traversing flooded areas, municipal sanitation staff, farmers and agricultural labourers, and construction workers. Children, the elderly, and individuals with comorbidities—such as diabetes mellitus, chronic liver disease, or renal impairment—are at greater risk of progressing to severe complications.

Clinical Presentation: Often Mimicking Common Febrile Illnesses

Symptoms typically manifest 5–14 days post-exposure. The acute phase presents with sudden-onset high fever (frequently exceeding 39°C), profound myalgia (particularly in the calves), frontal headache, chills, nausea, vomiting, and conjunctival suffusion (reddening of the eyes without discharge). These non-specific features frequently lead to confusion with dengue, influenza, or other viral fevers. If untreated, the illness may progress to multi-organ dysfunction. In clinical practice, I recommend prompt laboratory evaluation—including *Leptospira* IgM ELISA, MAT (microscopic agglutination test), or PCR—for suspected cases, especially in endemic areas during the monsoon.

Management: Early Antimicrobial Therapy Improves Outcomes

Timely antibiotic intervention is highly effective in halting disease progression.

Mild (Anicteric) Cases (suitable for outpatient management):

- Doxycycline: Adults – 100 mg orally twice daily for 7 days (first-line when not contraindicated, e.g., pregnancy or young children).
- Children: 2 mg/kg/day in two divided doses (maximum 200 mg/day) for 7 days. Alternative options include azithromycin 500 mg orally once daily for 3–5 days, or amoxicillin 500 mg every 6–8 hours.

Severe Cases (requiring hospitalization, with jaundice, renal, or pulmonary involvement):

- Intravenous Penicillin G: 1.5 million units IV every 6 hours (preferred in many protocols).
- Ceftriaxone: 1–2 g IV once daily as a reliable alternative.

Treatment duration is generally 7 days, tailored according to clinical response. Supportive care—including fluid management, renal replacement therapy when indicated, and management of complications such as acute respiratory distress—is essential.

Important Note: These are standard treatment guidelines. All dosages and choices must be individualized by a qualified physician based on disease severity, patient age, weight, comorbidities, allergies, pregnancy status, and renal function. Self-medication is strongly discouraged and may lead to adverse outcomes.

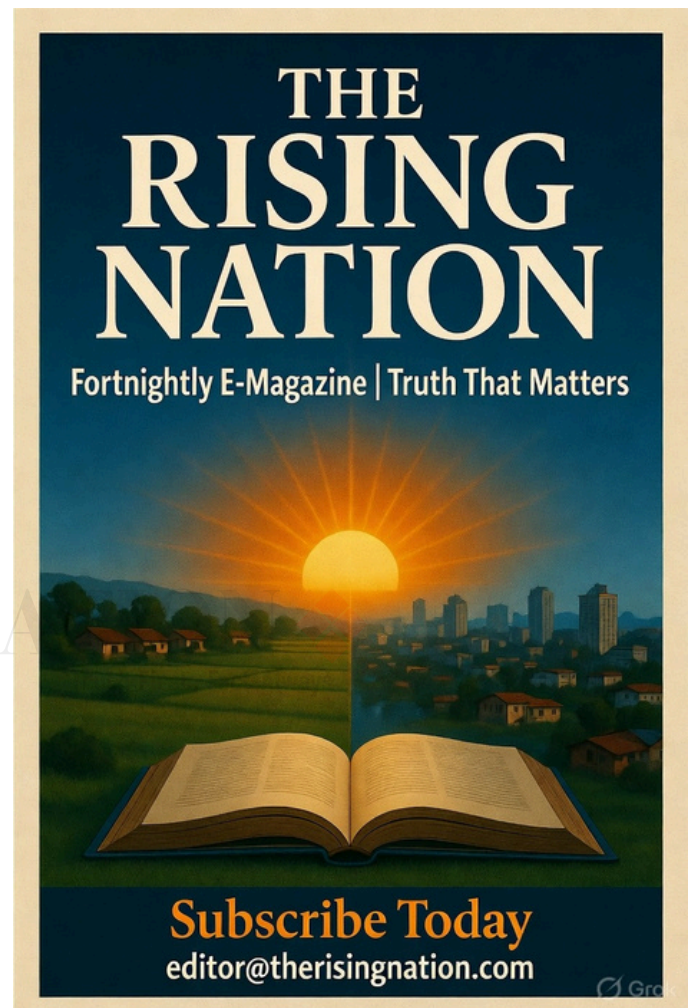
Prevention: The Most Effective Strategy

Prevention remains superior to treatment. As clinicians, we emphasize the following evidence-based measures:

- **Protective Footwear:** Wear waterproof boots or sturdy closed shoes in flood-prone or waterlogged areas. Avoid walking barefoot or in open footwear.
- **Wound Protection:** Cover all cuts, abrasions, or skin breaks with waterproof dressings before potential exposure.
- **Personal Hygiene:** Immediately after contact with potentially contaminated water, wash exposed skin thoroughly with soap and clean water. Avoid touching the face or eyes with unwashed hands.
- **Rodent Control:** Maintain clean surroundings, properly dispose of garbage, eliminate food sources for rodents, and employ safe rodent control methods.
- **Avoid Contaminated Water:** Refrain from wading, swimming, or allowing children to play in floodwaters. Ensure drinking water is boiled or adequately treated.
- **Chemoprophylaxis:** In high-risk outbreak settings, doxycycline 200 mg orally once weekly may be considered for short-term prophylaxis in select high-exposure individuals, but only under medical supervision.

Community-level interventions—such as improved stormwater drainage, regular desilting of canals and drains, and sustained public health education campaigns—are crucial for reducing overall incidence.

Leptospirosis is a preventable illness. A single exposure can result in significant morbidity, but with heightened awareness, early medical consultation, and adherence to simple protective measures, its impact can be substantially mitigated. Stay protected, seek prompt care if symptomatic, and let us collectively reduce the burden of this monsoon-associated disease.



CM Joseph Vijay: Weeping for the Broken, Fighting for the Forgotten

By Our Special Correspondent



In the bustling heart of Tamil Nadu, where dreams of the common man often clash with the harsh realities of life, a new leader has emerged – not as a distant ruler, but as a compassionate guardian. Thalapathy Vijay, the Chief Minister who transitioned from captivating audiences on screen to serving them in governance, is steadily winning the hearts of the people. He delivers on promises, remains accessible to all, and champions the cause of the poor with unwavering sincerity. His recent actions in Karur and beyond are not mere political moves; they are profound human gestures that reaffirm his commitment to a pro-people, pro-poor administration.

The Karur visit remains etched in public memory as a defining moment of empathy in leadership. On July 10, 2026, CM Vijay personally distributed compassionate government job appointment letters to members of 31 families who lost loved ones in the

tragic stampede during his TVK rally in September 2025. He did not stand aloof on a podium. Instead, he invited each family member to the stage, handing over the letters with his own hands – a direct fulfillment of the assurance he had given to the grieving.

What moved the thousands watching was his tender care for a pregnant woman among the recipients. Spotting her discomfort, Vijay walked up to her, gently escorted her back to her seat, and insisted she receive the letter only after ensuring her well-being. "Join only after delivery," he conveyed with genuine concern. As he consoled the families, sharing their pain, the Chief Minister's eyes welled up with tears. Calling the stampede an "unhealed wound," he announced plans for a memorial and reiterated his government's ongoing support. In those tearful moments, Tamil Nadu witnessed a leader who does not just govern but feels deeply for his people.

This emotional connect is part of a larger pattern. Vijay's administration has launched the "Thaaimaaman Thanga Mothira Thittam," gifting a one-gram gold ring to every newborn in government hospitals. The scheme, retrospective from June 22, 2026 (his birthday), and set for formal launch on C.N. Annadurai's birth anniversary, honors mothers and children from humble backgrounds. Reports of his visits to women and children's hospitals, where he interacts warmly and presents these tokens, highlight a hands-on approach that prioritizes the vulnerable.

These initiatives reveal the exceptional qualities that make Thalapathy Vijay a pro-poor Chief Minister par excellence. At the core is his unyielding commitment to promises. Campaigning on corruption-free governance, social justice, and people-centric development, he has moved swiftly to deliver. Job appointments for stampede victims' families, welfare schemes for newborns, and support for the underprivileged underscore a leadership that translates words into tangible relief.

His accessibility stands in refreshing contrast to conventional politics. Whether consoling families in Karur or engaging directly with citizens, Vijay makes himself available. He has vowed a "government for all," steadfastly upholding secularism, state rights, river water sharing, and social justice. His administration's "CEO-style" focus – emphasizing direct action, anti-corruption drives, modernization of canteens, loan waivers, agricultural packages, and improved healthcare – reflects efficiency without losing the human touch.



Empathy for the marginalized defines his tenure. By taking responsibility for past lapses in crowd management and providing compassionate appointments, Vijay demonstrated accountability. Initiatives like the "Singapenne" task force for women's security, stricter monitoring in maternal healthcare, and empowerment against corruption further amplify his pro-poor vision. He has urged citizens to reject bribes and report irregularities, positioning people as active partners in clean governance.



Drawing from his philanthropic roots through Vijay Makkal Iyakkam and on-screen portrayals of fighters against injustice, Vijay brings authenticity to public service. His frugal leadership, emphasis on youth employment, crime reduction, and inclusive growth have silenced many skeptics. In a short span since assuming office in May 2026, his government has prioritized welfare delivery, revived stalled projects, and fostered hope among the masses.

Challenges persist – fiscal discipline, opposition critiques, and high public expectations. Yet, the early momentum is unmistakable. Vijay's style evokes comparisons to his cinematic heroes: decisive, people-focused, and incorruptible. For the fisherfolk, farmers, daily wagers, and grieving families, he represents a leader who walks among them, not above them.

The journey ahead will demand resilience, but the foundation of trust is strong. Thalapathy Vijay's Tamil Nadu is not just a political entity; it is a living testament to compassionate governance. In him, the people have found a Chief Minister who listens, acts, and cares – proving that true power lies in serving the last person in the queue.

Digital Land Grab: How Loopholes in the IT Act Are Fueling Domain Hijacking in India

By Nanditha Subhadra

India's digital economy thrives on millions of websites and news portals that serve as vital sources of information, commerce, and livelihood for countless individuals and businesses. Yet, this ecosystem faces a persistent threat: opportunistic domain name disputes where trademark claims, often based on similar but distinct extensions (e.g., .in vs. .com), are weaponized to seize long-established domains built through decades of effort. The absence of clear, specific provisions in the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, governing domain ownership has created exploitable gaps, enabling fraudulent claims, extortion, and reverse domain name hijacking. A targeted amendment or dedicated clause is essential to safeguard prior users, genuine owners, and the public interest.

The Core Problem: Prior Use vs. Trademark

Domain names function as unique business identifiers, akin to trademarks, distinguishing one entity's online presence from another. Registration follows a "first-come, first-served" basis globally, but disputes arise when a party with a trademark (often for a .in domain or similar mark) claims rights over a flourishing .com or other gTLD (generic top-level domain) owned by a prior user. Claimants argue that the trademark entitles them to the established domain, ignoring prior adoption, substantial investment, goodwill, and actual use.

This exploitation stems from the IT Act's silence on domain-specific rules. While the Trade Marks Act, 1999, and common law principles of passing off apply, courts often navigate these disputes without tailored statutory guidance for cross-extension conflicts or administrative safeguards against bad-faith claims. Fraudulent claimants approach thriving portals demanding settlements, threatening litigation that smaller owners cannot afford. With thousands of portals sustaining families, such tactics undermine livelihoods and public access to information.

Administrative hurdles compound the issue. Domain registrars and bodies like NIXI (for .in domains) lack robust mechanisms to verify prior use or deter speculative filings. International frameworks like ICANN's UDRP or India's INDRP help for certain disputes but are not comprehensive for all scenarios, especially when Indian courts are involved. This patchwork leads to inconsistent outcomes and prolonged uncertainty.

While UDRP has successfully curbed widespread cybersquatting on a global scale, its application in India highlights limitations. It excels for international gTLDs but does not fully address nuances of prior Indian users facing domestic trademark claims on variant extensions. Many Indian entities rely on UDRP for .com disputes, yet the lack of integration with domestic law creates friction—successful UDRP



outcomes may still face parallel court challenges, prolonging disputes and increasing costs for rightful owners. Strengthening domestic legislation to complement and reference UDRP/ICANN standards would harmonize protections while prioritizing local prior-use rights.



Exploring the .IN Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (INDRP)

For .in and .bharat domains (including Indian language IDNs), India's dedicated mechanism is the .IN Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (INDRP), administered by the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI). Introduced in 2005 and amended around 2020, INDRP mirrors UDRP closely but operates as mandatory arbitration under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. It provides a faster, specialized route for trademark-based disputes.

Key Requirements (INDRP Paragraph 4(a)): A complainant must establish on balance of probabilities:

1. The domain is identical or confusingly similar to the complainant's name, trademark, or service mark (Indian registered or common law rights receive strong consideration).
2. The registrant has no rights or legitimate interests in the domain.
3. The domain was registered or is being used in bad faith (broad examples include intent to sell at profit, blocking the owner, disrupting business, or creating confusion for gain).

Procedures:

- Complaint filed online with NIXI, including evidence.
- Respondent gets a response window (typically 15–30 days).
- NIXI appoints an empanelled arbitrator (single or panel) following ethical codes and arbitration rules.
- Proceedings are efficient (often decided in 30–60 days total), paper-based or virtual, with decisions published online.

- Implementation: Registrar transfers or cancels the domain promptly (subject to court stay).

Remedies and Penalties: INDRP remedies are limited to transfer of the domain to the complainant or cancellation (making it available for re-registration). There are no direct monetary damages, fines, or penalties awarded within INDRP proceedings. Bad-faith findings or declarations of reverse domain name hijacking (RDNH—abusive complaints) carry reputational and evidentiary weight for follow-on court actions but do not trigger automatic sanctions under the policy. Victims of fraudulent claims must seek damages, costs, or punitive relief through civil suits under trademark law or general litigation.

INDRP has resolved numerous cases efficiently but highlights gaps: narrow remedies, potential for parallel proceedings, and insufficient built-in deterrents against abuse. This underscores the broader need for IT Act reforms.

Reverse Domain Name Hijacking and Its Implications

A particularly insidious aspect of these disputes is reverse domain name hijacking (RDNH), where a trademark holder or claimant with superior resources files a baseless complaint under UDRP, INDRP, or civil suits to wrest control of a legitimately held domain from its rightful owner. This often involves bad-faith allegations of infringement despite clear evidence of the owner's prior use, continuous operation, and lack of confusion. RDNH not only burdens the victim with defense costs and operational disruptions but also chills legitimate online entrepreneurship. Indian courts and panels have occasionally recognized such tactics, but without statutory penalties, deterrents remain weak. Explicit provisions addressing RDNH would empower genuine owners and discourage abusive litigation.

Legal and Administrative Dimensions

Legally: The IT Act focuses on electronic commerce, cybercrimes, and data protection but omits domain governance. Section 43 (unauthorized access) or other provisions offer limited recourse. Integrating domain rules—recognizing prior use as a strong defense, defining bad faith (e.g., speculative registration for extortion), and harmonizing with the Trade Marks Act—would provide clarity. A new clause could mandate consideration of global registration dates, investment evidence, and actual traffic/goodwill.

To further deter abuse, the amendment should introduce **specific penalties for damages caused by fraudulent litigations against rightful owners.** These could include compensatory damages (covering lost revenue, legal fees, and reputational harm), punitive damages in cases of proven malice or extortion, and statutory fines payable to the victim. Courts could award costs on an actual basis plus interest, with provisions for summary dismissal of frivolous claims and potential bar on future similar actions by repeat offenders. Such measures would align with principles of equity and accountability, ensuring that bad-faith claimants bear the financial consequences of their actions rather than shifting burdens onto legitimate businesses. Enhanced linkage between INDRP/UDRP outcomes and civil remedies would further strengthen this.

Administratively: NIXI and registrars need stronger KYC, audit mechanisms, and dispute triage. Recent court directives have pushed for better registrar accountability (e.g., against privacy proxies and fraud), but systemic reform is required. A centralized domain oversight body or enhanced INDRP with statutory backing could reduce court burden. Public interest demands protection for news portals and SMEs, which drive employment and democratic discourse.

Extortion via threats of injunctions or UDRP/INDRP complaints burdens genuine owners, especially journalists and small media houses. Government intervention via the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and legislative action is critical to prevent “name squatting” that chills innovation.

Landmark Judicial Precedents Highlighting the Gaps
Indian courts have addressed domain disputes primarily through trademark law, establishing key principles but underscoring the need for legislative clarity:



- **Yahoo! Inc. v. Akash Arora** (1999, Delhi High Court): One of the earliest cybersquatting cases. The court restrained the defendant from using **“yahooindia.com”**, finding it deceptively similar to Yahoo!’s mark and likely to cause confusion. It treated domain names as equivalent to trademarks under passing off principles (Section 27(2) of the Trade Marks Act). This set a precedent against bad-faith registration but relied on general trademark law.
- **Rediff Communication Ltd. v. Cyberbooth & Anr.** (Bombay High Court): The court granted an injunction against **“radiff.com”** for similarity to **“rediff.com”**, emphasizing consumer deception and protection of goodwill. It highlighted how minor variations can mislead users.
- **Satyam Infoway Ltd. v. Sifynet Solutions Pvt. Ltd.** (2004, Supreme Court): A landmark ruling. The apex court held that domain names qualify for protection under the Trade Marks Act, 1999, as they serve as business identifiers with features of trademarks. It applied passing off and restrained the use of confusingly similar domains (“sify” vs. “siffy”). The Court noted the lack of specific domain legislation but affirmed judicial adaptability. However, it also revealed registry oversights in allowing similar registrations.

Other cases, such as *Acqua Minerals Ltd. v. Pramod Borse* (Bisleri.com protection) and various INDRP/UDRP arbitrations (e.g., Starbucks, Morgan Stanley), consistently favor prior rights holders and bad-faith detection. Yet, disputes involving prior .com users versus later .in trademark claimants often hinge on fact-specific equity, leading to expensive litigation rather than swift administrative resolution.

These precedents demonstrate judicial creativity but also expose reliance on outdated frameworks. Reverse domain name hijacking—where legitimate owners face baseless claims—remains a risk without statutory deterrents like penalties or expedited defenses.

The Case for Amendment: Safeguarding Public Interest

With India's digital push (e.g., Digital India), protecting domain owners is non-negotiable. Millions rely on these portals for income; disruption affects not just owners but audiences seeking reliable content. An amendment could include:

1. Explicit recognition of domain names as protected assets with prior use primacy.
2. Clear bad-faith criteria and anti-extortion measures (e.g., costs/penalties for frivolous claims), including specific remedies for RDNH and fraudulent litigation, plus stronger integration with INDRP/UDRP.
3. Fast-track administrative resolution with appeal rights, better integration with ICANN/UDRP processes.
4. Registrar obligations for due diligence and transparency.
5. Alignment with international standards while prioritizing Indian prior users.

Such reforms would deter fraud, reduce litigation, and foster a stable digital environment. Courts and INDRP have filled gaps admirably, but legislation must now provide the robust framework.

Conclusion: Time for Action

The exploitation of domain disputes threatens the backbone of India's online economy. Genuine owners who have nurtured domains for decades deserve statutory shields against opportunistic trademark claims on variant extensions, abusive UDRP/INDRP complaints, and reverse hijacking tactics. By amending the IT Act or inserting a dedicated clause—with clear penalties for damages from fraudulent actions—Parliament can protect livelihoods, uphold fairness, and signal India's commitment to a secure digital future. The government, judiciary, ICANN-aligned mechanisms, NIXI, and stakeholders must collaborate urgently—before more innovative portals fall prey to legal predation. Facts over fiction; protection over exploitation.



Aranmula Vallasadya – A Divine Symphony of Feasts and Faith

By Nanditha Subhadra



Nestled in the verdant, mist-kissed embrace of God's Own Country, where the sacred waters of the Pampa River weave tales as old as time, Aranmula emerges like a jewel from Kerala's ancient crown. Here, beneath the whispering palms and amidst the heady aroma of sandalwood and jasmine, the Aranmula Vallasadya unfolds – a magnificent, centuries-old symphony of devotion, culinary artistry, and living heritage. At the hallowed Sree Parthasarathy Temple in Pathanamthitta district, this grand ritual feast transcends mere sustenance, becoming a vibrant tapestry of faith, gratitude, and timeless cultural splendor that beckons the soul. For pilgrims and wanderlust-filled travellers alike, it promises an unforgettable immersion into Kerala's sacred heart, where Lord Krishna, revered as Parthasarathy – the divine charioteer – graciously accepts offerings of love and abundance.

As the monsoon recedes and the Onam season paints the land in festive hues, the Vallasadya commences, stretching across more than 60 days. Devotees from near and far sponsor these feasts as an act of profound bhakti (devotion), honouring the valiant oarsmen of the region's iconic snake boats, known as Palliyodams. These majestic vessels, with their elegantly curved prows resembling hooded serpents, symbolize Kerala's legendary martial and riverine heritage. The feast serves as a heartfelt "thank you" to these sturdy men who row with rhythmic precision, their efforts echoing the timeless tales of valour and unity.

Whispers from the Legends: The Divine Origins

The roots of Vallasadya delve deep into the mists of legend, evoking the pure devotion of yore.

Long ago, a pious Nambudiri Brahmin from the Mangattillam family in nearby Kattoor observed a sacred custom: feeding a Brahmin guest on every Thiruvonam day, the auspicious culmination of Onam. One year, no suitable guest could be found. Deep in prayer, the Brahmin beseeched the heavens. Miraculously, a radiant young boy appeared and partook of the meal with great relish. That night, in a divine dream, Lord Krishna revealed Himself as the boy. He instructed the Brahmin to carry the feast directly to the Aranmula temple, transporting the provisions by boat along the river – a journey immortalized as the Thiruvonachilavu Thoni.

This sacred voyage symbolizes the seamless bond between the divine, nature, and humanity. Today, it lives on in the spirit of the Vallasadya; reminding us that true offering transcends the material and touches the eternal. The tradition has endured through generations, preserving Kerala's rich tapestry of temple rituals, boat lore, and vegetarian culinary excellence.

A Symphony of Flavours and Faith

Imagine rows upon rows of plantain leaves laid out with meticulous care, each one a canvas for 60 to 70 authentic vegetarian delicacies – a true sadya fit for the gods. From fragrant avial bursting with coconut and vegetables, to tangy sambar, creamy kalan, crisp pappadam, and an array of pickles, payasams, and thorans, every dish whispers of Kerala's bountiful harvest and time-honored recipes passed down through temple kitchens.

What sets Vallasadya apart is its joyful, interactive spirit. As the oarsmen – clad in simple white mundus, their bodies glistening from the river's embrace – gather, they regale the air with Vanchipattu, traditional boat songs that praise Lord Parthasarathy. These melodic verses, rich in rhythm and devotion, start solemnly but grow delightfully playful as the meal progresses. The oarsmen chant requests for specific dishes, their voices rising like a harmonious tide. And herein lies the profound belief at the heart of it all: Lord Parthasarathy Himself is believed to be seated among the diners. Every wish must be fulfilled,

every plate replenished, for to deny even one is to overlook the divine presence.

The pinnacle arrives on Ashtami Rohini, the auspicious star day marking Lord Krishna's birth. On this day, the feast reaches its most magnificent scale, drawing thousands of devotees who partake in the prasadam (sanctified offering), experiencing a sense of unity and bliss that transcends the ordinary.



A Magnet for the Soulful Traveller

For the modern tourist seeking more than scenic backwaters or hill stations, Aranmula Vallasadya is an irresistible cultural immersion. Nestled in a heritage village famed also for the exquisite Aranmula Kannadi (metal mirror) and the thrilling Uthrattathi boat race, the temple complex buzzes with energy. Visitors can witness the graceful Palliyodams slicing through the Pampa, hear the echo of Vanchipattu, and savor the feast's vegetarian bounty – a rare window into sustainable, sattvic living rooted in ahimsa and gratitude.

The experience stirs the senses: the aroma of spices wafting from temple kitchens, the sight of devotees in fervent prayer, the laughter and songs blending with the river's murmur. Families, solo wanderers, and culture enthusiasts flock here, often extending their stay to explore nearby Sabarimala routes or the serene Pampa ghats. It fosters a deep appreciation for Kerala's syncretic traditions, where faith fuels community, and heritage welcomes all with open arms.

In an age of fleeting distractions, Aranmula Vallasadya stands as a beacon – a reminder that the greatest feasts nourish not just the body, but the spirit. Whether you come as a pilgrim or a seeker of beauty, this sacred tradition will leave an indelible mark, inviting you to return to Kerala's timeless embrace, year after year. As the boatmen row into the sunset, singing praises to the Lord, one feels truly blessed to witness such living divinity.



The Hill That Refused to Die: Where 9th-Century Jain Stones Still Breathe Amid Kanyakumari's Green Silence

by Salini T S



I had heard of Chitharal for years — a quiet Jain hilltop tucked away in the Kanyakumari countryside — but nothing prepared me for the moment the landscape opened up.

The climb itself is gentle, a winding stone path through cashew and rubber trees that takes barely fifteen minutes. Yet with every step the world below grows smaller and the air turns cooler. By the time I reached the summit, the ordinary sounds of the plains had disappeared, replaced by wind moving through leaves and the occasional call of a bird. Standing there, framed by branches heavy with green, I felt I had stepped into a place that had been waiting patiently for visitors who would truly look.

The first thing that struck me was the sheer expanse. From the rocky crown of the hill, the view rolls away in endless shades of green — coconut palms, banana groves, distant villages, and the soft blue-grey folds of

further hills. On the day I visited, a light haze softened the horizon, giving everything a dreamlike quality. It was as if the landscape itself was breathing slowly.

Then I saw the pond.

Tucked into the living rock just below the temple, it lies like a calm, dark eye in the stone. Its edges follow the natural contours of the hill, and on that still morning its surface held a perfect reflection of the sky and the single tree standing sentinel beside it. Two visitors stood at its edge, their figures small against the vastness. In that moment I understood why this spot was chosen centuries ago. Water, stone, and sky meeting in one place — it felt deliberate, almost sacred.

The temple complex grows out of the rock rather than sitting on it. Massive boulders form natural walls and roofs. The 9th-century Jain cave shrine is carved



directly into the living stone, its sanctums still holding the quiet presence of the Tirthankaras. I stood before the central panel and felt time slow down.

Mahavira sits in padmasana, serene and unmoving, a triple umbrella above his head. To his left rises the tall figure of Parsvanatha, protected by the multi-hooded cobra canopy. On the right stands Padmavati, graceful and watchful. These are not museum pieces. They are still here, still receiving the same light and rain they have known for more than a thousand years. Later, probably in the 13th century, a Hindu shrine to Bhagavati was added beside them. The two traditions share the same rocky platform without conflict — a quiet lesson in coexistence carved in stone.

Walking around the structures, I noticed how the later additions were built to respect the older Jain cave rather than overpower it. Even the way the temple seems to lean into the giant boulders feels respectful, as if the builders understood they were guests on this hill.

Near one of the entrances I found an old stone slab with an inscription dated 1918–19. It reminded me that this place has never been truly abandoned. People have continued to come, to remember, to add their own small marks across the centuries.

From the temple terrace the pond lies below like a secret the hill has kept for itself. The water was dark and still the morning I visited, disturbed only by a light breeze that sent tiny ripples across its surface. Standing there, looking out over the endless green canopy toward the hazy line where land meets sky, I felt something I rarely feel at more famous sites — a deep, unhurried peace.

This is not a place that shouts for attention. It does not have the polished grandeur of larger temple complexes. Instead it offers something rarer: the chance to stand where Jain monks once meditated, where later devotees added their own prayers, and where nature has never been asked to step aside.

As I began the walk back down, the path seemed shorter than it had on the way up. Perhaps because I was carrying something with me now — the memory of that still pond, the ancient faces in stone, and the quiet certainty that some places in this land still know how to keep their soul.

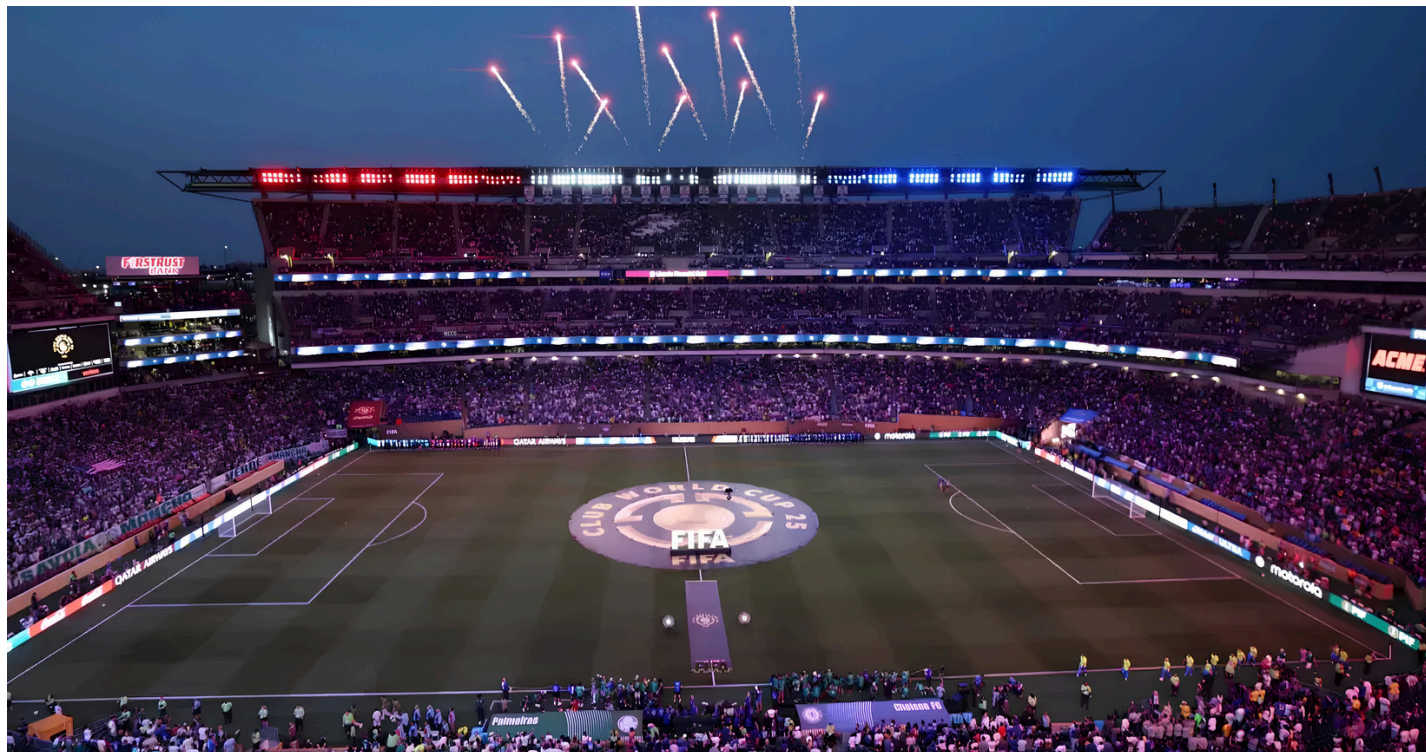
Chitharal does not demand to be visited. It simply waits — on its rocky hill, beneath its open sky — for those who are willing to climb a little, look a little longer, and listen.

And when you do, the hills remember you too.



FIFA World Cup 2026 Roundup: Systemic Strength, Institutional Accountability, and Lessons for Emerging Football Nations

From Our Sports Desk



The FIFA World Cup 2026, co-hosted by Canada, Mexico, and the United States, stands as the largest edition yet, with 48 teams and 104 matches. As it reaches the semifinals, the tournament reveals a clear pattern: sustained success flows from robust systems—youth development pipelines, transparent governance, consistent investment, and accountability—rather than fleeting individual brilliance. With France facing Spain and England meeting defending champions Argentina in the semifinals, followed by the July 19 final at MetLife Stadium, this edition offers critical insights for nations aspiring to rise on the global stage.

The Raising Nation examines the facts: where structures deliver and where gaps in preparation and fairness persist.

Expanded Format: Promise and Persistent Gaps

The move to 48 teams and 12 groups of four (top two plus best eight third-placed teams advancing) widened participation.

Host nations advanced, yet outcomes varied, underscoring disparities in long-term planning. The USA campaign included refereeing controversies, such as the review and overturning of Folarin Balogun's red card, highlighting the need for consistent, transparent officiating protocols shielded from external influence.

Underdogs like Cape Verde produced spirited performances, pushing stronger sides and demonstrating the value of expanded access. However, their runs also exposed the infrastructure deficits that prevent consistent contention. True reform requires addressing these systemic barriers—domestic league quality, coaching education, and anti-corruption safeguards—rather than relying on occasional heroics.

Group stages featured competitive matches, with sides from Africa and Asia displaying tactical organisation rooted in collective discipline. Yet many results reinforced that one-off upsets rarely translate to deep runs without institutional foundations.

Knockout Realities: Structures Over Stars

Quarterfinal outcomes (as of July 11-12) illustrate the point:

- France advanced past Morocco 2-0 through coordinated attacking play and squad depth built on France's long-term academy and federation systems.
- Spain defeated Belgium 2-1, with a late goal rewarding sustained midfield control developed through Spain's renowned technical philosophy and youth investment.
- England overcame Norway 2-1 after extra time via collective resilience and tactical adjustments honed in a competitive domestic environment.
- Argentina edged Switzerland 3-1 in extra time after an early lead, equaliser, and opponent red card. Their progression reflects experience and organisation, even as questions arise about over-reliance on aging frameworks and the need for renewed squad-building systems.

The presence of the top four pre-tournament ranked teams in the semifinals marks a historic alignment. It rewards nations with superior development ecosystems while prompting scrutiny of whether the global structure adequately supports genuine parity for all 48 participants.

These results affirm a core truth: individual contributions matter, but they are enabled—and limited—by systemic factors including youth pathways, data-driven coaching, medical support, and federation accountability.

Broader Lessons: Governance, Investment, and Reform

The tournament has not been free of challenges. The passing of South African midfielder Jayden Adams shortly after participation serves as a sobering reminder of the human cost when welfare systems lag. Officiating debates and logistical strains in the expanded format further highlight the urgency of institutional reforms at FIFA and national levels—transparent protocols, independent oversight, and equitable resource distribution.



Fan engagements and cultural integrations in host cities have been positive, yet the event's scale raises legitimate questions about legacy planning, sustainability, and who truly benefits. For emerging football nations, the message is unambiguous: sporadic talent spotting is insufficient. Success demands comprehensive reform—modern academies, corruption-free leagues, scientific training methods, and media that holds federations accountable.

India and Kerala possess talent and passion. Real progress requires prioritising systemic changes: investing in grassroots infrastructure, professionalising domestic competitions, fostering transparent governance free from political interference, and building international exposure pathways. Short-term sensationalism or reliance on isolated stars will not close the gap with nations that treat football as a long-term institutional project.

Women's Football: Parallel Imperative for Structural Growth

Women's football continues its upward trajectory. Preparations for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup in Brazil, alongside events like the U-20 Women's World Cup in Poland 2026 and the inaugural Women's Champions Cup, demonstrate growing investment. Nigeria's Super Falcons exemplify balanced squad building ahead of WAFCON.

These advances reinforce that sustainable development—across genders—rests on equitable funding, merit-based selection, and institutional integrity. Emerging programmes in India must learn these lessons to avoid repeating cycles of underachievement.

The Road Ahead: Reform as the True Champion

The upcoming semifinals—France vs Spain and England vs Argentina—will test organisational depth, adaptability under pressure, and collective character forged through systems. The third-place playoff and final will conclude this chapter.

For The Rising Nation readers, the 2026 World Cup is not merely entertainment. It is evidence that nations rise through deliberate, accountable reform rather than hope or headlines. India's football future depends on rejecting complacency, demanding transparency from administrators, and building structures that outlast any single generation of players

Facts over fiction: the beautiful game rewards those who build enduring systems. Let this tournament inspire concrete action—policy reform, investment, and relentless accountability—so that more nations can genuinely contend on the global stage.



The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005: Protective Use and Concerns of Misuse in Matrimonial Disputes

Adv Salini T S

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA) was enacted to fulfil the constitutional mandate under Articles 14, 15(3) and 21 by providing civil remedies to women facing violence within domestic relationships. Two decades after its enforcement, the statute continues to serve as a vital protective mechanism for genuine victims while simultaneously attracting criticism for alleged misuse in matrimonial conflicts. A balanced examination reveals both its efficacy in addressing domestic violence and the structural features that have enabled its deployment as a tactical weapon in matrimonial litigation.

Legislative Intent and Protective Use

The Preamble and long title of the PWDVA declare its object to be the provision of “more effective protection” to women who are victims of violence occurring within the family. Section 3 defines domestic violence in expansive terms, encompassing physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic abuse, as well as harassment for dowry. This broad formulation was a deliberate departure from the narrow criminal provisions then existing under the Indian Penal Code and recognises the continuum of coercive control that characterises many abusive relationships.

The Act confers substantive rights that have proved efficacious for genuine complainants. Section 17 grants the aggrieved person the right to reside in the shared household irrespective of title or ownership. Sections 18 to 22 empower the Magistrate to grant protection orders, residence orders, monetary relief, temporary custody and compensation. These remedies are civil in nature and can be obtained expeditiously, often through ex-parte interim orders under Section 23, thereby providing immediate sanctuary and financial support without awaiting the outcome of criminal proceedings.

Judicial interpretation has further strengthened the protective framework. In *Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora* (2016), the Supreme Court struck down the restrictive words “adult male” in Section 2(q), enabling complaints against female relatives. In *Satish Chander Ahuja v. Sneha Ahuja* (2020), the Court clarified the scope of “shared household” to afford meaningful residence rights. These pronouncements have empowered women in joint-family settings and live-in relationships. The Act operates in addition to criminal remedies; complaints under Section 85 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 (corresponding to the erstwhile Section 498A IPC) can be pursued concurrently, allowing victims to invoke both civil protection and criminal accountability.

Empirical data underscores the continuing relevance of the legislation. The National Family Health Survey-5 (2019–21) indicates that approximately 32 per cent of



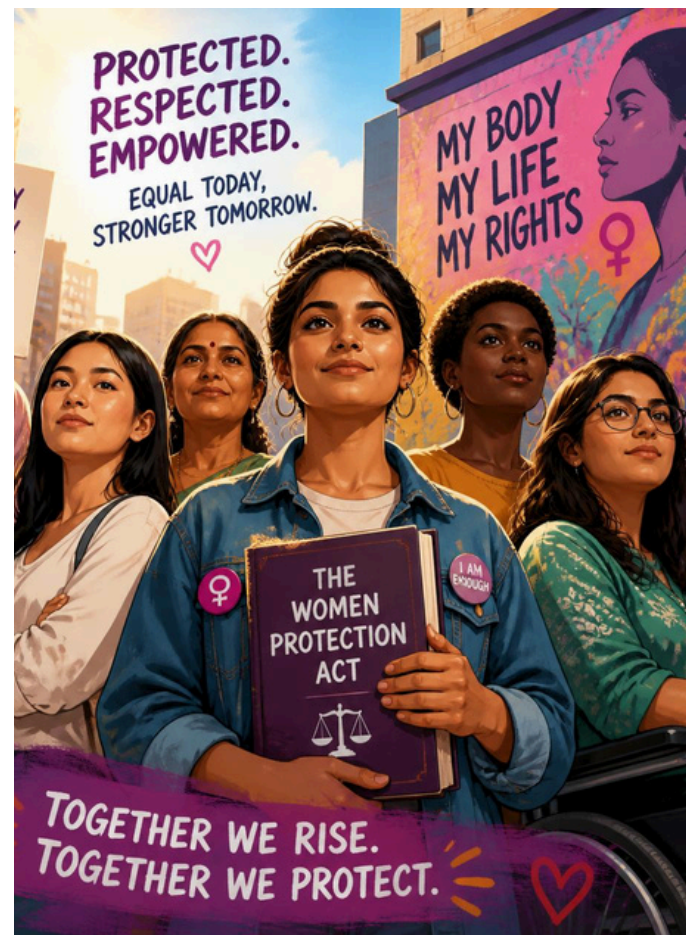
ever-married women have experienced spousal physical, sexual or emotional violence. In such a context, the PWDVA provides an accessible civil avenue for relief that does not require the stringent proof thresholds of criminal trials, thereby serving a legitimate protective function for a significant number of women.

Structural Features Facilitating Alleged Misuse

Notwithstanding its protective design, the Act's architecture contains features that critics contend have been exploited to settle personal scores in matrimonial disputes. The subjective breadth of "verbal and emotional abuse" and "economic abuse" under Section 3 permits allegations that are inherently difficult to rebut through documentary evidence. Ordinary marital discord or financial disagreements can be recast as actionable domestic violence, triggering the full panoply of interim reliefs.

The provision for ex-parte residence and protection orders under Sections 19 and 23 is particularly potent. Such orders can result in the immediate exclusion of the husband—and frequently his parents—from the shared household before any opportunity for rebuttal. In property disputes or contested divorces, this creates irreversible leverage that may compel settlements favourable to the complainant. Monetary relief under Section 20, granted at the interim stage without exhaustive inquiry into the parties' respective financial capacities, has similarly been alleged to serve as a tool for extracting maintenance or one-time settlements.

The expansive definition of "respondent" and "domestic relationship", read with the ruling in *Hiral P. Harsora*, has enabled complaints to be filed against a wide circle of relatives, including those with peripheral involvement. This practice, critics argue, is sometimes deployed to increase psychological and financial pressure on the primary disputant. When PWDVA proceedings run parallel with complaints under Section 85 BNS, the combined effect—civil ouster from the home coupled with the threat of criminal prosecution—can function as a powerful coercive mechanism.



Although robust statistical evidence quantifying the precise proportion of frivolous filings remains limited, judicial dicta and academic commentary have acknowledged instances of abuse. High rates of settlement, withdrawal or acquittal in related proceedings under Section 85 BNS, together with observations by various High Courts that the Act "lends itself to easy misuse", lend support to concerns that a discernible segment of complaints is motivated by extraneous considerations rather than genuine victimisation.

Consequences and the Imperative for Balance

Unchecked misuse inflicts tangible harm. Innocent family members, particularly elderly parents and unmarried siblings, endure social stigma, mental trauma and financial ruin. Prolonged litigation burdens already strained family courts and may deter genuine victims who fear that their complaints will be viewed through the lens of scepticism generated by frivolous filings. Conversely, an overly restrictive approach risks diluting the protective efficacy of the statute for women who continue to face serious domestic violence.

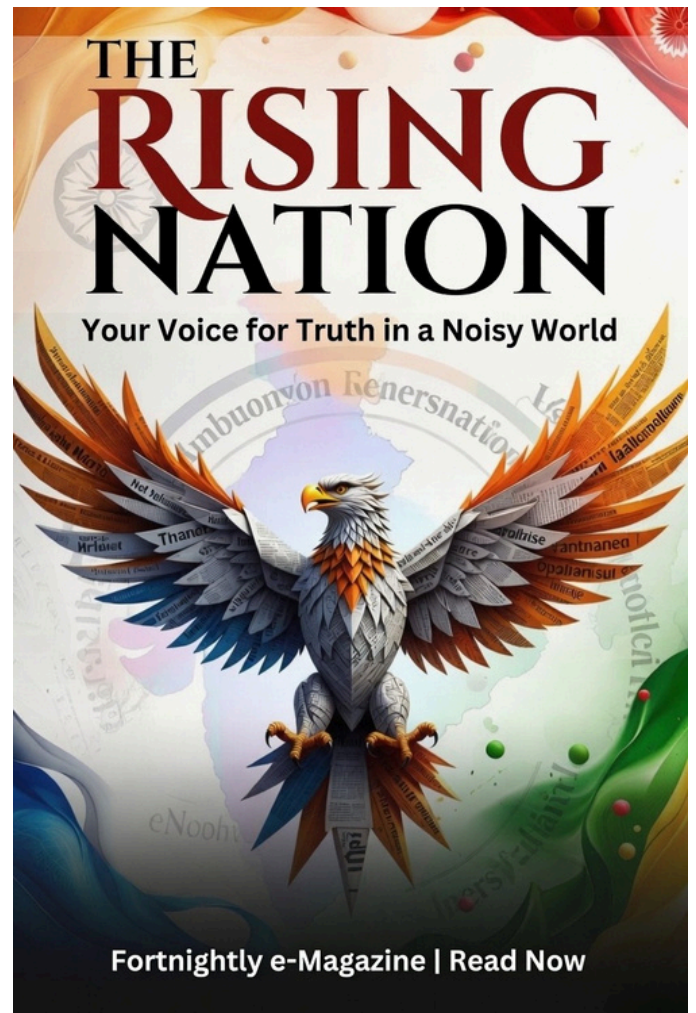
The challenge, therefore, lies in preserving the Act's remedial strength while introducing procedural safeguards against abuse. Measures such as mandatory preliminary assessment by Protection Officers before registration of complaints, a higher threshold for ex-parte residence orders in the absence of imminent physical threat, provision for award of costs in demonstrably false cases, and institutionalised mediation at the pre-litigation stage merit consideration. Strengthened training for Protection Officers and Magistrates in distinguishing genuine grievances from tactical complaints would further enhance the quality of decision-making.

Conclusion

The PWDVA, 2005 remains an essential instrument for the protection of women from domestic violence. Its civil remedial framework, broad substantive definitions and expeditious interim relief mechanisms have provided meaningful succour to genuine victims. At the same time, the very features that render the Act effective for protection have also rendered it susceptible to misuse in matrimonial warfare. Allegations that the statute is being deployed to settle scores, oust family members from their homes and extract financial concessions cannot be dismissed as entirely unfounded, even as the prevalence of domestic violence continues to demand robust protective legislation.

A mature legal response must therefore pursue calibrated reform—strengthening safeguards for genuine complainants while introducing deterrents and procedural filters against abuse of process. Only through such equilibrium can the PWDVA fulfil its constitutional promise without becoming an instrument of injustice in the hands of those who would exploit its provisions for collateral ends.

***The author is a practicing Lawyer in the High Court of Kerala**



THE RISING NATION
Truth First, Fact Always

Understanding Spiritual Sex: The Blissful Realisation of Eternal

By Bhrigu



Sexuality—whether heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, or solo—represents one of the most vibrant expressions of human desire. Yet, nothing arises in the body without the mind's participation. True attraction occurs when sexual energies align in frequency. Adolescence brings the sprouting of these seeds, but maturity is far deeper than legal age thresholds of 18 or 21. It reflects the harmonious integration of mind, body, and nature.

Social norms evolved to protect human culture from perversion and harm, crystallising into traditions. Over time, ignorance, blind belief, and imitation eroded their original purpose. DNA carries heritage while allowing permutations—explaining the natural emergence of diverse orientations. From a spiritual-scientific lens, the spirit remains constant and equal in all beings, akin to the divine essence. Thoughts birth the mind; sensations trigger biochemical reactions forming the body. This mirrors nuclear reactions in speed and scale. Accumulated thoughts shape DNA patterns. Mind shifts subtly alter DNA, much like a worm transforming into a caterpillar.

Each rebirth stores knowledge as seeds in this “microchip” of consciousness, driving evolution toward greater complexity.

Eastern sages documented these insights in scriptures, influencing even Western thinkers. Modern science may not yet verify every claim experimentally, but the negligible daily changes in DNA parallel Earth's imperceptible rotation.

Sexual Practices Across Cultures

Lust finds physical expression only through the body. Western traditions historically permitted mating near puberty, focusing on physiological needs. Eastern cultures, particularly in India, emphasised guidance from elders for marriage, aiming to unite compatible souls early and forge psychological bonds. Ancient child marriage, though now rightly critiqued, sought soul alignment rather than exploitation. Invasions and societal shifts distorted this into forced unions and commercial transactions, eroding sanctity.

Marriage primarily channels the potent, multi-life sexual drive. Modern science acknowledges health-boosting biochemicals from consensual intimacy, but these vary by emotional context. Non-consensual acts produce harmful chemicals. Thus, sex should unfold with love, awareness, mutual sharing of dreams, and sanctity—transforming physical union into spiritual realisation. Choosing the right partner proves essential.

Frequent partner changes driven by infatuation breed perversion and complicate the mind-DNA matrix. Humans evolve from simpler life forms carrying deep-seated lust across millennia. Animals experience sensation without awareness, remaining bound to instinctual cycles. Only the human body enables mindful awareness of sensations, allowing mind cleansing and liberation from base lusts. Yogis note that humans alone can observe and transcend bodily processes.

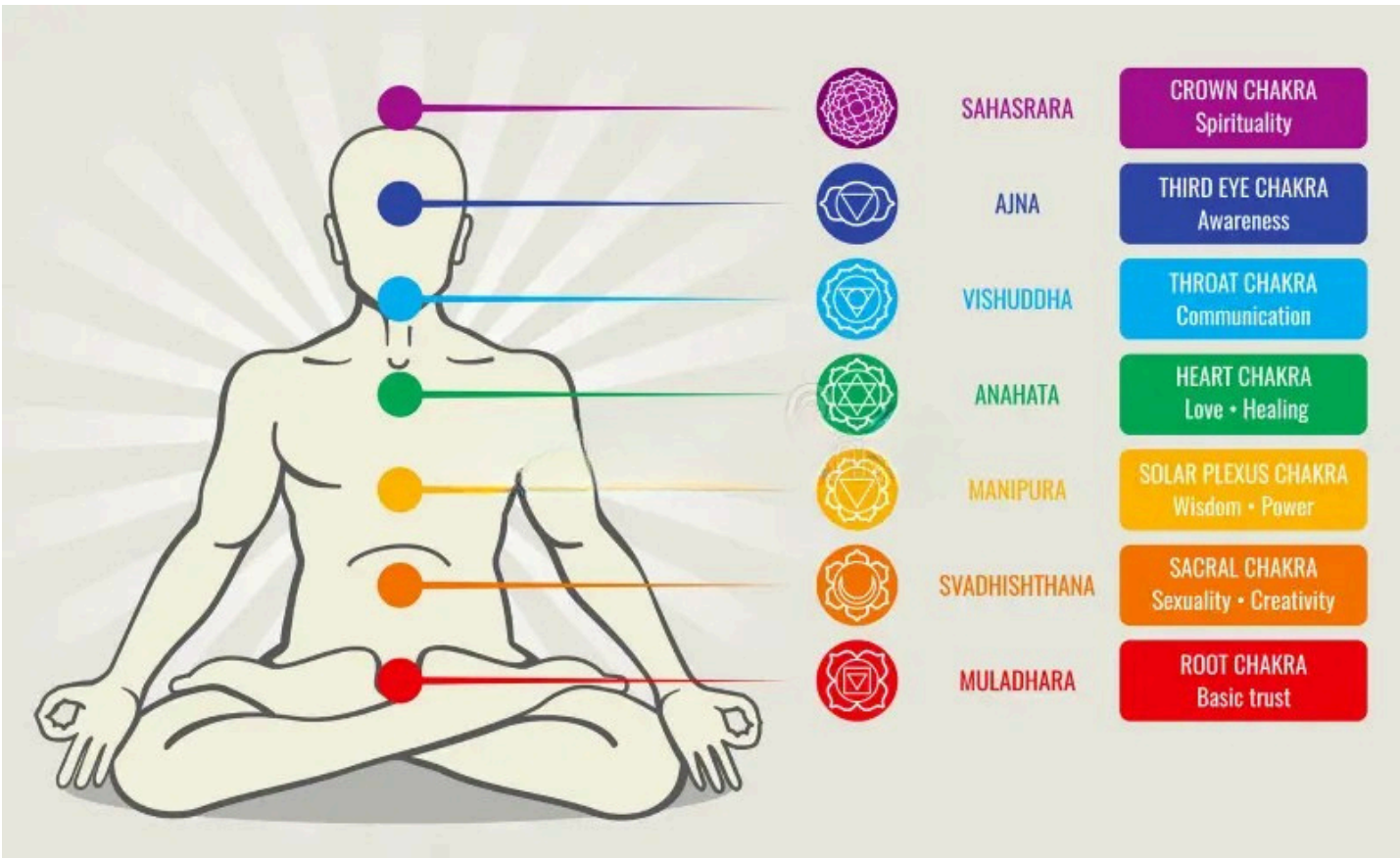
Sex as a Spiritual Path and Kundalini Awakening

The ultimate human goal is enlightenment.

Most cannot leap directly from ordinary life into asceticism; mental purification is prerequisite. Conscious sexual union offers one profound avenue. Spiritual or sacred sex occurs when partners fully accept each other’s souls, including limitations. This exchange merges merits, deactivates demerits, and unifies two mind-databases into one—rectifying imperfections like two sides of a coin. Hindu traditions sanctify marriage precisely for this.

Viewing intimacy as spiritual ecstasy releases tremendous energy, awakening dormant life forces—commonly known as Kundalini—and propelling the spiritual journey. Kundalini is envisioned as a coiled serpent energy at the base of the spine (muladhara chakra). When awakened, it rises through the central energy channel (sushumna nadi), piercing the chakras and culminating in union at the crown (sahasrara), leading to expanded consciousness, bliss, and enlightenment.

Kundalini Awakening Techniques in the Context of Spiritual Sex/Tantra (Practice with caution and ideally under qualified guidance):



Preparatory Grounding and Purification: Begin with regular yoga asanas, pranayama (breath control), and meditation to purify nadis (energy channels) and strengthen the nervous system. A sattvic diet, ethical living (yamas/niyamas), and periods of moderated celibacy help conserve and build energy.

Paired Breathing and Energy Circulation: Sit facing your partner. Synchronise deep, slow breaths—inhale to draw energy from the base upward along the spine, exhale to ground or share with your partner. Visualise golden or serpentine energy rising. In Tantric union, during heightened arousal, consciously direct sexual energy upward instead of releasing it downward (a practice called *urdhva retas* or semen/sexual energy retention/transmutation).

Eye Gazing with Visualisation: Maintain prolonged eye contact while imagining Kundalini uncoiling. Chant mantras like “Om” or bija mantras (e.g., “Lam” for root chakra) together to amplify vibration. This builds energetic connection and facilitates shared awakening.

Conscious Touch and Microcosmic Orbit: Through slow, intentional massage or lovemaking, circulate energy in a loop: up the spine on inhalation, down the front channel on exhalation. Focus on moving energy past each chakra, awakening qualities like stability (root), creativity (sacral), and compassion (heart).

Sacred Union and Transmutation: During intimacy, maintain awareness. At the peak of arousal, breathe deeply, contract pelvic floor muscles (*mula bandha*), and visualise energy shooting upward to the crown. Merge sensations with divine love. Post-climax, rest in stillness to integrate the energy.

Important Safety Note: Kundalini awakening can bring intense physical, emotional, or psychological experiences (sometimes called “Kundalini syndrome”). Proceed gradually. Grounding practices (walking in nature, healthy diet, journaling) are essential. Seek an experienced Tantra or Kundalini yoga teacher, especially for advanced work. It is not a race—respect your body’s readiness. It marks the beginning of mind-merging via the physical body. Awareness is key: without it, partners remain separate individuals.



True unity manifests when touching the spouse feels like touching oneself; sensations transcend physical proximity. Orgasm becomes possible through energetic connection alone. Full merging may span multiple lifetimes

Soulmates in Vedic Wisdom

Vedic traditions viewed marriage as an eternal spiritual tie across births. The Shiva Purana details finding soulmates and cultivating ecstatic sexual life leading to enlightenment. Ancient temple sculptures, such as those at Khajuraho, depict divine unions as sacred art—not mere eroticism but teachings on transcendence. Temple rituals once modelled ideal family and relational roles. Idol worship provided living examples. Unfortunately, blind ritualism replaced lived practice.

Modernisation often reduces sexuality to public spectacle on fashion ramps, eroding privacy and sanctity. Physical-focused sex without love fosters perversion and mental impurity, trapping individuals in animal-like cycles despite human form. True soul-union transcends this.

Interpretations, Mispractices, and Modern Insights

Vedic marriage served spiritual duties, later narrowed to mere religious observance. Practices like Sati were misrepresented; original texts do not endorse forced widow immolation. Surviving a spouse's death signals incomplete spiritual union, granting freedom to seek true alignment. Remarriage remains a personal choice, free from societal coercion. Marriages rooted solely in material gain inevitably fracture—emotionally, spiritually, financially—leading to divorce. Love, even for partners, parents, or friends, often serves personal satisfaction. The unconscious database records even “sad” love as fulfilling. Genuine connection demands deeper reflection.

Spiritual sex, also called sacred sexuality or Tantra-inspired practice, elevates physical intimacy into mindful ritual. It channels creative life-force energy (Kundalini/sexual energy) for heightened consciousness, emotional healing, and divine connection rather than mere climax.

Key Principles and Common Practices (paired breathing, eye gazing, conscious touch, energy transmutation) integrate seamlessly with the Kundalini techniques above.

Conclusion: The Journey Toward Eternal Love

Spiritual sex, amplified by mindful Kundalini practices, is not a quick fix but a disciplined path of awareness, acceptance, and transcendence. It honours the body as a temple for merging souls across lifetimes. By approaching intimacy with love, reverence, and mindfulness, couples embark on a shared journey of purification and awakening. In a world of fleeting connections, rediscovering this ancient wisdom offers profound healing and bliss.

May all beings find their true soul companion and realise the eternal love that unites spirit, mind, and body.



Eternal Eclipse: In Loving Memory of Bonnie Tyler, the Heartthrob Queen of Pop

By Team Rising nation

Bonnie Tyler, the thunderous Welsh voice that wrapped itself around the hearts of millions, has left us. On July 9, 2026, at the age of 75, the world lost not just a singer, but a true heartthrob — the emotional anchor for countless souls who found solace, strength, and soaring hope in her unmistakable husky roar. Her passing feels like a sudden eclipse, plunging fans into a deeper darkness because her music was never background noise; it was the heartbeat of our most private joys and heartbreaks. From the misty valleys of Wales to stadiums across the globe, Bonnie didn't merely perform — she bled emotion into every lyric, turning pain into power and longing into anthems that still echo in our lives. Her voice, raw and resilient, became a lifelong companion for lovers nursing wounds, dreamers chasing impossible heroes, and anyone who ever needed to feel understood in the storm. Today, the silence is deafening, yet her spirit refuses to fade. She remains the great pop artist who taught us how to feel everything fiercely.

A Voice That Defined an Era

Born Gaynor Hopkins on June 8, 1951, in Skewen, Wales, Bonnie Tyler rose like a force of nature from humble beginnings. Her early breakthrough came with the 1977 global hit "It's a Heartache," a song that captured the universal ache of lost love and introduced her gritty, soulful delivery to the world. But it was her legendary partnership with producer Jim Steinman that propelled her into immortality. The 1983 masterpiece "Total Eclipse of the Heart" — a dramatic, gothic power ballad of obsession, redemption, and endless longing — topped charts worldwide and became one of the most emotionally charged recordings of the decade. Its operatic intensity and haunting video imagery made it far more than a song; it was a cinematic experience that millions turned to in moments of vulnerability.

Then came "Holding Out for a Hero" (1984), the explosive Footloose soundtrack anthem that embodied defiance and desire.



With its driving rhythm and larger-than-life chorus, it inspired action, courage, and romantic idealism. Other classics like "Lost in France," "Faster Than the Speed of Night," and powerful duets further showcased her range — from tender country-infused ballads to roaring rock energy.

Truth First, Fact Always

Bonnie's career spanned more than five decades, surviving vocal challenges (nodules that gave her that signature gravelly tone), industry shifts, and personal trials. She performed for popes and presidents, earned devoted international fans, and stayed true to her roots. Married to her manager and husband Robert Sullivan for over 50 years, she embodied quiet strength and warm authenticity offstage. Welsh pride pulsed through her work, and she never chased fleeting trends — she created timeless emotional connections instead.

In an era of polished pop, Bonnie Tyler stood apart as the real, raw deal. Her music soundtracked first dances and final goodbyes, midnight drives and triumphant comebacks. She gave voice to the unspoken feelings millions carried in their hearts. Though her physical presence is gone, the legacy of this great pop artist endures — in every playlist, every sing-along, every tear shed to "Total Eclipse of the Heart."

Rest in eternal power, dear Bonnie.

S. Janaki (1938–2026): The Nightingale Whose Voice Echoed Through Generations

By Sidharthan



The golden voice that painted a thousand emotions on the silver screen has fallen silent. On July 11, 2026, legendary playback singer Sistla Sreeramamurthy Janaki, affectionately known as Janaki Amma and the Nightingale of South India, passed away at the age of 88 in Mysuru, Karnataka. She breathed her last at Apollo BGS Hospitals after developing breathing difficulties due to age-related ailments. Her departure leaves an irreplaceable void in Indian music — one that no melody can ever fully fill.

Born on April 23, 1938, in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, to an Ayurvedic doctor father and a teacher mother, Janaki's musical journey began in the simple rhythms of everyday life rather than in elite academies. She performed on stage at just nine years old. Lacking formal classical training, her raw talent, emotional depth, and extraordinary vocal range propelled her forward. In 1957, at the age of 19, she made her debut with the Tamil film Vidhiyin Vilayattu. From that point, her voice became the heartbeat of South Indian cinema and beyond.

Over a remarkable six-decade career, Janaki Amma recorded more than 48,000 songs across nearly 20 languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi, and others. She was more than a

Singer — she was a storyteller, an actress through melody, and the undisputed “Queen of Expression and Modulation.” Her voice could soothe like a lullaby, thunder with passion, or dissolve into heart-wrenching sobs. Whether lending magic to Ilaiyaraaja's compositions, collaborating with A.R. Rahman, or creating timeless duets, she elevated every film she touched.

Iconic numbers like the soul-stirring “Paadariyen” and countless others brought heroines to life and etched themselves into collective memory. Her four National Film Awards and 33 State Awards were formal recognitions for a talent that transcended accolades. She sang for generations — evoking laughter, tears, love, and faith in the enduring power of music. Even after stepping back from active singing, her recordings continued to inspire new artists and comfort listeners across ages.

Her personal life reflected quiet strength and resilience. Married to V. Ramaprasad in 1959, who remained her greatest supporter until his passing in 1997, she balanced family and a legendary career. She faced life's sorrows — including the recent loss of her son — with the same grace she brought to her art.

As tributes flow in from stalwarts like Rajinikanth, Chiranjeevi, Kamal Haasan, and countless admirers, one truth stands clear: Janaki Amma did not merely sing songs — she gifted emotions that will endure in our hearts. Her voice formed the soundtrack of our joys and heartbreaks, festivals and quiet nights.

Janaki Amma, your melodies will forever echo in every Tamil song of longing, every Telugu lullaby, every Kannada prayer, and every Malayalam whisper of love. The stage may be empty, but your spirit dances on in the timeless notes you left behind. The Nightingale's song has ended, yet its resonance will live through generations.

— The Raising Nation pays homage to a voice that defined an era.





Editor's Diary

Faith Looted – The Brazen Plunder of Devotees in the Name of God

In the hallowed sanctums of our temples and religious shrines, where countless devotees pour out their devotion through hard-earned offerings, a shameless syndicate of fake custodians is running systematic loot. The Ayodhya Ram Mandir donation scandals, the massive Tirupati ghee scam involving fake and adulterated supplies, the gold misappropriation at Sabarimala, the enduring controversies surrounding the immense treasures of Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, and numerous other exposes across faiths lay bare a rotten reality: a handful of opportunists, cloaked in the garb of bhakti, are ruthlessly deceiving and robbing the faithful.

Poor devotees — the daily labourers, farmers, and struggling families who form the backbone of these offerings — skip meals, sell assets, or empty their pockets in blind faith, believing their sacrifices will reach the divine. Instead, their contributions vanish into private coffers through thefts, fake supplies, missing gold, and opaque dealings. This is not mere negligence; it is organised, daylight robbery sanctified by the very institutions meant to uphold dharma and spiritual purity. The betrayal is criminal, the exploitation unforgivable, and the scale staggering.

These scandals expose how temple treasures and devotee offerings are treated as personal fiefdoms. Fake ghee in sacred prasadam, pilfered gold from idols, unaccounted donations worth crores, and mysterious disappearances of priceless artefacts — each case mocks the trust of millions. This plunder thrives across religious lines, but the poor bear the heaviest burden, their sincere piety turned into profit for the unscrupulous.

Even more outrageous is the criminal silence and complicity of those in power. Political parties, hungry only for votes and power, shamelessly ignore this looting or exploit it for cheap electoral rhetoric. Inquiries are announced with much drama only to be buried or twisted for partisan gains. Temple administrations remain mired in political interference, lacking transparency, independent audits, and genuine accountability. Successive governments have failed miserably to protect these sacred institutions, allowing corruption to fester while devotees are left cheated and faith itself stands violated.

Enough is enough. This brazen deception under the guise of religion must be crushed without mercy. Autonomous, transparent management bodies with mandatory public audits, digitised accounting, and real-time oversight are non-negotiable. Swift, impartial investigations, recovery of every looted paisa, and harsh punishments for the culprits — regardless of their connections — are the bare minimum required.

Devotees are not ATM machines for the greedy and powerful. Their faith sustains our civilisational soul. The time has come to reclaim our temples and shrines from these parasites. Let this be a clarion call: protect the sacred from the sacrilegious, or watch devotion turn into despair and distrust.



THE RISING NATION



Truth First, Fact Always

