



US & CANADA

Newsletter

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MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

US POLITICS

“Washington in Flux”

- In a pivotal Sunday session, the U.S. Senate broke a six-week legislative deadlock, paving the way to end the longest federal government shutdown in American history. By a razor-thin margin of 60-40, [the chamber passed a procedural motion](#) on November 9 to advance a continuing resolution, effectively signalling the end of the 40-day impasse that began on October 1. The breakthrough was achieved only after a coalition of seven Democrats and one Independent joined Republicans to overcome a filibuster. The decisive [bloc](#) included Independent Senator Angus King (Maine) and Democrats Catherine Cortez Masto (Nev.), Dick Durbin (Ill.), John Fetterman (Pa.), Maggie Hassan (N.H.), Tim Kaine (Va.), Jacky Rosen (Nev.), and Jeanne Shaheen (N.H.). Their support provided the exact number of votes needed to reach the 60-vote threshold.

[The funding measure](#), which extends government operations through January 30, 2026, were signed by President Trump. The shutdown, having surpassed the previous 35-day record set in 2019, furloughed roughly 900,000 federal employees and disrupted services nationwide. Senate leadership hailed the vote as a “necessary compromise” to restore critical agency functions.

- Democrats secured key victories in Tuesday’s off-year elections, delivering a mixed verdict on the party’s future direction while holding ground in critical swing states. In a boost for the party’s

centrist wing, Representative Abigail Spanberger flipped the Virginia governor’s mansion, and Representative Miki Sherrill [held the governorship in New Jersey](#). Both campaigned as pragmatic “[problem solvers](#),” focusing on economic stability and affordability to woo suburban independents. Their successes effectively countered Republican narratives in battleground regions, validating a moderate strategy for statewide races.

Meanwhile, the progressive wing celebrated a [major symbolic victory](#) in New York City, where Zohran Mamdani won the race for mayor. The victory has reignited internal debates over whether the path to national dominance lies in the cautious centrist approach of the suburbs or the bold progressive platforms energized by urban centres. Beyond candidates, voters demonstrated a focus on kitchen-table issues through ballot measures. [Electorates in multiple states approved redistricting reforms](#) and permanent free school meal programs, signalling that despite high-level partisan rifts, grassroots support for pragmatic social welfare remains strong.

- The White House moved aggressively to fulfil a central campaign pledge, announcing a sweeping executive agreement with pharmaceutical manufacturers to implement “[Most-Favoured-Nation](#)” (MFN) pricing for high-cost prescription drugs. The initiative, described by administration officials as [a “historic realignment” of the healthcare market](#), ties the cost of specific medications in the United States to the lowest prices paid by other wealthy OECD nations. The

initial phase targets blockbuster drugs related to the nation's most improved chronic conditions: diabetes, heart disease, and anti-obesity medications (GLP-1 agonists). The deal marks a significant shift in domestic policy for the second Trump term, leveraging federal purchasing power to bypass congressional gridlock. While the pharmaceutical lobby has historically opposed such measures, the White House touted the agreement as a necessary intervention to curb inflation and provide immediate relief to millions of patients facing exorbitant out-of-pocket costs.

- [U.S. consumer confidence plummeted](#) in late November, signalling deepening economic anxiety in the wake of the record-breaking federal shutdown. The Conference Board reported Tuesday, November 25, that its Consumer Confidence Index fell to 88.7, down sharply from 95.5 in October- the lowest reading since April. [The decline highlights the lasting economic](#) scars of the 40-day impasse. While the government has reopened, analysts at The Conference Board attribute the souring mood to a “perfect storm” of persistent inflation, sluggish job growth, and the delayed financial strain on furloughed workers and contractors.

The report warns of significant political headwinds for the White House. [With economic pessimism now cutting](#) across party lines-and notably spiking among independents-the drop suggests that the “post-shutdown bounce” the administration hoped for has failed to materialize. As Republicans head into a challenging

midterm cycle, the data indicates that voter frustration with fiscal brinksmanship is hardening into broader economic discontent.

INDIA-US RELATIONS

- A major breakthrough in [India-U.S. economic relations](#) appears imminent following comments from India’s Trade Secretary, Rajesh Agrawal. Agrawal announced that negotiators have resolved the majority of outstanding disputes, placing the two nations on a clear path to finalize a comprehensive trade deal by the end of 2025.

Sources indicate the approaching pact is being [crafted as a “fair and balanced” agreement](#) designed to address long-standing friction points. Crucially, the deal is expected to ease high U.S. tariffs on Indian exports, a primary demand from New Delhi. The optimism suggests that intensified diplomatic efforts have successfully bridged gaps, setting the stage for a historic signing in the coming weeks.

- In a robust display of cross-party consensus, the U.S. Congress [passed a bipartisan resolution](#), calling for an immediate acceleration of the strategic and economic partnership with India.

The resolution, which passed with overwhelming support in both chambers, explicitly urges [the Trump administration to expedite](#) ongoing trade negotiations and prioritize the removal of persistent tariff barriers. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle emphasized that a stronger economic architecture with New Delhi is essential for long-term stability in the Indo-Pacific.

“This vote confirms that the U.S.-India relationship is a top legislative priority,” noted a statement from the [Congressional India Caucus](#). The move signals to negotiators in both capitals that the political will exists in Washington to finalize a comprehensive trade deal, effectively clearing the runway for the “fair and balanced” pact currently under discussion.

DIASPORA NEWS

- The Indian-American community across the United States erupted in celebration this week following [Zohran Mamdani’s historic election](#) as the first South Asian and Muslim Mayor of New York City. Community leaders and diaspora organizations hailed the victory as a watershed moment for immigrant representation in American politics.

Mamdani, 34, the son of acclaimed filmmaker Mira Nair, defeated former Governor Andrew Cuomo in a landslide on November 4. In his victory speech, he leaned into his heritage, quoting Jawaharlal Nehru and declaring New York “[a city built by immigrants, powered by immigrants, and now led by an immigrant](#).” The win is widely viewed by political analysts as a definitive arrival of the South Asian diaspora as a major political force in the U.S., transitioning from economic success to executive leadership.

- In a coordinated appeal to New Delhi, [the IndUS Canada Forum](#) urged the Indian government, to implement dual citizenship for overseas Indians, framing it as a “transformative reform” essential for India’s global rise. Led by [Vikram Bajwa](#),

[the forum](#)- representing over 79 diaspora organizations- argued that the current Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) scheme is insufficient for the 21st-century geopolitical landscape. Bajwa highlighted that the 80 lakh Indians residing in the U.S. and Canada constitute a massive strategic asset that remains underleveraged compared to the diasporas of nations like Israel or the UK.

The forum emphasized that dual citizenship would provide economic stability for professionals facing visa uncertainties and "tariff escalations" in the West, while also securing deeper investment commitments in Indian manufacturing and technology.

- The Indian Consulate in Seattle, in collaboration with prominent diaspora organizations, unveiled a “[Wall of Unity](#)”, a dedicated tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The installation, part of a broader cultural-heritage initiative launched in November, honours the legacy of the “[Iron Man of India](#)” and his pivotal role in national integration. Community leaders described the wall as a symbolic bridge connecting the Pacific Northwest diaspora with their historical roots. “This structure stands as a [reminder that our strength](#) lies in our togetherness,” the Consul General stated during the dedication ceremony. The project also aims to educate second-generation Indian-Americans about [India’s founding history](#) while fostering stronger cultural ties within the diverse Seattle community.

CANADA NEWS

“Canada’s Structural Reboot”

- The federal government unveiled its ambitious Budget 2025, presenting a sweeping fiscal roadmap titled “[Canada Strong](#).” The document outlines a transformative strategy designed to fundamentally restructure the national economy, with a central goal of reducing Canada’s historic over-reliance on a single trade partner—a clear nod to the volatility of the U.S. market.

The [investment-focused package directs](#) billions into critical domestic sectors, including a massive overhaul of national infrastructure and industrial capacity. Key pillars of the budget include accelerated housing construction to tackle the affordability crisis, a significant boost in defence spending to meet international obligations, and revitalized public services.

While business groups welcomed the focus on industrial growth, opposition critics have raised concerns about the long-term fiscal impact of such extensive spending.

- In a direct response to punishing U.S. trade levies, [Prime Minister Mark Carney unveiled a robust support package](#), designed to shield Canada’s beleaguered steel and lumber sectors. The measures aim to pivot the industries away from reliance on the U.S. market by fostering domestic demand and curbing foreign competition.

Key initiatives include tightening import quotas on steel from non-free trade partners to just 20% of 2024 levels and imposing a

new 25% global tariff on specific steel-derivative products like wind towers. Additionally, a “[Buy Canadian](#)” policy will now mandate that federal contracts exceeding \$25 million prioritize local materials. “We must protect our workers [and industries who are most exposed to U.S. tariffs](#),” Carney stated, acknowledging the effective closure of the American market under President Trump’s aggressive trade stance.

INDIA-CANADA NEWS

- In a significant step towards normalizing economic relations, India and Canada successfully concluded [the 7th Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment](#). The talks, held in New Delhi between Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Canadian Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu, [marked a strategic pivot in bilateral ties](#).

Moving beyond traditional commodities, the ministers identified critical minerals, clean energy, and aerospace as the new pillars of cooperation. A joint statement emphasized [the need for resilient supply chains](#), with Canada offering to leverage its vast mineral reserves to support India’s clean energy transition. The dialogue also set an ambitious target: aiming to double bilateral trade to \$50 billion by 2030.

- [Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney](#) and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the formal relaunch of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations, signalling a definitive “diplomatic thaw” after years of tension.

Meeting on the sidelines of [the G20 Summit in South Africa](#), the leaders agreed to an ambitious timeline, aiming to double bilateral trade to \$50 billion by 2030. The renewed talks will cover a broad spectrum of sectors, including goods, services, investment, agriculture, digital trade, and labour mobility.

“This is about re-establishing a stable footing,” Carney stated, emphasizing India's role as a [crucial partner for diversifying Canadian](#) trade beyond the U.S. The move follows a period of suspended engagement sparked by diplomatic controversies in 2023. Both leaders also committed to deepening cooperation in civil nuclear energy and defence, marking a significant [pivot towards strategic economic alignment](#).

DIASPORA NEWS

- Canada has officially overhauled its citizenship laws, delivering a major victory for the global Indian diaspora. With [Bill C-3 receiving Royal Assent](#), the federal government has amended the Citizenship Act to allow Canadian parents born abroad to pass citizenship to their children born outside Canada.

This historic move overturns the controversial 2009 “first-generation limit,” which had created a class of “Lost Canadians” by barring citizenship transmission beyond the first generation born overseas. The reform immediately [benefits thousands of Indian-origin families](#) previously excluded by the restriction. Going forward, the legislation introduces a new “substantial connection” test: parents

born abroad can now pass on citizenship if they demonstrate at least three years (1,095 days) of cumulative physical presence in Canada. Immigration Minister Lena Metlege Diab hailed the law as a restoration of fairness that reflects [the reality of modern, globally mobile families](#).

- Diplomatic tensions flared in Ottawa after an unofficial “referendum” organized by the [separatist group Sikhs for Justice \(SFJ\)](#) descended into controversy. Held on November 24-25, the event-seeking support for a separate homeland of “Khalistan”—drew thousands of participants but was marred by aggressive rhetoric and anti-India demonstrations.

Reports confirm that participants openly [desecrated the Indian national flag and chanted violent slogans](#), sparking immediate outrage among the broader diaspora community. The display drew a sharp rebuke from Dinesh Patnaik, the Indian High Commissioner to Canada.