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Art

01 The Sublime Somi Bridges African and Western Jazz

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

➤ <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/goings-on/the-sublime-somi-bridges-african-and-western-jazz>

In the past two decades, the singer Laura Kabasomi Kakoma, who performs music mononymously as **Somi**, has become a bridge between Western jazz and the jazz of Africa. An Illinois-born New Yorker of Rwandan and Ugandan descent who grew up in Zambia, she channels her diasporic upbringing into a synergized and singular sound—one anchored by a lovely, fluid voice that is paradoxically both calm and emphatic. She collaborated with the distinguished South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela, helped relaunch Sony’s Okeh Records as a jazz label, and released a tribute album for the singer-songwriter and activist Miriam Makeba. In 2021, Somi became the first African woman nominated in a jazz category at the Grammys.

02 Are Public Spaces Really for the Public?

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

➤ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/are-public-spaces-really-for-the-public>

In New York City, the streets are your living room,” Jack Espel said the other day, at a coffee shop on East Fifty-Ninth Street. Espel, a middle-school history teacher, is part of a group of Midtown East residents who are organizing to transform what they call “derelict parks” into cheery public spaces. That day, they’d met to discuss their goal of turning two dilapidated lots into pocket parks.

03 More Sunshine with Joey Arias and Basil Twist

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

➤ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/more-sunshine-with-joey-arias-and-basil-twist>

Recently, at the HERE Arts Center, near SoHo, the puppeteer Basil Twist, the performance artist Joey Arias, and six unseen puppeteers (“They’re wearing black velvet, hood on, like ninjas,” Twist said) were rehearsing the grand finale of “Arias with a Twist,” their cabaret fantasia from 2008. To the zingy “You Gotta Pull

Strings,” from “The Great Ziegfeld,” puppet chorus girls in feathers and fish-nets exited the stage, a Mylar curtain opened, and Arias—Bettie Page bangs, sheer top, Adidas pants—entered, sprawled on a Twistian three-layer cake with showgirls’ legs extending from it like flower petals. Mirrors appeared, the music intensified, and King Kong-size showgirl calves stepped in from stage left and stage right. Meanwhile, the cake wiggled uncertainly. Twist called out, “Can we pause?” He crouched in front of the cake, raising its white fabric frosting. “How can we help?” he asked.

04 Detecting Notes of . . . Citi Field?

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/detecting-notes-of-citi-field>

On a moonless Friday night at Citi Field, Ryan Goydos, one half of the popular social-media account known as SuperVinoBros, stood at a security entrance reserved for staff, press, mascots, players, and eminences, waiting for his fraternal twin brother, Chris, the other half of the bros, to arrive.

05 The Unknowable Miley Cyrus

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/bass-persuades-miley-cyrus-music-review>

These days, pop stars are required to participate in a relentless cycle of self-annihilation and triumphant rebirth—with each album, a new Era!—but there’s something almost uncanny about the plasticity of Miley Cyrus. After entering the public consciousness, in 2006, as the chipper, apple-cheeked star of the Disney Channel series “Hannah Montana,” she released multiple songs declaring herself a hedonist, beginning with “Can’t Be Tamed,” in 2010, and reaching a nihilistic apotheosis with her fourth album, “Bangerz,” from 2013. The single “We Can’t Stop” is an unrepentant ode to ripping it up: “So la-da-di-da-di, we like to party / Dancing with Molly / Doing whatever we want,” she announces in the pre-chorus. To some degree, Cyrus’s rebellion was preordained: in 2008, when she was fifteen, Annie Leibovitz photographed her nude, wrapped only in a bedsheet, for the cover of Vanity Fair. “You can’t say no to Annie!” Cyrus cheerfully told a reporter.

06 I like to work on small gestures: K. Benitha Perciyal**Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.**

➤ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/arts-and-culture/art/k-benitha-perciyal-artist-interview-ashvitas-chennai/article71442179.ece>

An ongoing solo exhibition by the Chennai-based artist K. Benitha Perciyal, “How Long Will We Live? Or When Will We Die?” (August 7 to September 30), offers a rare opportunity to see her body of work alongside the collection of objects she references in her dense, layered process of art-making. The objects have been gathered over years, and the collection is her labour of love.

Artificial Intelligence

07 Don't let AI kill the author**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

➤ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2026/09/24/dont-let-ai-kill-the-author>

If The Economist had just two loyalties, they might well be to good prose and creative destruction. Those seldom previously came into conflict—until artificial-intelligence models began writing. Now, AI text is winning literary awards, occupying op-ed pages and, as we report this week, filling the mouths of politicians. One in ten words spoken in Britain's parliamentary debates, and one in seven in America's House of Representatives, are probably drafted by AI.

08 The dictator's laboratory: Nayib Bukele is pushing AI hard**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

➤ <https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2026/09/24/the-dictators-laboratory-nayib-bukele-is-pushing-ai-hard>

Nayib Bukele, El Salvador's youthful president, is image-conscious. Not wanting to be seen as a run-of-the-mill dictator, he markets himself not just as the saviour of his country of 6m people, but the builder of a lab—often powered by technology—from which others can learn.

Biography

09 Bob Mackie dressed stars—if they were brave enough

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/obituary/2026/09/24/bob-mackie-dressed-stars-if-they-were-brave-enough>

Everyone remembered the dress. It was a floor-length crystal-beaded sheath, slinky and tight as fish-scales, fitting perfectly to every curve of the body of Marilyn Monroe. It was in this that she stood, sparkling in the spotlights, in Madison Square Garden in 1962 to sing “Happy Birthday, Mr President” to John F. Kennedy on his 45th. Her voice was light and shy. Not many in the audience were attending to her voice.

10 How Paweł Pawlikowski Learned to Film Europe’s Fractures

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/pawel-pawlikowski-profile>

The first thing you notice about the film director Paweł Pawlikowski is that he looks like a movie star. This is an unusual state of affairs. As a rule, if you happen to be—as Pawlikowski is—demonstrably tall, dark, and handsome, with a flexible sense of humor, a yen for cinema, and industrial quantities of charisma, your rightful spot is smack dab in front of the camera. So why go and lurk behind it? Why didn’t Pawlikowski become an actor? “Oh, no, I’m a terrible actor,” he says. “I never know what to do with my eyebrows.”

11 Firaq Gorakhpuri: A resourceful Indianness

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/books/firaq-gorakhpuri-urdu-poetry-hindustaniyat/article71403978.ece>

Firaq Gorakhpuri (1896-1982), who would have been 130 on August 28 this year, is widely regarded as being one of the best four or five poets ever to write in Urdu, along with Mir, Ghalib, Iqbal (whom he did not much care for), and Faiz. He was probably the most innovative of them all, for in the deeply conflicted context of Urdu in the decades on either side of Partition, he consciously strove to make Urdu poetry less anchored in “Medina and Shiraz”, that is, in Arabia and Persia, and located it instead on Indian cultural ground. Two recent books, Firaq Gorakhpuri:

The Poet of Indianness by Surinder Deol, and Firaq Gorakhpuri: The Man behind the Genius by Alka Pathak, discuss his contribution.

Business

12 Donald Trump says China is opening up. American bosses disagree

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/business/2026/09/21/donald-trump-says-china-is-opening-up-american-bosses-disagree>

American companies should be celebrating. China is on the verge of a grand opening of its markets to them, claims Donald Trump. The president's meetings in Beijing in May with China's ruler, Xi Jinping, yielded such a promise: it is just waiting to be "papered". Mr Trump surely hoped for that when meeting Mr Xi again in Washington on September 24th, after The Economist went to press.

13 Business in the Gulf is making a slow recovery

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/business/2026/09/24/business-in-the-gulf-is-making-a-slow-recovery>

AS THE BUILDER of the world's tallest skyscraper and one of its biggest shopping malls, Emaar Properties embodies Dubai's ambitions—and its resilience. Almost 20 years ago the global financial crisis struck just as the 828-metre Burj Khalifa was about to open its doors. Emaar's American unit filed for bankruptcy, the group's profits sank and debt ballooned. Five years ago, amid the covid-19 pandemic, Emaar came to the aid of its mall unit, buying out minority shareholders.

14 Tata goes to war with itself

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/business/2026/09/24/tata-goes-to-war-with-itself>

Who runs Tata? The Indian conglomerate's board meeting on September 17th offers no easy answer. One claimant is Noel Tata, who chairs Tata Trusts, a group of charities that is Tata's largest shareholder. The other is Natarajan Chandrasekaran, chair of Tata Sons, the holding company that runs the businesses. The board split four to one, with Mr Tata the only dissenter, to give Mr Chandrasekaran a third five-year term, though he had said a month earlier that he

would not seek one. The board also voted to stop fighting a demand from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the central bank, for Tata Sons to list. That too was against Mr Tata's objections.

15 German unions are fighting to defend the 35-hour week

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/business/2026/09/24/german-unions-are-fighting-to-defend-the-35-hour-week>

The mood at Gate One of the Mercedes-Benz factory at Marienfelde, on the southern edge of Berlin, was combative. Several hundred people—workers in black factory uniforms and trade unionists in red T-shirts—blew whistles and waved placards demanding “Ola out!” (Ola Källenius is chief executive of Mercedes) and “The 35-hour workweek must stay”. Yasmin Fahimi, who chairs Germany's trade-union confederation, told them 35 hours was “a red line”. Constantin Borchelt, head of the Berlin branch of IG Metall, the metalworkers' union, produced a red vest, emblazoned with the number 35 and a smiling sun, worn by workers during the bitter but successful seven-week strike in 1984 that cut the week from 40 hours to 35.

Climate Change

16 Summer Vacation or Summer Fade

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/commentary/summer-vacation-or-summer-fade.html>

In a reformatory move, V Sivankutty, Kerala's education minister, proposed shifting the traditional April–May summer vacation to June and July, citing the severity of monsoon season in a press conference in July 2025 (Hindu Bureau 2024, 2025). With climate change, the state experiences two extreme weather events like summer heatwaves and severe monsoon rainfall, both of which lead to school closures to avoid calamities, while compromising instructional days. The proposal of a shift has brought criticism in Kerala, arguing that it would delay exam results, that summer heat is unfavourable for schooling and that a monsoon vacation would hinder children's play that summers otherwise offer. Yet, a mere shift in months may be inadequate, considering the 2026 heatwave that necessitated cancelling summer camps and restricting sun exposure even during

the summer break, alongside reports of alarming heat severity in March, the month of annual examinations.

17 Unready urban India

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/indias-peri-urban-climate-governance-crisis/article71437663.ece>

Every monsoon brings now-familiar scenes of disaster from urban India. One heavy spell of rain, and Bengaluru's IT corridors are flooded, the underpasses in Delhi submerged, the Mumbai local trains halted mid-track owing to waterlogging. Recently, Gurugram, known for its corporate towers and luxury condominiums, was brought to a standstill by a few hours of rain. Local newspapers complained, accurately, that this had become an annual pattern. They also predicted, equally accurately, that everyone would forget about this disaster in a few days and return to normal.

18 India can see the danger in the Himalaya. Can it manage the risk?

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/environment/himalayan-glacial-lakes-risk-india-nepal-flood/article71413649.ece>

On August 26, when a rapid slope failure involving a glacier occurred high on Langtang Lirung near the Nepal-China border, the disaster that followed travelled astonishingly far. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) says in a report on its website that the debris flow and flood were likely triggered by rapid slope failure involving a glacier. The slope failure generated seismic energy equivalent to a magnitude 5.2 earthquake, and the flow travelled nearly 100 kilometres.

Economics

19 The future of digital finance rests on public money, not private

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2026/09/21/the-future-of-digital-finance-rests-on-public-money-not-private>

IN 2008 an obscure manifesto introduced a new vision of money that promised to make central banks obsolete. The techno-futurist ambitions of bitcoin's

pseudonymous creator, Satoshi Nakamoto, captured the public imagination—and sparked the wild booms and busts of unbacked crypto assets. More recently, the focus has been shifting towards the use of crypto’s underlying technologies—tokenisation and distributed ledgers—in mainstream finance. These innovations enable assets such as bonds, shares or deposits to be represented, recorded and transferred as digital packets of data, or tokens. Combining distributed ledgers with tokenisation promises a more efficient way to offer financial services, around the clock and with far fewer intermediaries than today.

20 Australia’s giant data-centre boom

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/asia/2026/09/21/australias-giant-data-centre-boom>

Australia gets by with a fair dose of luck. Now it wants intelligence, too. It has set about building data centres, the engine rooms of the global drive for artificial intelligence. Investors have plans to pour some \$156bn into computing clusters there—eclipsed only by the United States at \$1.8trn and China at \$295bn. The reasons for this are, as with Australia’s mineral riches, mostly the result of good fortune. But its government wants to make sure that it lasts.

21 What Mao can teach China about managing America?

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/china/2026/09/21/what-mao-can-teach-china-about-managing-america>

TRADE WAR. Tech war. New cold war. All of these shorthand descriptions for frayed Sino-American ties have an air of foreboding. Not so the label that the two countries agreed on earlier this year, at China’s urging. They are now officially in a “constructive relationship of strategic stability”. If that fails to set your pulse racing, the cumbersome phrase has succeeded: it is meant to signify a calm approach for managing the superpowers’ tensions.

22 How realistic is Africa’s dream of a gas-powered future?

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/09/24/how-realistic-is-africas-dream-of-a-gas-powered-future>

To tell the story of African gas, Alain Ebobissé explains, he carries his “gas map” with him everywhere. The boss of Africa50, an infrastructure investment platform, produces a sheet of paper showing the world laced with pipelines. Africa is almost entirely blank (see map). “Look at that!” Mr Ebobissé exclaims. “We have almost

no pipelines, no infrastructure—it's terrible.” Africa holds 13% of the world's natural-gas reserves, with deposits in 24 of its 54 countries and more still to be found. Yet it burns less than 5% of the gas used for power worldwide. Its pipeline network is one-tenth as dense as North America's. “Who is using that gas?” Mr Ebobissé asks. “It's not us.”

23 Why so many Nigerian states want their own airline

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/09/24/why-so-many-nigerian-states-want-their-own-airline>

If EBONYI, A poor state in south-eastern Nigeria, is known for anything, it is for the paucity of its development efforts, from reducing poverty to improving literacy. That may be because the state government has been pursuing higher ambitions: it has been trying to build an airport. It says it spent some 50bn naira (\$38m) on it between 2020 and 2023 alone, more than half of what it spent on education in the same period. The project has been marred by corruption allegations and vandalism. After a few flights, air traffic stopped because of a defective runway. Undeterred, Ebonyi's government is mulling the next step: launching its very own airline.

24 House prices survived the last rise in interest rates. Will they this time?

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/20/house-prices-survived-the-last-rise-in-interest-rates-will-they-this-time>

RISING BOND yields imperil government finances. They will also change the housing market. The interest rate on most American mortgages, after all, closely tracks the ten-year yield on Treasuries, now around 5% and the highest in two decades; German mortgage lenders price off long-term bunds; and so on in other rich economies. If interest rates remain high, let alone rise further, a confluence of factors could spell a long period of weakness for house prices.

25 Data centres are straining the insurance market

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/22/data-centres-are-straining-the-insurance-market>

EARLIER THIS month Monte Carlo hosted the annual get-together of the world's insurance firms, including the reinsurers who insure them. The “Rendez-Vous de Septembre” is a swanky affair. Rooms at the main venue can cost over \$2,000 per

night. Attendees can choose to arrive via helicopter. The organisers discourage any side-events that might compete with the “Official Cocktail”. Yet at this month’s gathering the gin drinkers’ thoughts drifted to less glamorous locales: the dusty deserts, flat farms and desolate shrublands where data centres are being built.

26 The battle between India’s stock exchanges is heating up again

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/24/the-battle-between-indias-stock-exchanges-is-heating-up-again>

FOR DECADES sweaty brows and torn shirts were occupational hazards at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). Brokers jostled and jockeyed, bellowing bids and offers while sealing trades with hand signals. Circulars were printed in Gujarati, the main language of Mumbai’s traders. Founded under a banyan tree in 1875, the exchange long dominated share trading in India. Market abuses, such as insider trading, were rampant.

27 Israel’s war economy is thriving

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/24/israels-war-economy-is-thriving>

WAR CAN wreak havoc on any economy. But open, knowledge-based economies are especially vulnerable. International connections come under strain; the best minds can flee. Israel’s conflicts in the past three years have thus raised many fears for its prosperity. Will its skilled elite stay? Must its Palestinian labourers go?

28 You can’t trade your way through the AI apocalypse

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/22/you-cant-trade-your-way-through-the-ai-apocalypse>

MORE THAN ever, the big questions about artificial intelligence drive the ups and downs of financial markets. The bulls, who think AI will be both transformative and lucrative, stand against the sceptics, who believe the promised returns will never arrive.

29 Turkey's investment-fund fiasco

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/24/turkeys-investment-fund-fiasco>

THE NUMBERS seemed too good to be true. Dozens of investment funds—and the financial groups behind them—posted spectacular returns, propelling Turkey's stock market to record highs. One asset manager, Tera, saw its main fund soar by over 60,000% in only three years. Another financial firm, Destek Finans Faktoring, became Turkey's second-biggest listed company barely 17 months after going public, as its share price rose by 7,000%.

30 How the Fed should measure inflation

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2026/09/24/how-the-fed-should-measure-inflation>

IN THE EARLY 1970s Arthur Burns had an inflation problem. As one supply shock followed another, the pipe-smoking Federal Reserve chairman, known as the “Pope of Economics”, responded by excommunicating prices he blamed on “special factors”. The Arab oil embargo pushing up crude? Look past energy. A collapse in Peru's anchovy harvest driving up feed costs? Strip out food. When inflation still looked too high, out went used cars, home purchases and mobile homes. Even rising jewellery prices were blamed on “gold mania” and waved away, as Stephen Roach, then a young Fed economist, later recalled. In search of the one true inflation rate, Burns kept narrowing the canon. Inflation, meanwhile, was becoming ever more catholic.

31 District-level Labour Market Statistics

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.epw.in/journal/editorials/district-level-labour-market-statistics.html>

The “Labour Market Snapshot of Selected Districts,” released by the National Statistical Office, provides official district-level labour market estimates. Based on the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for January–December 2025, the first part presents key indicators for the 10 most populous districts in each state. The second covers 584 districts and National Sample Survey (NSS) regions, which combine smaller districts where stand-alone samples are inadequate. In Keralam, for example, 11 of the 14 districts appear separately, while Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, and Idukki are grouped into one NSS region.

32 Women's Work and Just Transition in Agriculture

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/perspectives/womens-work-and-just-transition-agriculture.html>

“Just transition” is a concept first used by the trade unions in the United States to protect workers from air and water pollution regulation, and has gained traction in climate conversations since its use in the Paris Agreement. The agreement calls for an effective response to threats of climate change, while recognising the need for the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities (UNFCCC 2015). The imperative of achieving just transition stipulates switching from an extractive economy to a regenerative one, and adopting low-carbon pathways that are equitable to workers and communities (McCauley and Heffron 2018).

33 Orangutans in Odisha Point to the Rise of Illegal Primate Trade in India

India Forum. 29th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.theindiaforum.in/environment/orangutans-odisha-point-rise-illegal-primate-trade-india>

Recently, pictures and videos of five orangutan babies in a forest in Odisha, thousands of miles from their real home, were plastered across many screens. As authorities investigate the antecedents of the critically endangered animals and discuss their future, one thing is becoming increasingly clear: international wildlife trafficking is widening its reach, and India is emerging as a destination.

34 Paper Compliance, Physical Reality in E-Waste Management

India Forum. 24th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.theindiaforum.in/public-policy/paper-compliance-physical-reality-e-waste-management>

India wants waste recycling to pay for itself and to clean up after itself. For a solution, new policies were hurriedly implemented, mostly inspired by the West. On paper it looked good. Recyclers get paid for their work and producers are held accountable for making sure the end goods end up in the right hands.

35 Human capital is the bedrock on which success of cities sits: Edward Glaeser

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/india-cities-interview-human-capital/article71399982.ece>

The academic and author Edward Glaeser, who is the Fred and Eleanor Glimp Professor of Economics in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, has consistently argued that cities become prosperous not because of grand physical infrastructure alone but because they enable the exchange of ideas, talent, and entrepreneurship. In this email interview with Frontline, Prof. Glaeser, who is the author of *Triumph of the City* (2011) and the co-author of *Survival of the City* (2022), shares his views on varied topics, including agglomeration economics, housing regulation, land-use policy, and urban governance. Edited excerpts:

Education

36 The Return of the Oral Exam

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-return-of-the-oral-exam>

Calculus class may not be the first place you'd think to find oral exams. But Robin Pemantle is a longtime fan. A math professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Pemantle believes that having conversations with students about math is a uniquely valuable way to assess what they have learned and how they think.

37 AI Has Outpaced Academic-Integrity Councils

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-academic-integrity-council-cant-keep-up-with-ai>

When Lindsay Waldrop signed on as chair of Chapman University's academic-integrity committee for the 2025-26 school year, she imagined the role might be a slog. After all, she was the only volunteer for the position.

38 Is This How Colleges Woo Back Students?

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/can-higher-ed-finally-figure-out-how-to-serve-nontraditional-students>

Most colleges aren't set up to educate this country's fastest-growing group of potential enrollees: the 40 million adults with some college but no degree.

39 Is College for Fun? This President Says Not Quite.

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/is-college-for-fun-this-president-says-not-quite>

Roslyn Clark Artis will tell you that not every student is going to be able to graduate from Benedict College. "We would love that all of our students would persist and complete, but given the population that we serve, that's probably unrealistic," said Artis, Benedict's president. About 79 percent of those who attend the small historically Black institution, in Columbia, South Carolina, are from low-income families eligible for Pell Grants. Many are first-generation.

40 As Disability Accommodations Soar, This College Offers a Playbook

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-neurodiversity-playbook-how-one-tiny-college-is-teaching-others-to-adapt>

A few years ago, Nickole Milo began noticing a pattern at River Valley Community College: Each semester, more students were showing up to her accessibility office asking for academic accommodations, mostly for anxiety, attention-deficit disorder, and autism. The number of students approved for modifications like extra time on tests and assignments tripled in three years.

41 Big Payouts Are the Norm for Campus Leaders with Abrupt Exits

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/big-payouts-are-the-norm-for-campus-leaders-with-abrupt-exits>

The Chronicle's newest list of the top-paid public-college presidents reads like a who's who of leaders who departed under duress last year. That several of those departures stemmed from high-profile political spats is a sign of how perilous the environment has gotten for leaders trying to steer the country's most storied public institutions through unprecedented headwinds.

42 Blue Books Are Back. Is That a Good Thing?

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/blue-books-are-back-is-that-a-good-thing>

An unusual sound is sometimes heard while Katie Good's film-studies students take tests: the snip of scissors. Good, a professor of communications at Calvin University, has largely abandoned take-home essays in favor of handwritten, in-class exams. To replace the digital movie stills that typically intersperse a paper about film, she arms her undergraduates with scissors and glue sticks to cut and paste printed images into the blue books where they write their timed essays.

43 The Future of Plagiarism

Chronicle of Higher Education. Vol.73, No-2. 18th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-future-of-plagiarism>

Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, quotes a 13th-century Franciscan friar who observed that there are four ways to make books. One can simply copy the work of another without alteration. One can put together excerpts from several works without adding anything of one's own. One can put together excerpts and add comments. Or one can write a work of one's own and add excerpts from others. The friar meant "making books" literally: putting words on paper or parchment by hand. Before the printing press, the distinction between writing and publishing did not exist in any of its modern forms. To write, in a sense.

44 India's education system is failing in new ways

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/asia/2026/09/22/indias-education-system-is-failing-in-new-ways>

INDIA IS talking about education. After a hot summer dominated by youth protests that toppled the country's education minister, attention has stayed on the schools, colleges and universities in which almost 300m Indians are enrolled. The fatal collapse of a student hostel in Delhi on September 6th quickly became another symbol of neglect. Meanwhile the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), which led the protests, has encouraged its supporters to report on schools across the country, turning the gaze of millions on social media onto the shoddy conditions in which Indian children are supposed to learn.

45 China's kids rank near the top in global school tests

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/china/2026/09/24/chinas-kids-rank-near-the-top-in-global-school-tests>

Many parents have heard of PISA, the Programme for International Student Assessment, which tests 15-year-olds worldwide on maths, reading and science. The 2025 results, released this month, were a disappointment for many countries. But the 12,385 mainland Chinese who sat the tests made their parents proud. They scored better than any other contingent in maths and science and came second only to Singaporeans in reading.

46 Institutional Murder, Not Suicide

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/editorials/institutional-murder-not-suicide.html>

The death by suicide of 22-year-old Sahil Wakode, a student at IIT-Bombay, on 18 September 2026, and its aftermath have once again shed light on institutional practices that drive young people to take their lives. This comes barely a month after a suicide at IIT Delhi of an MSc student. Nor are these stray incidents. Suicides at IITs totalled 45 over 2020 to 2025. The 2024 National Crime Records Bureau report shows that student suicides in India took 14,488 lives, constituting 8.48% of the total suicides in India, growing from 8,068 deaths, 6.1% of the total, in 2014. When the numbers scale at this level, suicides at higher education institutions (HEIs) cease to be happenstance or individual tragedies, and assume the form of systemic destruction of young lives, inviting the description, institutional murder.

47 Employment, Employability, and Education-work Alignment in India: A multi-dimensional institutional framework.

University News. Vol-64, No-38. 21-27 Sep 2026.

India has experienced rapid expansion in higher education, yet many graduates continue to face difficulties in securing productive, stable, and skill-appropriate employment. This paper examines how higher education institutions can strengthen education–work alignment by improving graduates' transition from education to employment while recognising the structural constraints of a labour market characterised by high informality, regional disparities, and persistent gender inequalities.

48 De-affiliation: a step towards Viksit Bharat**University News. Vol-64, No-38. 21-27 Sep 2026.**

Indian higher education is approaching a structural transition that could fundamentally change the relationship between universities and colleges. For decades, the affiliated college system has been one of the principal mechanisms through which higher education has been expanded across the country. It has enabled universities to bring higher education within the reach of millions of students. However, the same model has also created a highly centralized administrative structure in which universities are often required to perform multiple functions simultaneously: teaching, research, curriculum development, examinations, assessment, affiliation, inspection, academic administration and supervision of large numbers of colleges.

49 Beyond contact hours: an effort-adjusted model for instructional workload**University News. Vol-64, No-38. 21-27 Sep 2026.**

A faculty member in the Indian higher education system serves not only as a teacher but also assumes a variety of academic, administrative, research, and extension responsibilities. Although instructional components such as lectures, tutorials, and practical sessions remain the fundamental part of his job, which are usually quantified using credit-based standards as prescribed by the UGC, he is continuously engaged in administrative, research, and extension activities. The existing workload model calculates a faculty member's workload based on contact hours in the classroom or laboratory, derived from course credits, assuming that effort in the classroom is uniform across all courses and programmes with identical credits. This paper intends to propose an effort-adjusted teaching workload model for the faculty working in the Indian higher education system that broadens the existing credit-based framework by including class size as a key feature of their instructional effort.

50 Public Examinations: When the Solution is the Problem**India Forum. 22nd Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.theindiaforum.in/education/public-examinations-when-solution-problem>

Nothing comes into existence without a reason. But once introduced, it can continue long after its utility ends. Further, the solution perpetuates itself and becomes a bigger problem in itself. More often than not, it becomes so entrenched as a shibboleth that nobody dares to do away with it for fear of a revolt or the wrath

of vested interests. This can be said of public examinations for admission to higher professional and technical education, as well as for job recruitment. These were introduced to overcome the insufficiencies of relying on the results of school board and university examinations to assess the suitability of candidate for admission to higher education institutions or for recruitment to government jobs. University exams were found deficient due to the variations in curricula, academic rigour, and evaluation.

Environment

51 No country for walkers

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/indias-walkability-crisis-urban-planning/article71396002.ece>

All cities should help people move faster. Traffic paralysis imposes big costs on them in terms of money, physical and mental health, and economic opportunities. The economy as a whole suffers.

52 Change the waste game

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/india-waste-crisis-swachh-bharat-decentralized-management-open-burning/article71442457.ece>

In 1994, Delhi produced about 3,500 tonnes of waste a day. Today, according to official data, it produces 13,000 tonnes a day. You might argue that the population has shot up from 11.5 million to 22 million. You might argue that an increase of nearly 10,000 tonnes across 32 years is nothing to worry about. As I see it, this data reminds us that India must design systems and products to reduce waste.

Food

53 Ugly Baby Is Hot but Has a Personality, Too

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-food-scene/ugly-baby-is-hot-but-has-a-personality-too>

If you listened carefully, almost two years ago, on the day that the Carroll Gardens Thai restaurant Ugly Baby announced that it would be closing, you could almost hear a wail of anguish rising up over Brooklyn. The chef, Sirichai Sreparplarn, a Bangkok native, opened Ugly Baby, in 2017, as a place to show off the fruits of years of gastronomic research into Thai cuisine: the fermented, spiced, herbaceous, sour, complex cuisine of the north; the turmeric-stained, shrimp-funked, chili-loaded cooking of the country's south. Sreparplarn's menu was expansive, but diners crammed into the narrow, color-saturated dining room for a few dishes especially, chief among them a duck laab and a kua kling (a beef dry curry), both obliteratingly spicy. The restaurant became known as not just one of the best Thai restaurants in town but the most reliable for nuclear detonation—the thinking person's place to go get your face blasted off.

History

54 Death of Musical Coalman Thomas Britton

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/months-past/death-musical-coalman-thomas-britton>

There was plenty of music in Restoration London, but for those in the know the best place for serious recitals was a room above a small coal shop in Clerkenwell. Founded by coal merchant Thomas Britton in 1678, the concert series was among the first of its kind. It ran every Thursday for nearly 40 years. Handel reportedly performed there on arriving in London in 1711. Sir Roger L'Estrange, the government's censor, played often on the viol.

55 The Hatry Group Collapse

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/months-past/hatry-group-collapse>

They called themselves 'Hatry's Own' – young bloods, often guardsmen, living high in London before the First World War on money borrowed against the trust

funds they stood to inherit. The brains behind the loans was Clarence Hatry, a slight man with a toothbrush moustache – ‘Walter Mitty with money’, as a friend later recalled.

56 The Hatry Group Collapse

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↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/months-past/hatry-group-collapse>

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57 William Buckland’s Theology of Geology

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/great-debates/william-bucklands-theology-geology>

The Oxford University geologist William Buckland (1784-1856) was thrilled when in 1823, exploring a Welsh cave, he unexpectedly came across some ancient human bones. Renowned in scientific circles for his powers of deduction, he pronounced that the remains dated from Roman times and belonged to a local prostitute, whom he christened the Red Lady of Paviland. Fortunately for Buckland’s self-esteem, he never found out that he was wrong on two counts. Closer examination revealed that the ‘Red Lady’ was actually a man – and modern carbon-dating techniques show that he died about 35,000 years ago, making him the oldest human skeleton ever excavated in Britain.

58 ‘Offa, King of the Mercians’ by Rory Naismith review

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/review/offa-king-mercians-rory-naismith-review>

Of all the monarchs who reigned in Britain before the Norman Conquest, Offa of Mercia (r.757-96) may be the most frustrating. Offa ruled longer than any other Anglo-Saxon king. At the time of his death he oversaw – directly or through proxies – virtually the whole of what is now southern England. His reign is attested by nearly 50 charters (an impressive number compared with King Alfred’s 17), a diverse and innovative coinage, and the famous earthworks along the border between England and Wales that bear his name.

59 Europe's Strangest Special Relationship

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/behind-times/europes-strangest-special-relationship>

Germany crossed a political threshold in May 2026 when Cem Özdemir took office as minister-president of Baden-Württemberg. Özdemir is the country's first state-level head of government with a Turkish background; his parents were Gastarbeiter ('guest workers') who moved to the Black Forest in the early 1960s as part of West Germany's programme to fix its labour shortage problem. Elected on 8 March, his victory arguably depended less on his credentials as co-chairman of Germany's Green Party than on his personal charisma.

60 The Bayeux Tapestry: Woven by the Victors

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/out-margins/bayeux-tapestry-woven-victors>

This is shaping up to be the year of the Bayeux Tapestry. From September this monumental work of medieval art will be on display at the British Museum, and its return to England for the first time in almost 1,000 years has been greeted with immense enthusiasm.

61 'The Bookshop' by Andrew Pettegree review

History Today. Vol.76, No-9 Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/review/bookshop-andrew-pettegree-review>

Few commercial enterprises possess as much romance as the bookshop. From the teetering warrens of secondhand dealers to the sprawling floors of Foyles on Charing Cross Road, they are places of promise and serendipity. At Wigtown in Scotland, the Open Book lets visitors stay in the flat above the shop and run it for a week. What might normally be counted as employment is turned into a holiday that one pays for, and is popular enough to be booked out for three years in advance. Certainly, not many people fantasise about leaving their jobs to start up a branch of Tesco or Zara.

62 Hockey Dads and Hockey Sons

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/hockey-dads-and-hockey-sons>

We walked single file through the snow to Lasker Rink, escorted by the coaches. Central Park at night, 1977: in the swirl of a storm, the Park was desolate and

pristine. I was eight and had been invited to start skating with the older boys at school. I'd had hockey on the brain for a year, and yet had never really gone to a hockey practice. The Zamboni did a quick dry sweep while we suited up, and then we spilled through the gate onto the ice. Someone dumped out a milk crate full of pucks. I'd never seen such abundance—they may as well have been gold ingots. We scooted and stickhandled around one another, the clatter of our sticks and the rip of our blades muffled by the storm. Whatever anxiety I'd felt about getting out there with the older kids gave way to a saucer-eyed vigilance, the air as bracing as a hit of smelling salts.

Health

63 Back and shoulder surgery is often worse than useless

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2026/09/24/back-and-shoulder-surgery-is-often-worse-than-useless>

SIX IN TEN Britons have surgery at some point. So do lots of Americans, at a cost of perhaps \$500bn a year, a third of all spending on adults in the world's biggest health-care market. Plenty of these procedures save lives, by removing tumours, transplanting new organs or mending broken ones. Many others make life better, say by restoring vision (cataract extraction) or hearing (tympanoplasty, for example). Yet a growing body of evidence suggests millions of surgeries performed each year are unnecessary—and, given the risk of complications when a person is sliced open, often worse than useless.

64 Healing Indian healthcare

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/books/tilak-shankar-management-indian-healthcare-review/article71441667.ece>

The Indian healthcare system is often criticised for inadequate public expenditure, persistent inequities, and excessive dependence on private providers. Comparatively less attention has been paid to healthcare management: the organisation of services, leadership, institutional processes, human resource management, and operational efficiency. In this context, Tilak Shankar's *Management of Healthcare in India: Need for a Paradigm Shift* is both

timely and valuable. The book argues that many of India's healthcare challenges stem not just from resource deficits but from systemic management and governance failures. It makes a convincing case for professionalisation, leadership development, evidence-based decision-making, and broader management reform in Indian healthcare.

International Relations

65 When America walks away

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2026/09/24/when-america-walks-away>

AMERICA SEEMS to be stuck in the Middle East. It has no easy way out of its war with Iran. Yet the conflict, however it ends, will in fact mark something quite different: the moment when America pulls back from the region—in the sense that it finally relinquishes its hegemony there. For the first time since the great powers dismembered the Ottoman Empire a century ago, the Middle East's overarching order will no longer be imposed from afar. Will that herald an orgy of score-settling and violence, or a new beginning?

66 Brazil turns its back on the future

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2026/09/24/brazil-turns-its-back-on-the-future>

Brazil is blessed. Its proven reserves of oil are huge and growing. Within its borders the world's largest river, the Amazon, flows through its greatest rainforest. More than half of Brazil's electricity comes from hydropower. Its farmland is among the most productive on the planet; it will soon become the largest exporter of food, overtaking America. Beneath its soils lie vast deposits of rare-earth minerals. Its 220m people are enterprising, creative and diverse. Brazil's vast potential has long been apparent. When the capital, Brasília, was built in the 1950s, its streets were laid out in the shape of an aeroplane, symbolising a country ready to take off.

67 America is stepping back from a region it never managed to remake**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/09/23/america-is-stepping-back-from-a-region-it-never-managed-to-remake>

WHEN world leaders met for the UN General Assembly in September 1991, a period of unchallenged American hegemony in the Middle East seemed at hand. The Pentagon had just waged a swift war, with many allies, to expel occupying Iraqi forces from Kuwait. American diplomats were preparing to host the Madrid conference, the first direct talks between Israel and a group of its Arab neighbours. With the Soviet Union on its last legs, America looked ready to shape a new order in a turbulent region.

68 A disastrous new war threatens in Africa**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/09/23/a-disastrous-new-war-threatens-in-africa>

Just a few years ago, between 2020 and 2022, a civil war was fought in Tigray, Ethiopia's northernmost region. Hundreds of thousands of people are thought to have been killed. The war pitted the armies of Ethiopia and Eritrea against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Tigray's ruling party. "Serious human-rights abuses" prompted America to impose an arms embargo on Ethiopia in 2021, and to put sanctions on Eritrea's army, senior officials and state-owned conglomerates. Thankfully, the crisis is at last over, at least according to American officials. On September 18th America removed the arms embargo on Ethiopia and did not renew the sanctions on Eritrea. "The national emergency [in Ethiopia] has expired," the treasury department declared.

69 From 50 Years Ago- West Asia: Soviet Union on the Sidelines**Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/50-years-ago/50-years-ago-west-asia-soviet-union-sidelines.html>

Actors in international relations prefer to deal with optimal conditions: low risks, minimum costs and high potential benefits. The problem is that these conditions seldom obtain. International relations in general have become increasingly complex, and in specific adversary relation there are risks of crises and, ultimately, risks of war. As a superpower, the Soviet Union's position on regional conflicts is inevitably linked, less with its relationships with the parties directly involved or its intentions vis-a-vis the region in question, than with considerations of global

strategy. The broader Soviet foreign policy perspective indeed provides this explanation for the two major components of the Soviet stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict: on the one hand, the constant desire to have a say in every agreement or settlement that may be reached; and on the other, the influence of extraneous factors and trends that forces Moscow to adopt a defensive position or more over to the offensive. It is these outside influences which explain the frequent contradictions in the implementation of Soviet policies.

70 Peace in Ukraine is nowhere in sight

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/world-affairs/ukraine-war-russia-peace-settlement/article71415143.ece>

Four and a half years into Russia's "Special Military Operation" (SMO), the Ukraine conflict has entered a phase in which neither side is likely to achieve all its objectives. Yet, neither is prepared to accept the compromises required to end it. Negotiating positions remain far apart, making the conflict harder to win and no easier to end.

Law

71 Sri Lanka still has to reckon with its Easter bombings

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/asia/2026/09/24/sri-lanka-still-has-to-reckon-with-its-easter-bombings>

THE WHEELS of justice turn slowly. But on September 22nd, more than seven years after suicide-bombings in churches and luxury hotels killed 269 people on Easter Sunday, 2019, a Sri Lankan court convicted and sentenced 15 people to between 200 and 260 years in prison. Nine others were acquitted. The three judges summarised their 2,000-page judgment to a packed courtroom, as paramilitary police patrolled outside.

72 Should I Stay or Should I Go?

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/should-i-stay-or-should-i-go>

On March 7, 2025, Celia Cohen, a prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's office for the Southern District of New York, was finishing up a meeting at 26 Federal Plaza, in

lower Manhattan, when she learned that a federal marshal had arrived on the premises and wanted to see her. She was soon led to a conference room where the marshal served her with a letter from Todd Blanche, then the Deputy Attorney General, informing her that she and Andrew Rohrbach, another prosecutor at the S.D.N.Y., were being investigated and placed on administrative leave. After Cohen collected her personal belongings, the marshal escorted her out of the building.

Literature

73 Narrow Escape

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/narrow-escape-fiction-aleksandr-solzhenitsyn>

It happened like this. The availability of bread was in a phase of so-called temporary difficulties. There was a crush of many hundreds outside the bread shops. The limit was two kilos per person, and no ration cards had been instituted yet. The family of Gleb Nerzhin's wife, Nadya, had gone three days without bread, but Gleb had grown up during the first Five-Year Plan and had mastered the art of waiting in line or in a milling crowd, of sprinting and scrounging, so he volunteered to scrounge. This entailed standing in the gateway of one's housing block while it was still night and waiting for the dawn to break. In every gateway all along the street, similar groups were lining up for the start, casting sidelong glances at one another but not making a run for the bread shop until it was time: after all, for security reasons, no one was allowed out in the streets at night, except for night patrols and policemen. But just as electric charges gradually build up in lead-colored thunderclouds until at last the intolerable difference in potential gives violent birth to lightning, so, too—without any word of command, without a sign or prior agreement, without conscious intent, not even at the moment when dawn became perceptible—somebody stirred, someone else swayed, a third one took a step, and, from every gateway, the crowd surged toward the bread shop, merging into an avalanche. Not every war could boast of attacks like this, with no one needing to be urged on, everyone rushing forward, selflessly giving their all.

74 Weeping Willow, Nantucket**New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.**

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/weeping-willow-nantucket-stephanie-burt-poem>

75 D'Angelo in Starlight**New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.**

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/dangelo-in-starlight-ishion-hutchinson-poem>

Political Science & Public Administration

76 Why house prices may be in trouble**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2026/09/24/why-house-prices-may-be-in-trouble>

LIKE MANY politicians, Donald Trump dreams of having his cake and eating it. In January he told his cabinet that he wanted to make houses more affordable, but also “to drive housing prices up for people that own their homes”. A government that could do both would be a true cakeistocracy. In the real world, only homeowners have been gorging: house prices are near record highs in many rich countries. Homebuyers have gone hungry, especially after post-covid inflation pushed up bond yields in 2022-23, making mortgages more expensive.

77 Brazil's next president will either be a vengeful nepo-baby or a doddering leftie**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2026/09/24/brazils-next-president-will-either-be-a-vengeful-nepo-baby-or-a-doddering-leftie>

FEW COUNTRIES are as lucky as Brazil. It faces no threat of invasion. Its economy is more resilient to Donald Trump's senseless tariffs than almost anywhere else. It enjoys relatively friendly relations with both superpowers. Above all, it is awash with coveted resources.

78 What a partial pardon for Najib Razak says about Malaysia**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/asia/2026/09/24/what-a-partial-pardon-for-najib-razak-says-about-malaysia>

WHEN NAJIB RAZAK was going through a tough time as Malaysia's prime minister back in 2015, he knew he could count on a few mates. "If he needs advice, I am here as a friend," Sultan Ibrahim, the ruler of the southern state of Johor, told reporters. The sultan and the prime minister remained close, even as the scale of Mr Najib's theft from the 1MDB sovereign-wealth fund became clear.

79 China's Communist Party faces a generational shift**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/china/2026/09/22/chinas-communist-party-faces-a-generational-shift>

Next year, at the biggest recurring event on China's political calendar, a five-yearly Communist Party congress will confirm who will run the country until 2032. The supreme position of Xi Jinping is in little doubt. But hundreds of senior roles below him are up for grabs. A series of secretive meetings over the coming months will decide who gets them. The dates of one such event have just been announced: a gathering from October 26th to 29th of the 370 or so leaders who form the party's Central Committee. Officially they will discuss "full and rigorous party self-governance", meaning, in essence, obedience to Mr Xi. Privately they will ponder a generational shift in Chinese politics.

80 A contentious battle in Alaska may determine control of the Senate**Economist. 26th Sep 2026.**

↗ <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2026/09/20/a-contentious-battle-in-alaska-may-determine-control-of-the-senate>

Alaska is an unusual state with unusual politics. It is both tiny and enormous, with fewer than 740,000 people living in a territory more than twice the size of Texas. It is staunchly Republican yet politically open. The last Democratic presidential candidate to win Alaskans' vote was Lyndon Johnson, in 1964, but the state prizes moderation. Now America's 49th state is one of a handful that will determine if Democrats win the Senate.

81 Schools for the poor are not poor schools

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2026/09/24/schools-for-the-poor-are-not-poor-schools>

THE “WOKE”, race-and-gender-focused ideology that peaked in 2020 had no leader, but Nikole Hannah-Jones has a strong claim to be its defining intellectual. A journalist for the New York Times Magazine, she wrote “The 1619 Project”, a revisionist history of America centred on slavery, and won plaudits for a story in 2016 about sending her daughter to a school with mostly poor, non-white pupils. Her latest article, published on September 20th, is a partial mea culpa that has triggered a torrent of anti-woke schadenfreude. It recounts her daughter’s subsequent ordeal of absent or neglectful teachers and rowdy classmates, and rage at the sacrifice of her education in the vain hope of fixing a broken system one child at a time.

82 Donald Trump will lose his latest media battle

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2026/09/24/donald-trump-will-lose-his-latest-media-battle>

He was uncharacteristically silent as he cut the ribbon on a new helipad at the White House on September 21st. Donald Trump’s mouth moved, but viewers heard nothing. The press “pool” that normally relays the president’s public remarks was absent. Mr Trump had been muted by his latest skirmish with the press.

83 The White House may soon announce a nonsensical diesel-export ban

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2026/09/24/the-white-house-may-soon-announce-a-nonsensical-diesel-export-ban>

When voters are mad about a problem—particularly before an election—politicians usually try to solve it. Ideally, their proposed fix would be wise. But sometimes the solution that seems politically effective is also substantively nonsensical. Such is the case with diesel.

84 The love-in between Donald Trump and Delcy Rodríguez

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2026/09/23/the-love-in-between-donald-trump-and-delcy-rodriguez>

Donald Trump grinned and gave a thumbs-up as he posed for a photograph beside Delcy Rodríguez, a leading member of the torturing, election-stealing regime which all but destroyed Venezuela. Mr Trump met Ms Rodríguez, who is Venezuela's unelected interim president, at the UN General Assembly on September 22nd. For Mr Trump the encounter in New York was a chance to highlight a foreign-policy success. For Ms Rodríguez it was a golden opportunity to charm Mr Trump in the hope that he ignores opposition demands for elections and continues to favour her biddable authoritarianism.

85 Stand Up to US Bullying

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/editorials/stand-us-bullying.html>

It is high time India told the United States that India will not succumb to the threat of tariffs or secondary sanctions and be bullied into truncating its international transactions to comply with American diktat. President Trump has signed into law a piece of legislation that authorises him to levy tariffs up to 100% on imports from nations that buy Russian oil. The official Indian response has been to say that India will do what it thinks is required to be done to meet the energy needs of its 1.4 billion people. This can be interpreted as submitting to the US threat or as diplomatically phrased defiance. The time for ambiguity is over. The Trump administration has no respect for interlocutors who roll over when attacked—bullies are further encouraged by signs of weakness in their victims. New Delhi must tell Trump in plain language that India will buy Russian oil as it has been, in its own interest, and in the interest of the rest of the world, including American voters bristling over high gas prices.

86 Conflicts around Forest Reserves in Assam

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/commentary/conflicts-around-forest-reserves-assam.html>

Forest governance plays a crucial role in managing environmental variability and change across societies, particularly in regions where land use and resource rights are contested. In contemporary discourse, environmental policies—including those related to land, forests and climate change—are increasingly recognised as

arenas of struggle over authority and state–citizen relations (Muok et al 2021). Understanding these dynamics necessitates a deeper exploration of how these frameworks are intertwined with broader political shifts, particularly in contexts where conflicts between state authorities and local communities are prevalent.

87 Is Small Significant?

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/commentary/small-significant.html>

For more than three decades, Rajasthan politics has been known for its strong bipolarity. The state has witnessed the formation of governments by either the Indian National Congress (INC) or the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Also, despite attempts, the so-called “third force” has not seen the light of day. However, in recent times, Rajasthan’s electoral politics has witnessed the emergence of a small party, the Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP), and the same has caught the attention of electoral analysts. This article is an attempt to decode the meaning of the emergence of a small party in the essentially two-party state of Rajasthan.

88 What Ails India’s Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/special-articles/what-ails-indias-civil-registration-and-vital.html>

Accurate and timely records of births, deaths, and causes of death are foundational for monitoring population dynamics, identifying inequities, and shaping responsive, evidence-based policies. In India, despite the long-standing presence of the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, enacted in 1969, the Civil Registration System (CRS) continues to suffer from systemic limitations that compromise its completeness and timeliness (Kumar et al 2019; Rao and Gupta 2020). A significant number of vital events are either not registered or are reported with substantial delay, often reflecting occurrences from previous years (Office of the Registrar General 2025). Recognising this gap, the Sample Registration System (SRS) was introduced in the late 1960s as a dual-record system covering sampled areas to provide continuous demographic data. Although the SRS remains a reliable source for calculating annual birth and death rates, its sample-based nature, limited granularity, and publication lags constrain its utility for district-level planning and for tracking emerging demographic trends at finer spatial and temporal scales.

89 Bigger is not better

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/india-infrastructure-boom-fails-to-boost-private-investment/article71395632.ece>

According to official statements, India is in the midst of an infrastructure boom. In a press release dated June 9, 2026, the Central government declared: “After 2014, infrastructure development has increasingly focused on scale, integration, and long-term capacity creation.... Public capital expenditure increased from about Rs.2 lakh crore in FY2014-15 to Rs.12.2 lakh crore in FY2026-27.”

90 The President vs. the Press

New Yorker. 5th Oct 2026.

↗ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2026/10/05/the-president-vs-the-press>

Donald Trump’s decision, on September 18th, to summarily revoke White House access from three major news outlets—CNN, Politico, and MS NOW—is consistent with the mercurial, paranoid, and inscrutable style that has defined his political career but has been particularly prominent in his second term. Since Trump returned to the Presidency, his Administration has tended to justify its most belligerent actions by claiming national-security concerns or by couching said actions as an attempt to root out fraud. Earlier this year, the Times noted that Trump had cited “national security” as justification for acts as disparate as halting the development of wind farms off the East Coast, stripping union rights from federal employees, and continuing the construction of his behemoth ballroom. (He is now making the same argument regarding his colossal arch.) Accusations of fraud have been the reasoning for doge’s evisceration of the federal workforce, ice’s occupation of Minneapolis, and, just last week, the removal of three-quarters of a million people from the Affordable Care Act rolls. In a frenzied attempt to retrofit a rationale for Trump’s abrupt press ban, the White House turned to some version of both of these arguments.

91 India’s Democratic Resilience in a Majoritarian Setting

India Forum. 25th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.theindiaforum.in/politics/indias-democratic-resilience-majoritarian-setting>

Across a swathe of countries ranging from India and Turkey to the United States of America, ethnonationalist leaders have won power electorally and deployed electoral power to destroy democratic institutions and deliberative traditions (Levitsky and Way, 2010; Mukherji 2020). This hybrid competitive authoritarian

(CA) situation, as we term it, has two faces in India. Autocratic consolidation driven by state power impacts Parliament, the Supreme Court, the Election Commission, the media, and constrains civic space (Mukherji and Zarhani, 2023, Mukherji 2024). Yet the competitive elements of a CA regime in the form of elections and some civic rights persist (Brownlee, 2009).

92 A city of her own

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/feminist-urbanism-patriarchy-cities-women/article71438405.ece>

On August 22, while speaking with a young woman at a political meeting for women students in Pune, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, commented that “roads are controlled by patriarchy... businesses are controlled by patriarchy, the school education system is controlled by patriarchy...” I would add cities to the list.

Science

93 Many surgical interventions are little better than placebo

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2026/09/23/many-surgical-interventions-are-little-better-than-placebo>

EACH YEAR, according to the World Health Organisation, over 300m operations are conducted worldwide. Patients in the rich world are more likely to go under the knife—about 60% of people in England are expected to undergo surgery at least once in their lifetime. Some of these procedures are clearly life-saving, such as organ transplants and emergency Caesareans. But as the number of other operations continues to grow, some in the field are starting to ask an awkward question: how many are really necessary?

94 Space-going mirrors could offer daylight on demand

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2026/09/23/space-going-mirrors-could-offer-daylight-on-demand>

IN THE NORMAL course of things, night follows day. But if a Californian startup called Reflect Orbital gets its way that might become optional. The firm, which

has raised over \$28m in funding since it was founded in 2021, hopes to fly tens of thousands of highly reflective mirrors into space, and then use them to illuminate dark parts of Earth on demand. The idea is to provide solar power after sunset, help with disaster relief and perhaps even replace streetlights in cities.

95 Should you fear pesticide-resistant super-bed bugs?

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2026/09/23/should-you-fear-pesticide-resistant-super-bed-bugs>

The bedtime blessing, “Good night, sleep tight, don’t let the bed bugs bite”, had pretty much lost its true meaning by the 1980s, for good reason. After supping on sleeping humans for millennia, bed-bug populations had collapsed in rich countries in the face of modern pesticides. In mere decades the insects had gone from scourge to myth.

96 A new battery could make edible electronics safer

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2026/09/21/a-new-battery-could-make-edible-electronics-safer>

DEVICES THAT peer into the human body from the outside, like X-ray scanners and MRI machines, have transformed medicine. A new generation of ingestible sensors could do the same from the inside. But these require power, and as standard batteries contain harmful chemicals, swallowing them is generally inadvisable.

97 Consuming extra vitamin D is less good than it sounds

Economist. 26th Sep 2026.

↗ <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2026/09/18/consuming-extra-vitamin-d-is-less-good-than-it-sounds>

THE AUTUMN equinox, which fell this year on September 23rd, is a glum milestone, at least for people in the northern hemisphere. The days are shortening and the nights lengthening; around the equinox they cross over, and the winter gloom begins in earnest.

Sociology

98 Age Structure of Indian Unemployment

Economic & Political Weekly. Vol. 61, No-39. 26th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://www.epw.in/journal/2026/39/commentary/age-structure-indian-unemployment.html>

Recent work on the question of unemployment in India has uncovered a set of core empirical features that characterise the phenomenon. Unemployment is largely an urban phenomenon, and mostly affects the young and the highly educated. As pointed out by the recently released State of Working India report (APU 2026), unemployment rates are highest for the young and for graduates, and vary inversely with age.

99 Barriers everywhere

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/disability-urban-planning-universal-design-india/article71438412.ece>

What does it mean to be able? One may have a physical or sensory capacity, but whether that capacity translates into ability depends on the environment. Ability is not intrinsic—it emerges through relationships between bodies, environments, and the worlds they inhabit—and is an idea consistent with the biopsychosocial model of disability.

100 ‘Smart’ outside, shoddy inside

Frontline. 30th Sep 2026.

➤ <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/smart-cities-mission-india-failures-urban-development-infrastructure/article71427771.ece>

All major locations in Faridabad, be it the metro station, bus station, or the major four-way crossing, have an open waste dumping ground, boldly announcing the metropolis’ newly acquired “Smart City” status.

Journals & Magazines Covered

List of journals and magazines covered in this issue.

S.NO.	TITLE	Periodicity	Place of Publication
1	Chronicle of Higher Education	F	US
2	Economist (A.M.)	W	LONDON
3	Economic & Political Weekly	W	MUMBAI
4	Frontline	F	CHENNAI
5	History Today	M	UK
6	India Forum	W	DELHI
7	New Yorker	W	US
8	University News	W	DELHI