ARBiT
it happens here...

International Sushi Day: Celebrating Japan's Iconic Culinary Art

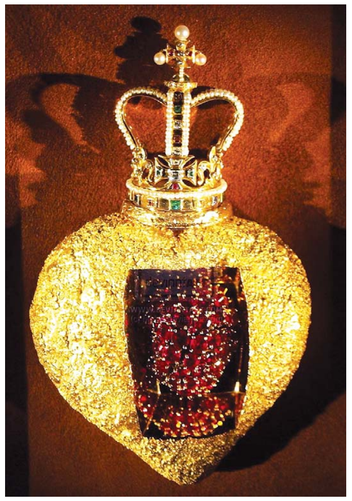
International Sushi Day, celebrated on June 18, honours one of Japan's most beloved and globally popular dishes. Sushi is far more than raw fish, it represents a centuries-old culinary tradition rooted in precision, balance and artistry. From classic nigiri and maki rolls to modern fusion creations, sushi showcases the harmony of rice, seafood and fresh ingredients. The day encourages food lovers to explore authentic Japanese flavours, support local sushi chefs and learn about sustainable seafood practices. Whether enjoyed at a fine restaurant or homemade with friends, sushi brings people together through taste, culture and creativity.

राष्ट्रदूत
THURSDAY
18 June 2026
A-B

#SALVADOR DALI

"Royal Heart" Came to Life

It remains preserved at the Dalí Theatre-Museum in Figueres, where visitors can still witness its mesmerizing heartbeat in person

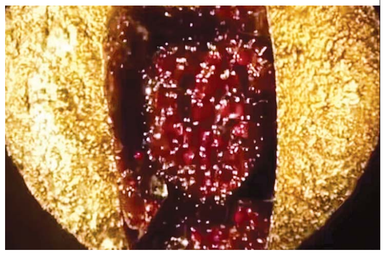


In 1953, the surrealist genius Salvador Dalí challenged the very idea of traditional jewelry by creating something entirely unprecedented. Convinced that conventional jewels were "dead," Dalí set out to design a piece that would embody life itself. The result was the legendary Royal Heart, a dazzling and imaginative masterpiece that blurred the line between art, engineering, and symbolism.

Crafted from 46 rubies, 42 diamonds, 4 emeralds, and gold, the Royal Heart was not just visually stunning, it was mechanically alive. Hidden within the brooch is a tiny, intricate mechanism that causes the rubies to expand and contract rhythmically, mimicking the pulsing beat of a real human heart. This innovation transformed static gemstones into a living, breathing artwork, unlike anything seen before in the world of jewelry. Dalí drew inspiration from royal iconography and the sacred heart imagery deeply rooted in his Spanish heritage. These influences are evident in the piece's dramatic form and emotional intensity, hallmarks of his surrealist vision. By combining symbolism with cutting-edge mechanics, Dalí elevated jewelry from mere decoration to a form of expressive, living art.

Unlike many masterpieces that pass through collectors' hands, the Royal Heart was never sold. Today, it remains preserved at the Dalí Theatre-Museum in Figueres, where visitors can still witness its mesmerizing heartbeat in person. The piece continues to captivate audiences, standing as a testament to Dalí's boundless creativity and his desire to push artistic boundaries.

More than just a jewel, the Royal Heart is a symbol of innovation and imagination, proof that the most powerful works of art are not merely observed, but experienced.



The Game Is The Science Essentially!

In Sooryavanshi's case, Dr. Niaz observes movement patterns commonly associated with elite baseball hitters. Before impact, the batter coils his body, creating separation between the rotation of his hips and shoulders. This movement stores potential energy in the muscles and connective tissues of the torso. At the moment of release, that stored energy is unleashed through a coordinated sequence of movements known as the kinetic chain. Force is generated from the ground, transferred through the legs, hips and core, before travelling through the shoulders, arms and ultimately into the bat. The concept is widely recognised in sports science. Whether it is a golfer driving a ball, a baseball player hitting a home run or a tennis player serving at over 200 kilometres per hour, the most powerful athletes generate force through efficient sequencing rather than raw strength alone.

Asif Ullah Khan
A veteran journalist who has written for The Khaleej Times and The Brunei Times

Dr. Nauman Niaz occupies a unique place in Pakistan's cricket discourse. Known to television audiences as a cricket broadcaster, analyst and historian of the game, he is, by profession, an internal medicine specialist, endocrinologist and diabetologist. Over the years, however, he has developed a reputation for bringing scientific concepts into cricket analysis, often explaining performances through physiology, biomechanics and sports science rather than relying solely on conventional cricketing wisdom.

As co-host of the popular YouTube programme *Caught Behind* alongside former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif, Dr. Niaz frequently offers perspectives that differ from those of former players. Where many analysts focus on technique, temperament or tactics, he often examines the physical and neurological mechanisms that underpin elite sporting performance.

It is therefore, perhaps, unsurprising that when discussing the extraordinary rise of teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Dr. Niaz approached the subject from a scientific angle. While many observers have marvelled at the youngster's fearless stroke play and astonishing six-hitting ability, Dr. Niaz believes the explanation lies deeper than talent alone.

According to him, what cricket fans are witnessing is a rare convergence of genetics, biomechanics, neuromuscular development, visual processing and years of highly specialised training. In simple terms, Sooryavanshi's success is not merely the result of natural ability or youthful confidence. It is the product of a body and mind that appear unusually well suited to the demands of elite batting.

The fascination surrounding Sooryavanshi stems largely from one question: how can a 15-year-old generate the kind of power normally associated with fully developed international cricketers?

For Dr. Niaz, the answer begins with what he describes as a "genetic gift." This does not mean success is predetermined by biology alone. Rather, genetics may provide the foundation upon which skills are built. Certain athletes possess natural advantages in coordination, balance, reaction speed, flexibility and force generation. These qualities can be improved through training, but some individuals begin with a higher baseline than others.

Watching Sooryavanshi bat, Dr. Niaz sees evidence of such natural advantages. The teenager appears to possess exceptional hand-eye coordination and an unusual ability to synchronise visual information with physical movement. His balance remains stable even when attacking at full power, while his timing often seems effortless. These are characteristics that coaches spend years attempting to develop, yet, some athletes appear to acquire them almost instinctively.

The second component of Dr. Niaz's explanation involves neuromuscular development. Elite batting is fundamentally a reaction-based skill. A batter has only fractions of a second to judge line, length, pace and movement before deciding which shot to play.

According to Dr. Niaz, Sooryavanshi's years of repetition from an early age have likely created highly efficient neural pathways between his eyes, brain and muscles. Sports scientists often refer to this as motor learning or muscle memory, although the memory itself resides in the nervous system rather than the muscles.

When Sooryavanshi watches the ball leave the bowler's hand, his brain appears capable of processing information extremely quickly. This allows him to recognise length earlier than most players. The advantage may amount to only a few hundredths of a second, but at elite levels, such margins can be decisive.

Those additional moments provide more time to move into position, align the body correctly and execute a stroke. To spectators, the shot appears effortless. In reality, it is the result of highly refined neurological processing taking place at remarkable speed. Perhaps, the most fascinating aspect of Dr. Niaz's assessment concerns biomechanics, the science of how the body generates and transfers force.

Traditional cricket commentary often attributes six-hitting to strength. Dr. Niaz argues that this explanation is incomplete. Strength certainly matters, but elite power hitters rely on far more than muscular force alone.

In Sooryavanshi's case, Dr. Niaz observes movement patterns commonly associated with elite baseball hitters. Before impact, the batter coils his body, creating separation between the rotation of his hips and shoulders. This movement stores potential energy in the muscles and connective tissues of the torso.

At the moment of release, that stored energy is unleashed through a coordinated sequence of movements known as the kinetic chain. Force is generated from the ground, transferred through the legs, hips and core, before travelling through the shoulders, arms and ultimately into the bat.

#BRILLIANCE

Dr. Nauman Niaz

The concept is widely recognised in sports science. Whether it is a golfer driving a ball, a baseball player hitting a home run or a tennis player serving at over 200 kilometres per hour, the most powerful athletes generate force through efficient sequencing rather than raw strength alone.

Dr. Niaz believes Sooryavanshi possesses an unusually efficient kinetic chain for a player of his age. His lower body provides stability and generates force, while his upper body acts as a conduit for energy transfer. The result is extraordinary bat speed and power generation.

This may explain why many of his sixes travel distances that seem disproportionate to his physical size. Equally impressive is the youngster's balance. Modern batting increasingly rewards players who can attack without losing control. Many young power hitters struggle because aggressive intent causes them to become unstable at the point of contact.

According to Dr. Niaz, one of the defining features of his batting is dynamic balance, the ability to remain stable while moving explosively. His back leg often acts as a powerful anchor, absorbing force and maintaining equilibrium. Meanwhile, his centre of gravity remains remarkably controlled throughout the stroke.

This balance allows him to generate maximum power without compromising timing or consistency. It also explains why his aggressive strokes often appear technically sound despite their apparent audacity.

Another important observation concerns adaptability. Many young players can dominate junior cricket through a narrow range of strengths. Once opponents identify weaknesses, their performances decline. Dr. Niaz argues that Sooryavanshi's success appears rooted in underlying athletic qualities rather than a single technical advantage.

Because his game is built upon visual processing, balance, coordination and efficient movement patterns, he possesses attributes that can adapt to different conditions and formats. Such qualities are often more sustainable than success based purely on physical superiority. The psychological dimension is equally significant. Observers frequently describe Sooryavanshi as fearless. Dr. Niaz offers a different interpretation. He believes the youngster's confidence stems not from recklessness but from competence.

When a batter repeatedly judges length correctly, consistently finds the middle of the bat and trusts his movement patterns, confidence becomes a natural consequence. Self-belief emerges from repeated success rather than bravado.

This distinction matters because confidence built on skill tends to be more resilient than confidence built on emotion. It helps explain why Sooryavanshi appears remarkably composed despite operating under intense scrutiny and expectations.

One of the most intriguing aspects of Dr. Niaz's analysis is his warning about player development.

Modern cricket places enormous emphasis on fitness, strength training and athletic conditioning. While these elements are essential, Dr. Niaz cautions against excessive intervention that could disrupt the very qualities that make Sooryavanshi unique.

Athletes often possess highly individual movement patterns. Attempts to impose uniform techniques or physique standards can sometimes undermine natural advantages. Dr. Niaz argues that coaches should focus on enhancing Sooryavanshi's fitness, endurance and fielding without fundamentally altering his biomechanical strengths.

The objective should be refinement rather than reconstruction. This perspective reflects a broader trend in modern sports science, which increasingly emphasises optimising individual strengths rather than forcing athletes into standardised models.

For Dr. Niaz, the most encouraging aspect of Sooryavanshi's game is that his strengths are not confined to T20 cricket. While his power-hitting naturally attracts attention, the underlying traits he identifies, early ball recognition, balance, coordination, rotational efficiency and adaptability, are valuable across all formats.

Historically, some of the world's greatest batters have relied on similar foundations. The ability to judge length early, maintain balance under pressure and generate power through efficient movement patterns is as useful in Test cricket as it is in limited-overs formats.

That is why Dr. Niaz views Sooryavanshi as more than a teenage sensation or a social-media phenomenon. He sees the potential foundations of a complete batter capable of succeeding at the highest level. Of course, potential does not guarantee greatness. Cricket history is filled with prodigies who struggled to fulfil early promise. Technical challenges, injuries, changing circumstances and the pressures of expectation have derailed many gifted careers. Yet, what makes Sooryavanshi particularly intriguing is that the qualities identified by Dr. Niaz are not superficial. They are rooted in the fundamental mechanics of athletic performance.

Whether he ultimately becomes one of the game's leading batters remains uncertain. But if Dr. Niaz's analysis is correct, cricket fans may be witnessing something rarer than the emergence of a gifted teenager. They may be watching the development of an athlete whose genetics, neurology, biomechanics and skill acquisition have combined to produce one of the most fascinating batting talents of his generation.

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#WORLD CUP

The Beautiful Game

If the script of the 2022 FIFA world cup final between France and Argentina had been submitted for a fantasy movie, it would have been rejected for being too unrealistic

Rakshat Hooja

Argentina are the world champions, Messi, the greatest of our era, France can hold their head high, and football is the most beautiful of all games. These are the facts. The emotions that any football lover went through last evening cannot ever be put down on paper. As a commentator said, if the script of the 2022 FIFA world cup final between France and Argentina had been submitted for a fantasy movie, it would have been rejected for being too unrealistic.

Amazing as the story of the match itself was, and it was an rollercoaster tale of skill, brilliance, heart, joy, agony, and joy; Alvarez ran 13.6 km before being substituted, Varne fell to the ground as he was replaced after making last of his numerous clearances; it is a sense of history and a question of destiny that made this an epic to be remembered.

In 1986, I was in Beneras. A kid getting hooked to football, who watched Maradona's Argentina give up a 2-0 lead in the final. Voller equalised in the 85th minute, before Argentina won the world cup with a Burruchaga goal within two minutes. Then, like all true

Indians who instinctively adopt a world cup team as if it's their own, I was supporting West Germany. But for kids, such heartbreaks are short lived! It was only later in life that I realised that I had seen a historic match and the cementing of the legacy of one of the greatest players ever.

36 years later, last evening, the doggies and the family put on the TV at home to see Argentina play some mesmerizing football and run up a 2-0 lead again, via Messi

and De Maria. Such was the control of the Argentine side that France did not have a touch of the ball in the opponents D in the first half, let alone a shot on Target. By half-time, it seemed that the one trophy that had eluded Messi in his career would finally be his in his last world cup appearance. It's called half time for a reason, there is still more to come or as we say in India, *kahani abhi khatam nahi hui hai*. Midway through the second half, the commentators started talking about how Argentina had started tormenting France with a certain swagger and the defending champions were hardly able to get control of the ball. And suddenly, against the run of play, France had a penalty that Mbappe converted.

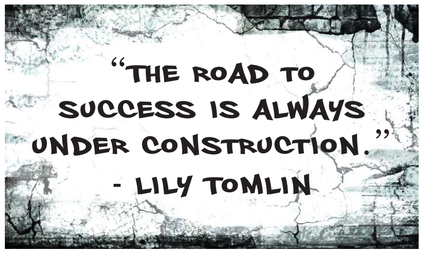
The dreaded commentators curse had hit and it would hit again for France to equalise with more Mbappe brilliance. A volley to remember for the ages. Game on and France in the ascendency. And then, Messi turned it on its head again to again give Argentina the lead in extra time, only to see France level it via a Mbappe penalty again! And Argentina, then, won it in penalties. Martinez making a save, and Messi and his teammates, all being on target. And we could all breathe, celebrate and may even shed a tear.

Messi dropped to the ground as teammates piled on him with joy. Among them was an interloper, Aguero, who ran in from the stands wearing Otamendi's shirt. Messi's strike partner and Maradona's son-in-law, Aguero, retired from football last year after a sudden diagnosis of a heart condition. He carried Messi on his shoulders with the team singing with them and the wall of light blue and white supporters in front of them who could argue that destiny is not real.

This was the greatest world cup final I have seen. Maybe, the best game ever. And this time, I am thankful for having witnessed history and seen Messi, one of the greatest to have ever laced up, achieve his and Argentina's dream.

RIP Maradona and well done Messi and Argentina!

THE WALL



BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman