

Central Chronicle

Founder: Late Shri Ramgopal Maheshwari
Inspiration: Late Shri Prafulla Kumar Maheshwari

EDITORIAL

India-France Relations

French President Emmanuel Macron's recent visit to India comes at a time when the global order is experiencing instability, war, and geopolitical competition. Amid the US-China rivalry, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and the complexities of West Asia, India and France have once again made it clear that they do not want to be confined to any bloc, but rather to move forward on the principle of "strategic autonomy." This approach is the true strength of their partnership.

India-France relations have been characterized by a lack of immediate political gains. When many Western countries imposed sanctions on India after the 1998 nuclear tests, France adopted a relatively balanced and prudent stance. That trust has now blossomed into a mature strategic partnership. France was the first Western nation with which India established a formal strategic partnership. Today, this relationship has expanded to include defense, space, nuclear energy, maritime security, and climate change.

The personal rapport that has developed between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Macron has given new energy to this relationship. The dialogue between the two leaders is not limited to formal meetings but is based on a shared vision. Discussions on defense technology transfer, jet engine manufacturing, advanced naval cooperation, and green energy projects during Macron's visit demonstrate that Paris views India not just as a large market but as a long-term partner. France's role in the context of "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" is of particular importance. The two countries' shared vision for the Indo-Pacific region is another important dimension of this partnership. France itself maintains a strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific region. It desires a free, open, and rules-based order. India, which is positioning itself as a "net security provider," is a natural ally for France. Amid China's aggressive maritime policy and the politics of power balance, India-France cooperation

offers a balanced alternative for regional stability.

The progress towards self-reliance in the defense sector is particularly noteworthy. Emphasis is being placed on joint production and technological partnerships rather than solely on the purchase of finished weapons. This shift reflects India's long-term strategic thinking. Partnerships in areas such as space cooperation, the development of nuclear power plants, and green hydrogen are being forged with future needs in mind. Education and people-to-people contacts also provide stability to this relationship.

France's initiative to expand opportunities for Indian students signals that this partnership will not be limited to governments but will also strengthen societies. Knowledge, innovation, and startup collaboration could become the new cornerstone of the relationship in the coming decade.

Overall, Macron's visit was not merely a symbolic diplomatic event. It was a clear message that India and France can play a decisive role in building a multipolar world order. A shared understanding of strategic autonomy, mutual respect, and a long-term vision make this partnership special. In the changing global politics, this axis between New Delhi and Paris is writing a new chapter of stability and balance. Overall, India-France relations are currently on a new horizon.

Macron's visit to India highlights the growing strength of the India-France strategic partnership amid global instability and geopolitical tensions. Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to "strategic autonomy," avoiding alignment with any single bloc. Their ties, which deepened after France's balanced stance following India's 1998 nuclear tests, now span defense, space, nuclear energy, and climate cooperation. Backed by strong rapport between Narendra Modi and Macron, collaboration in the Indo-Pacific, defense manufacturing, and green energy signals a shared vision for a multipolar and stable world order.

The Spirit of Ramadan - Fasting, Faith, and Community

Ramadan is the ninth and holiest month of the Islamic calendar, marked by 29-30 days of dawn-to-sunset fasting (sawm), daily prayers, and reflection. In 2026, it is observed with, communal iftar meals, charity, and special nightly Tarawih prayers, culminating in the joyous Eid al-Fitr celebration. Ramadan brings with it a spirit of unity, with many communities hosting interfaith iftar, promoting solidarity across different backgrounds. It's a time for increased prayer, charity, and kindness, aiming to strengthen their connection with Allah and cultivate compassion and forgiveness.

The observance of Ramadan is very personal and individual and is a time for "sacrifice and renunciation as well as a period of reflection and spiritual growth. Ramadan is the ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar. Healthy adult Muslims fast in Ramadan from dawn until dusk. This includes abstaining from drinking, eating, immoral acts and anger. Other acts of worship such as prayer, reading the Quran and charity are also encouraged during the holy month. According to the teachings in Islam, Ramadan holds greater importance as it is the first time when Allah SWT (God) revealed the Quran (Holy book of Muslims) to Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Quran (Holy book of Muslims) to Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The fasting during this month is considered as one of the five pillars of Islam. There is also a verse in the Quran that prescribes fasting for all Muslims who are mature and healthy enough to do so for the full day. Each pillar denotes an obligation of living a good Muslim life. The others

shortest in human history.

Muslims go to work and school and take care of their usual activities during Ramadan; however, some also read the entire Quran, say special prayers and attend mosques more frequently during this time. Muslims fast as an act of worship, a chance to get closer to God, and a way to become more compas-

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include reciting the Muslim profession of faith, daily prayer, giving alms to the poor and making a pilgrimage to Mecca. Ramadan is celebrated with a three-day festival known as Eid al-Fitr, one of Islam's major holidays. It is said that the month of Ramadan is that in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion." It is an anniversary of the Book of guidance, which transformed the illiterate Arabs into the most cultured and civilised people within a short period — the

sionate to those in need. Ramadan, one of the months in the Islamic calendar, was also part of ancient Arabs' calendars. The naming of Ramadan stems from the Arabic root "ar-ramad," which means scorching heat. Muslims believe that in A.D. 610, the angel Gabriel appeared to Prophet Muhammad and revealed to him the Quran, the Islamic holy book. That revelation, Laylat Al Qadar—or the "Night of Power"—is believed to have occurred during Ramadan. The Quran deals with practically every subject related to

human life and all branches of knowledge. Teaching someone is considered as an "ongoing charity" — such a person gets rewarded continuously even after his death.

Different cultures have different traditions during Ramadan, whether it is a special food they must cook, or eating iftar with the extended family. Islamic tenets such as generosity inspired most of these traditions, including sharing food and inviting guests over for iftar. During Ramadan, Muslims aim to grow spiritually and build stronger relationships with Allah. They do this by praying and reciting the Quran, making their actions intentional and selfless, and abstaining from gossiping, lying, and fighting. The month of Ramadan is also a month of forgiving. Allah SWT is the most forgiving to all his believers. Most Muslims would make use of this holy month to pray for forgiveness for the sins, intentional or unintentional, they've committed in the past year. Marking the end of Ramadan, Muslims worldwide bid farewell to a month of spiritual growth, self-reflection, and community. The lessons of compassion, forgiveness, and self-discipline learned during this sacred period stay with them, inspiring a renewed commitment to their faith and values. As Ramadan comes to a close, its spirit lives on, guiding Muslims to spread kindness, empathy, and peace throughout the year.

Preparations for celebrations in Kuno, President may visit

Gwalior Chambal Notes

Harish Dubey

Preparations for celebration in the Kuno Forest are underway. Due to indiscriminate hunting and environmental imbalance in Indian forests, leopards lost their existence decades ago and were declared extinct in 1952. However, when Prime Minister Modi launched the project for the rehabilitation and settlement of leopards in Kuno National Park in September 2022, Kuno, a once unknown animal on the national map, began making headlines almost daily in newspapers both domestically and internationally. These days, the atmosphere in Kuno is once again experiencing warmth. It is likely that President Draupadi Murmu and Botswana President Duma Bokwa will visit here on February 28th. In fact, when President Draupadi Murmu recently visited Botswana, the President of Botswana gifted her eight leopards.



Science Fact

Regeneration of fins and limbs relies on a shared cellular playbook

In the 2012 movie The Amazing Spider-Man, a key character regrows his missing arm by imbibing reptilian DNA — but then turns into a monster lizard that Spider-Man must foil. While humans outside the Marvel Cinematic Universe can't regrow limbs, a new study has uncovered a shared genetic and cellular toolkit for regenerating appendages in fish and salamanders. The work, reported January 22 in *Nature Communications*, reveals clues about how far back in evolutionary time regeneration appeared in vertebrates.

Interested in how vertebrates evolved — and often lost — the ability to regrow body parts, evolutionary developmental biologist Igor Schneider of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge has focused on understanding regeneration in the Senegal bichir (*Polypterus senegalus*). This fish can regrow an entire lost fin. And because it sits at the base of the family tree of modern bony fish, the bichir is considered a living fossil.

Studying this fish "helps fill a big gap in the story of how regeneration evolved," says developmental biologist Ji-Feng Fei of the Guangdong Academy of Medical Sciences in Guangzhou, China, who was not involved with the work.

For the new study, Schneider's team cut fins off bichirs and tracked gene activity at the wound site after one, three and seven days, which revealed the types of cells present and their activity. The team compared those data to similar new and existing data about the axolotl, a salamander that regrows limbs, and the zebrafish, a modern bony fish that can regrow the bony tips of its fins.

Spiritual

'Spiritual' Shah outreach minus overt politics at Mayapur ISKCON

Without delivering a single overtly political line, Union home minister Amit Shah on Wednesday crafted a carefully calibrated message for traditional Hindu voters before the Assembly elections, presenting himself not as a statesman but a pilgrim on bhakti marg (path of devotion).

Addressing thousands of devotees at the ISKCON parking ground in Mayapur to mark the 152nd appearance day of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, Shah began his speech with chants of "Hare Krishna" invoking the spiritual legacy of Vaishnavism, and paid homage to icons such as Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, Hari Chand Thakur and Guru Chand Thakur, linking devotional practice with social reform in a move widely seen as both symbolic and strategic.

Stressing that he had come not as the country's home minister but as a devotee carrying greetings from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shah said, "Today before leaving for Mayapur I met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and told him that I am going to Mayapur and he conveyed his sincere greetings saying Hare Krishna. Today I came here not as the home minister, rather as a devoted follower of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu."

Shah tried to position himself firmly within the Vaishnav spiritual continuum associated with Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The tone and setting underscored a larger political subtext.

By blending devotion with outreach to traditional Hindu communities — particularly Vaishnav monks and the Matua sect, which holds electoral significance in several Bengal constituencies — Shah appeared to be reinforcing the BJP's attempt to consolidate religious identity into political capital.

Letter to the Editor

Election knocking at the door

Sir, West Bengal election knocking at the door, hence to please Bengali to dethrone Mamata Banerjee government from the state, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and the other BJP leaders tried its best to shower respect to many of its 'yug purush' (iconic person of the age). As a result, participating in a discussion in Lok Sabha on 150 years of Vande Mataram, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi referred to the writer of the national song Vande Mataram as "Bankim da". Immediately after the intervention PM Modi switched to 'Bankim Babu' which is totally disrespectful and an example of the BJP being out of touch with Bengali culture. But I'm truly pained when PM Modi was deeply inspired by Swami Vivekananda so much he wanted to be a monk. However, it was the 15th President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Swami Atmasthananda (97 years old swami is presently struggling from age-related illness and has been admitted in a hospital since February 21) who advised against it and got rejected thrice. After being rejected to pursue his spiritual life, and under the advice of Swami Atmasthananda, Modi joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and then ventured into politics. Even then the PM maintained a lifelong bond with the Swami Atmasthananda as his spiritual guide and "Guruji", often visiting him at Belur Math and keeping a prasadi flower from him in his pocket during his 2014 swearing-in ceremony. But our talkative PM Modi again blundered today, while paying tributes today on Ramakrishna Paramahansa's birth anniversary, he referred to the saint as "Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa". Actually, Ramakrishna is traditionally revered as "Thakur" (meaning God) or Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. And the title "Swami" is typically reserved for his monastic disciples (like Swami Vivekananda). Actually, the "Holy Trinity": In the Ramakrishna Order, the "Holy Trinity" is defined as Thakur (Ramakrishna), Ma (Sarah Devi), and Swami (Vivekananda). Hope PM Modi remains more careful in future, particularly about Bengali culture.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee

Tech

Scientists just teleported information using light

Quantum communication is edging closer to reality thanks to a breakthrough in teleporting information between photons from different quantum dots—one of the biggest challenges in building a quantum internet. By creating nearly identical semiconductor-based photon sources and using frequency converters to sync them, researchers successfully transferred quantum states across a fiber link, proving a key step toward long-distance, tamper-proof communication.

Researchers have achieved quantum teleportation between photons generated by different quantum dots, a crucial step toward secure quantum networks. With improved photon matching and fiber-based transmission, the path to scalable quantum repeaters is becoming clearer.

Life online remains vulnerable. Criminals can infiltrate bank accounts or steal personal identities, and AI is helping these attacks become more sophisticated. Quantum cryptography offers a promising defense by using the rules of quantum physics to secure communication against eavesdropping. Even so, building a functioning quantum internet still involves major technical challenges. A team at the Institute of Semiconductor Optics and Functional Interfaces (IHF) at the University of Stuttgart has now made significant progress on one of the most difficult components, the "quantum repeater."

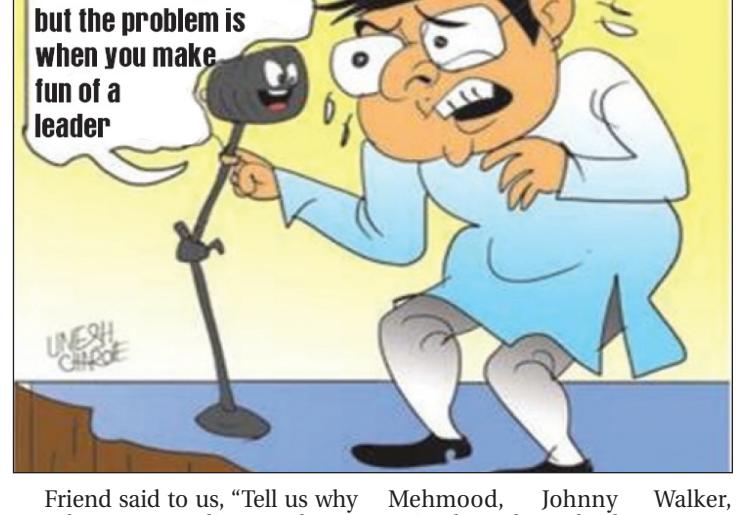
For the first time worldwide, we have succeeded in transferring quantum information among photons originating from two different quantum dots, says Prof. Peter Michler, head of the IHF and deputy spokesperson for the Quantenrepeater.N (QR.N) research project.



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Satire

Stand-up comedians why not sitting



Friend said to us, "Tell us why stand-up comedians always stand? Can't they perform comedy while sitting? Imagine if a stand-up comedian sprained his leg, how would he be able to stand? What would happen to his comedy in that situation?" We said, "Old school teachers would scold a naughty boy and tell him to stand on the bench. Standing on the bench for long periods like this, some smart kids became stand-up comedians as they grew up because they didn't take their studies seriously and considered it comedy."

Friend said, "Becoming a stand-up comedian isn't easy. It's a performing art. You might remember that last year, one such comedian, Kunal Kamra, got into trouble for his comedy that mocked a politician. Stand-up comedy isn't about exaggerated acting but sharp, original ideas delivered live. Comedians must connect with the audience, maintain rhythm, and rely on strong material and practice—because without genuine laughs, the act falls flat."

We said, "There was a time when films wouldn't have been made without comedians."

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