

Dumani Mail

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IMD issues yellow alert for Delhi, stormy weather likely across North India

New Delhi: Weather conditions across India have begun shifting once again under the influence of an active western disturbance, bringing light to moderate rainfall and a noticeable dip in daytime temperatures across several parts of North and Northwest India.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued warnings for stormy weather in at least 11 states, including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. Wind speeds in some regions are expected to reach up to 85 kmph. A yellow alert has been sounded for the national capital, indicating the likelihood of rainfall, thunderstorms, and gusty winds.

The impact of the western disturbance is also expected to extend to the hilly regions. Several districts in Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh may face potential risks of landslides and avalanches due to changing weather patterns.

Increased wind activity is



likely to bring down minimum temperatures by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius, leading to slightly cooler conditions, particularly during morning and evening hours.

The IMD has issued a

yellow alert for Wednesday in the Delhi-NCR region, forecasting cloudy skies, strong winds, and intermittent rainfall. Thunderstorm activity is also expected in isolated pockets,

with one or two spells of rain or storm conditions likely during the day.

In Delhi, the minimum temperature is expected to hover around 16 degrees Celsius, while

the maximum temperature may reach approximately 27 degrees Celsius.

Looking ahead, Thursday is likely to see partly cloudy skies in the capital. From April 10 to 11, weather conditions are expected to improve gradually, with clearer skies and a steady rise in temperature. Maximum temperatures during this period may climb to 33 to 34 degrees Celsius.

In Uttarakhand, districts such as Dehradun, Nainital, Chamoli, and Pithoragarh are likely to witness light to moderate rainfall on April 8 and 9, accompanied by winds of up to 60 kmph.

Similarly, districts in Himachal Pradesh, including Shimla, Kullu, Mandi, Kangra, and Kinnaur, are expected to receive moderate to heavy rainfall between April 8 and 10, as the weather system continues to influence the region.

MEA issues advisory to Indian nationals to exit Iran expeditiously over evolving situation in West Asia crisis

New Delhi: In view of the rapidly evolving situation in Iran, the Indian Embassy in Iran has advised Indian nationals who are currently in Iran to expeditiously exit Iran, in coordination with the Embassy and using the routes suggested by the Embassy.

In the advisory, it said that there should be no attempt to approach any international land border without prior

consultation and coordination with the Embassy.

Meanwhile, It has requested the Indian nationals to monitor official updates closely. The embassy can be contacted through Mobile Numbers +989128109115, +989128109109, +989128109102 and +98932179359. The email of the embassy is cons.tehran@mea.gov.in.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla pays tribute to Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay

New Delhi: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla today paid tribute to Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay on his death anniversary.

In a social media post, Mr Birla said that in the form of Vande Mataram, he gave not merely a song, but a great mantra of worship for Mother India, which wove the entire nation into a single thread and infused the freedom struggle with new consciousness.

The Lok Sabha Speaker described Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay as a great patriot, a fierce nationalist thinker, and an immortal litterateur of Indian consciousness.

Mr Birla added that through an immortal work like Anandamath, the divine light of devotion, sacrifice, and national duty kindled for the motherland will continue to illuminate the Indian psyche for ages to come.

8th Poshan Pakhwada 2026 will be observed from tomorrow

New Delhi: The Women and Child Development Ministry will commemorate the 8th edition of Poshan Pakhwada – 2026 from tomorrow across the country. Underscoring the importance of nutrition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emphasised that a well-nourished child is the foundation of a strong nation.

He said that Poshan Abhiyaan is not just a government programme but a people's movement to ensure holistic nutrition for every mother and child.

The theme for Poshan Pakhwada is maximising brain development in the first six years of life. This recognises that early childhood, particularly the first one thousand days, is critical for brain development, physical

growth, and overall well-being.

Scientific evidence indicates that over 85 per cent of brain development occurs by the age of six, underscoring the importance of optimal nutrition, responsive caregiving, and early learning.

During the Pakhwada, activities will be organised across States and Union Territories through Anganwadi Centres, with participation from mothers, carers, families, community institutions, and local bodies.

These will include Poshan Panchayats, awareness sessions, early stimulation activities, play-based learning initiatives, and campaigns promoting healthy lifestyles and reduced screen time among young children.

EC recalls observer from Bengal for poor knowledge

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Wednesday recalled its general observer from a West Bengal constituency for not having basic information about the seat where he was deployed.

Officials said during a briefing of the observers by the EC, it was found that Anurag Yadav, General Observer, Cooch Behar Dakshin, did not know the number of polling stations in his assembly constituency. He was immediately recalled by the order of the commission.

Vegetable vendor held for molesting 11-year-old girl in outer Delhi

New Delhi: A 25-year-old vegetable vendor was arrested for allegedly molesting an 11-year-old girl outside her residence in outer Delhi's Nihal Vihar area, police said on Wednesday.

According to an official, a PCR call was received at Nihal Vihar police station on April 4, reporting that a girl had been molested by an unidentified man who fled from the spot after committing the offence. The statement of the girl was recorded in the presence of her parents. Based on the complaint, a case was registered under relevant sections, along with provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, police said.

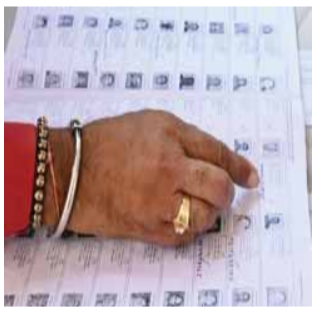
India welcomes ceasefire between US and Iran

New Delhi: India has welcomed the ceasefire reached between the United States and Iran. In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs expressed hope that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia and unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce through the Strait of Hormuz. The Ministry stated that India has continuously advocated de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy, which are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict. It added that the conflict has already caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks.

Caretaker slits farmhouse owner's throat with sickle

New Delhi: Police arrested a caretaker in Delhi on Tuesday for allegedly slitting the throat of a 35-year-old farmhouse owner here with a sickle. The official said police identified the accused as Khemchand (65), a resident of Hirapur Khurd district in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh. The Sohna Police crime unit took action after registering an FIR against the accused at the Sohna police station.

No exit polls from 7 am of April 9 till 6.30 pm of April 29: EC



New Delhi: Exit polls can neither be held nor disseminated from 7 am of April 9 till 6.30 pm of April 29 for the five assembly elections taking place this month, the Election Commission has said.

It has also cautioned that conducting or broadcasting exit polls in the period is violative of section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and is "punishable with imprisonment up to a period of two years, or with fine or both".

While Kerala, Assam and Puducherry going for assembly polls on April 9, the electoral exercise will be held in Tamil Nadu on April 23.

Counting of Ornaments and Valuables in Srimandir Ratna Bhandar Resumes Under Tight Security, Supervised by Gajapati Maharaj

Puri : The counting process of ornaments and valuable items stored in the Ratna Bhandar (treasury) of Srimandir has resumed today, Wednesday, April 8, 2026, under strict security arrangements.

As per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) approved by the state government, the counting work had initially begun on March 25, 2026, at an auspicious time of 12:09 PM. The Ratna Bhandar was opened in the presence of a magistrate, maintaining all sanctity and security protocols.

Today, authorized members assembled at the Srimandir office conference hall at the scheduled time. The Chief Administrator briefed them—especially the newly inducted members—on maintaining confidentiality regarding Ratna Bhandar-related information. All members submitted declarations to uphold secrecy.

Under the leadership of Chief Administrator Dr. Aravind Padhee and the Chairman of the high-level committee formed for the Ratna Bhandar, along with the District Collector, Superintendent of Police, senior officials, representatives of Chhatisha Nijog, sub-committee members, and other



staff, the team entered the temple premises at around 10:30 AM.

Before entering the Ratna Bhandar, all members wore traditional attire and were instructed to leave behind any metallic objects. They followed temple traditions and sought blessings from Maa Bimala, Maa Bhuvaneshwari, Maa Bedha Kali, and Maa Lakshmi. After security checks through metal detectors near the Beharan gate, they entered the treasury area.

In the presence of a magistrate, the Ratna Bhandar

was opened at 11:55 AM. The counting process of ornaments used in temple rituals was conducted systematically by authorized goldsmith members, gemologists, and weighing officials. The items were verified, photographed, videographed, and digitally catalogued (E-catalogue), following the same procedures as on the first day.

After completion of the day's work, the Ratna Bhandar was closed and sealed again in the presence of the magistrate. All recorded data was securely stored

in the branch office strong room.

It has been decided that the counting work will continue even on Saturdays. During the upcoming Chandan Yatra period, the work will proceed based on available time, in consultation with temple authorities and Chhatisha Nijog.

Following all government guidelines, today's counting process was completed smoothly. The Chief Administrator expressed gratitude to all servers, officials, and devotees for their wholehearted cooperation.

Delhi LG Taranjit Singh Sandhu and CM Rekha Gupta conduct joint inspection at Vasudev Ghat

New Delhi : Delhi Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta conducted a joint inspection at Vasudev Ghat on Wednesday to assess the city's preparedness for the upcoming summer and rainy seasons. During the visit, the LG and CM reviewed various aspects of the ghat's maintenance, including boat operations and the condition of the iron bridge. Speaking to reporters, LG Taranjit Singh Sandhu emphasised a collaborative Delhi administration approach to address the capital's civic challenges. "You can see the challenges of Delhi; everyone is aware of them. We are working with a 'whole of Delhi administration' approach. We have discussed with the Chief Minister, the entire cabinet, and the administration that everyone will be involved in this effort," the LG said. He further said that he, along



with the Chief Minister, will continue to conduct these inspections to ensure a constant focus on challenges in the summer and rainy seasons. "We are here to assess the challenges for the summer and rainy seasons, along with issues like cleanliness. The Chief Minister and I will continue to conduct these inspections to ensure constant focus on these

issues," Sandhu added. Underscoring Delhi's significance in the national vision, the LG said that the capital plays a critical role in the Prime Minister's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat'.

"Delhi is the capital, and it plays a critical role. We hope that if not revolutionary, then incremental changes will keep happening," he

remarked. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta lauded the central government for regularising Delhi's unauthorised colonies on an "As Is, Where Is" basis under the Pradhan Mantri Unauthorised Colonies in Delhi Awas Adhikar Yojana (PM-UDAY) scheme, noting that the new framework allows for the regularisation of 1,531 colonies without requiring layout plan approval. Furthermore, she mentioned that all plots and buildings within these colonies will be treated as residential.

Addressing a press conference at the National Media Centre, she mentioned that joint surveys will be conducted by revenue officials under strict timelines. The DDA-GIS survey will be completed within 7 days, resolve deficiencies within 15 days, and issue conveyance

deeds within 45 days. She also noted that out of 1,731 unauthorised colonies, 511 are being regularised immediately.

"... In 2019, the Government launched the PM-UDAY scheme for unauthorised colonies in Delhi. Under this, residents were granted ownership transfer and mortgage rights. So far, around 40,000 conveyance deeds and authorisation slips have been issued, though technical problems slowed progress, particularly with layout plan approvals. Thanks to the intervention of the Prime Minister and the Urban Ministry, a major step has now been taken. Delhi has about 50 lakh residents in unauthorised colonies, about 10 lakh families. The new scheme allows regularisation of 1,531 colonies, without requiring layout plan approval. All plots and buildings will be treated as residential," said CM Gupta.

The schedule for this year's Chandan Yatra has been approved in a meeting of the Chhatis Nijog

Puri: The schedule for this year's Chandan Yatra has been approved in a meeting of the Chhatis Nijog (traditional servitor groups) and the Niti Sub-Committee of the Shri Jagannath Temple.



Key Dates and Events:
20th - Akshaya Tritiya
24th - Niladri Mahodayashtami
April 30 - Narasimha Janma
May 9 - Bhauri Yatra

(morning offering)
1:10-4:30 PM - Bhoga Mandap
3:00 PM - Start of Dwadasha Yatra
3:30 PM - Procession of deities (Chal Pratima) for Chandan Yatra

3:00-4:30 PM - Second Bhoga Mandap
12:00 Midnight - Entry of Lord Narasimha
Until 1:30 AM - Completion of Narasimha Janma rituals

Followed by Pana Bhoga and return procession (Bahuda) of Chandan Thakur
Other Arrangements:
During Chandan Yatra, Narasimha Janma, and Bhauri Yatra:
Water sprinkling on roads
Security arrangements
Lighting, illumination
Cleanliness measures
Special decoration at Narendra Tank area

Allegation of Illegal Encroachment on 40-Foot Public Road in Sipasurubali Mouza

Puri: According to government records under Brahmagiri Tahasil and Puri Consolidation, Sipasurubali Mouza contains valuable land assets. Among these is a 40-foot-wide public road. It has been alleged that some influential and powerful individuals have illegally and forcefully encroached upon this road and are carrying out construction work there.



As per available information, based on an investigation report submitted by the concerned RI to the Additional Sub-Collector (Consolidation), Puri, the land in Sipasurubali Mouza under Sabik Khata No. 145, Plot No. 312/425, with an area of 182 decimals, is recorded as a public road.

As per available information, based on an investigation report submitted by the concerned RI to the Additional Sub-Collector (Consolidation), Puri, the land in Sipasurubali Mouza under Sabik Khata No. 145, Plot No. 312/425, with an area of 182 decimals, is recorded as a public road. Similarly, as per consolidation land records, Khata No. 521, Plot No. 754, with an area of 172 decimals, is also classified as a road. The width of this road is 40 feet.

This act is completely illegal.
Due to the construction of the boundary wall by occupying 20 feet of the road, the road has become narrow, causing inconvenience to the general public. The illegal digging and construction have also damaged the cement concrete road. Furthermore, the transportation of large stones by heavy trucks for the construction work has worsened the condition of the road,

breaking it into pieces despite significant public expenditure on its construction.
It is alleged that since Radha Shyam is an influential person, no action is being taken against him despite complaints. As a result, he continues to unlawfully occupy the government road and carry out construction activities.
The general public is demanding that the district administration and the District Collector take notice of this issue and initiate legal action against the illegal activities.

8th day of the Odia Paksha celebration, a blood donation camp was organized



Puri: On the 8th day of the Odia Paksha celebration, a blood donation camp was organized today by the Puri District Administration and the Red Cross branch at the conference hall of Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya. A total of 30 units of blood were collected during the camp.

Mahavidyalaya, Dr. Bipin Bihari Khuntia; Deputy Collector Anushrava Gantayat; former administrator Padmanabha Panda; Deputy Director of Information and Public Relations Santosh Kumar Sethi; Blood Bank Officer Dipak Kumar Sahu; editor of the social organization Samarpan, Jayanti Mahapatra; Soumendra Das; Sukanta Kumar Dash; Baidhar Mahapatra, and others, who helped manage the camp.

Puri: A special day dedicated to folk art will be celebrated at Pipili on the upcoming 10th of this month. On the occasion of "Odia Pakhya," the Department of Odia Language, Literature, and Culture has made arrangements for this event.
The program will be held in the afternoon at the Pipili Pada Ground. To ensure the smooth and systematic conduct of the event, a preparatory meeting was held today in the forenoon at the Pipili Block Conference Hall under the chairmanship of Additional District Magistrate (Protocol) Nilamadhab Bhoi.



government for deciding to organize a state-level festival at Pipili to encourage folk artists. He advised that the event should be conducted successfully with everyone's cooperation and also inspected the venue, giving various suggestions.
The Additional District Magistrate instructed all

of hanging electric and cable wires, ambulance services, healthcare arrangements, and wide publicity of the event.
At the beginning, Additional Secretary of the Culture Department, Smita Mohanty, welcomed everyone and discussed the program schedule, concluding with a vote of thanks.
Deputy Director of the department, Suchismita Mantri, provided detailed information about the event. She informed that a grand cultural procession will be organized on April 10 from Pipili Jawahar Vidyapitha to the Pada Ground.

participate in traditional attire and perform cultural programs. On this occasion, a massive cultural rally representing folk arts from all districts of Odisha will begin at 4:00 PM from Jawahar School Sports Ground and conclude at Pada Ground, where the main ?????????? will start at 6:30 PM.
Among others present at the meeting were Pipili BDO Saroj Kumar Rout, District Culture Officer Hemanta Behera, Deputy Director of Public Relations Santosh Kumar Sethi, and several other officials who participated in the discussion. Later, all officials, along with MLA Pattanayak, visited the venue.

Workshop on Solid Waste Management, Sanitation and Hygiene for Bomaloi Panchayat



Sambalpur-07/04(DMS)
workshop on solid waste management, sanitation and hygiene for Bomaloi Panchayat was organized at the Aditya Aluminium Project Office "Gyandhara" with the joint support of Aditya Aluminium, Lapanga and its partner NGO NIWCYD. The workshop aimed to raise awareness among Panchayat stakeholders on environmental protection, sanitation and proper waste management practices.

Pradhan, Samiti Member, Ward Members, CRPs, MBKs, Anganwadi and ASHA workers, SHG members and other community representatives.
Representatives from NIWCYD, Smt. Subhadra Mahapatra and Shri Jitendra Kumar Sahu, shared details about the "Lighthouse Project," which aims to strengthen waste segregation, collection and recycling systems in the Panchayat. The initiative seeks to develop Bomaloi Panchayat as a model Panchayat for sustainable waste management.

Cyclone hailstorm destroyed thousands of houses, displaced people on the roads

Keonjhar: Thousands of houses in the Patna block of Keonjhar district have been damaged due to a severe cyclone followed by a hail storm that took place on Tuesday morning. Many have become homeless and are taking shelter at the roadside. Tension erupted after hundreds of homeless families came to the road.
After the incident when the villagers failed to get a quick response from the administration, they protested by obstructing NH 220 near Mallipashi village. Local police and administrative officers

rushed to the spot and discussed with the protesters.
Sources said that today morning at about 7 am, a sudden hailstorm appeared where thousands of houses of four gram panchayats were severely affected. Roofs made of asbestos, tiles of houses have been damaged. Kutch houses made of mud have been allegedly demolished. Many numbers of cars and bikes have been broken.
Demanding immediate compensation, the aggrieved people have blocked the road at

Malliposhi Chhack on National Highway No. 220. Due to this vehicle movement on Dhenkikote-Patna-Karanja road has been stopped. Hundreds of vehicles are stuck due to the blockade of the highway. Block Development officer Patna Manas Dandpat, Tahasildar Patna Aswini Nayak along with Patna IIC Kiran Prasad Sahu along with others were on the spot and were trying to mediate with the people. The blockade is continuing till the evening. The administration is trying to mediate the people.

Bhamamani Das, Sarpanch of Musakhori GP said " roofs of thousands of houses were damaged due to the natural calamity. Grains and other items stored in their houses were damaged. Waterlogged inside the rooms of many houses. Many became homeless. Due to big hail, many vehicles have been damaged. I had already reported to the local administration as well as collector for reliefs. But when the local administration could not take immediate steps, they staged a protest by blocking the road". Kulamani Sadangi, another

affected said " due to severe hail falls, roof of their house damaged. When we ran away from the house to take shelter in another room, my wife and daughter sustained head injury".
IIC Patna, Kiran Prasad Sahu said " we are discussing with the people their problems and demands. The administration is arranging temporary shelter with distributing polythene and other items. Compensation will be paid as the government provision after a detailed survey of damage". (EOM)

Illegal encroachment in Mochigaon, PWD department wrote to Tahasil

Keonjhar: The Department of Public Works has written a letter to the Keonjhar Tehsil and Keonjhar Municipal Executive Officer to identify and evict the encroached land on the side of National Highway 20 near the Mochigaon flyover near Dhrupadain Sadar Tahasil. In his letter number 3125/2-4-2026, the Superintendent Engineer, Keonjhar of PWD wrote to the Tahasildar and Executive officer and gave a copy of the District Collector, Chief Construction Engineer and Sub Collector, Keonjhar for reference.



It is reported that while the price of land in Keonjhar city and surrounding areas has skyrocketed, there have been complaints about some people acquiring land through unfair means and illegally buying and selling it. In such cases, there have been allegations of illegal buying and selling of government and

deity land in Dhrupada and Mochigaon area near Keonjhar town. While agricultural land is being sold at high prices at homestead land price, the land mafias construct roads in government land illegally and prepare passage to the agricultural land to be sold.
Like this a road is being built

in Mochi village illegally, in between Madhapur and Dhrupada to sell such agricultural land, using polluted factory waste along the NH side and blocking the regular stream in the said place. Locals alleged that "It will cause urban flooding in the future if the stream is blocked".
Earlier the PWD department has written letters to the Sadar tahasil, but no action has been taken that hurt the locals. Apart from this, a notice has been issued again for illegal road construction on the land along the road.
"If the road is built by blocking the drain in the said

place, there will be a waterlogging problem in the city in the coming days. Due to the encroachment of the drain, there is a problem in water drainage" local complained.
After the complaint in March last year, a technical team of the Urban Development Department went to the spot to inspect and verify the truth. Despite being found true, no action has been taken, for which dissatisfaction is growing. Since the waste of the factory is being used in the construction of the road, there is water, soil and air pollution in the said area. Since the road was built by filling the Nayanjori on the side of the highway, the flow of rainwater in the canal has stopped. Although the sale of part plots is completely prohibited in the master plan area, some land mafias are illegally constructing roads on agricultural land and selling part plots. (EOM)

Ratna Bhandar Inventory at Shree Jagannath Temple to Be Completed Before Snana Yatra

Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): The ongoing inventory of precious ornaments and valuables stored in the Ratna Bhandar of Shree Jagannath Temple is set to be completed ahead of the annual Snana Yatra, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said on Wednesday.

According to the minister, the next phase of the inventory process will commence on April 13, following the second phase

scheduled from April 8 to April 11. The April exercise is expected to span approximately 10 to 12 days. Additional phases are planned for May and June to ensure the entire process is concluded before the Snana Yatra, also known as Deva Snana Purnima—the ceremonial bathing festival of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra.

Highlighting the use of modern

technology in the process, Harichandan said that officials are verifying current records against the 1978 audit data. Each item in the Ratna Bhandar is being digitally photographed to ensure accuracy and transparency. He further noted that once the inventory is completed, the government will take a decision regarding long-term preservation and management of the temple's valuables



SSB Releases Schedule for CPET 2026

Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): The State Selection Board (SSB) has announced the schedule for the Common PG Entrance Test (CPET) 2026. The examination is scheduled to be conducted from 5th May to 16th May 2026 across the state.

The CPET will cover admissions for 50 postgraduate subjects and will be held in two sessions each day: the first session from 10:00 AM to 11:40 AM and the second session from 3:00 PM to 4:40 PM. On the first day, 5th May, candidates



appearing for Commerce, Biotechnology, Sociology, Environmental Science, Education, and Anthropology (Arts) will take the exam. A total of 58,708 students have applied for 31,915 postgraduate

seats. Admit cards will be available for download from 30th April 2026 on the official SSB website <https://ssbodisha.ac.in>. Admission to postgraduate courses will be based solely on marks obtained in the CPET examination.

Protest Held in Bhubaneswar Over LPG Shortage and Alleged Consumer Exploitation

Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): Members of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Bikshubha Krushak Mazdoor Union (BKMU) staged a protest in the city on Tuesday, demanding immediate resolution of the ongoing cooking gas shortage and alleging large-scale inconvenience to consumers.

The protestors claimed that despite repeated assurances from the Prime Minister, the Odisha Chief Minister, and the State Food Supplies Minister that there is no shortage of LPG, consumers continue to face difficulties in accessing cooking gas. They alleged that even after a stipulated waiting period of 24 days for booking, cylinders are not being delivered. The situation has particularly affected small



roadside food vendors, hostel residents, students, and daily wage workers who rely on smaller cylinders. Protestors pointed out that 5-kg cylinders are not readily available in the open market, further aggravating the crisis. They also criticized the state

government's recent directive requiring consumers to produce documents such as residence certificates, income certificates, and identity proof to procure LPG cylinders. According to the demonstrators, these conditions have complicated access,

especially for students and migrant workers, raising concerns about whether individuals should prioritize standing in queues or their daily responsibilities.

The organisations further alleged that the state's public distribution system has become dysfunctional, indirectly encouraging black marketing. They accused authorities of failing to regulate supply effectively, leading to exploitation of consumers. The protest march began from the CPI office and saw participation from several party leaders and members, including former MLA N. Narayan Reddy, state assistant secretary Jayant Das, BKMU state secretary Sura Jena, and other local leaders, who expressed strong dissatisfaction over the prevailing situation.

Odisha Plans Stringent Law to Curb Obscene Language on Social Media

Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): The Odisha government is set to introduce a stringent legal framework to curb the use of obscene and abusive language on social media platforms, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan announced on Wednesday. He warned that strict action would be taken against individuals engaging in such behaviour online.

The proposed legislation will not be limited to digital platforms but will also cover the use of abusive language in public spaces, bringing such conduct under regulatory scrutiny. The move comes amid growing concerns over the increasing misuse of language in both online and offline environments.

According to the minister, the Law Commission has already submitted a proposal, and the government is preparing to

According to the minister, the Law Commission has already submitted a proposal, and the government is preparing to implement a Prevention of Hate Speech and Hate Crime Act to address the rising instances of offensive and derogatory expressions. "Social media standards are declining, and people must maintain mutual respect, especially as users from all age groups access these platforms."

implement a Prevention of Hate Speech and Hate Crime Act to address the rising instances of offensive and derogatory expressions. "Social media standards are declining, and people must maintain mutual respect, especially as users from all age groups access these platforms. The space is becoming increasingly toxic, with instances of indecent behaviour seen among

both common users and those from political backgrounds," Harichandan said. Emphasising the need for timely intervention, he noted that the proposed law aims to ensure accountability and discipline in public discourse, particularly on social media. The minister added that the growing trend of abusive language reflects a concerning mindset and requires corrective measures at the earliest.

Odisha Approves Direct Recruitment for 1,363 Junior Revenue Assistant Posts



Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): The Odisha government has approved the direct recruitment of 1,363 Junior Revenue Assistant (JRA) posts to further strengthen the state's revenue administration. The decision was taken in a committee meeting chaired by the Principal Secretary of the Finance Department.

In this regard, Dr. Arbind Padi, Additional Chief Secretary of Revenue and Disaster Management Department, has written to all District Collectors with detailed instructions. The recruitment process will be conducted across all 30 districts of the state through direct selection.

The letter specifies that reservation will be ensured for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, socially and educationally backward classes, women, persons with disabilities, ex-servicemen, and sports persons in accordance with the number of vacancies in each district.

District Collectors have been directed to coordinate with the Odisha Subordinate Staff Selection Commission (OSSSC) to facilitate prompt online application submissions. The Revenue Secretary expressed confidence that this initiative will enhance the efficiency of revenue administration and expand public service delivery across the state.

IAS Probationers Gain First-Hand Exposure to Urban Governance in Bhubaneswar



Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): As part of their administrative training and orientation, IAS probationers participated in a comprehensive programme organized by the Housing & Urban Development Department on Wednesday. The initiative combined high-level interactions with field visits to provide practical insights into urban governance and service delivery systems.

During the session, Additional Chief Secretary Usha Padhee, along with Director of Municipal Administration Shri Arindam Daku and other senior officials, briefed the probationers on key achievements, flagship schemes, and priority areas of the department. The interaction

offered a detailed understanding of institutional frameworks, policy implementation strategies, and the functioning of various agencies involved in urban development.

The programme also facilitated an exchange of ideas, enabling probationers to gain clarity on administrative coordination, programme execution, and emerging challenges in the urban sector.

As part of the field exposure, the probationers visited Buddha Vihar to observe affordable housing projects being implemented under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). The visit provided them with first-hand experience of beneficiary-centric approaches

and on-ground execution of housing initiatives.

Further, the group toured the Odisha Urban Academy, a Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP), and a Water Treatment Plant (WTP). Officials at these sites explained treatment processes, operational mechanisms, infrastructure management practices, and service delivery frameworks related to urban sanitation and water supply systems.

The programme aimed to strengthen the probationers' practical understanding of urban governance, infrastructure systems, and public service delivery, equipping them for effective administrative roles in the future.

IInvenTiv 2026: IIT (ISM) Dhanbad Hosts High-Level Roundtable to Accelerate India's Research, Development & Innovation Ecosystem

April 8, 2026 : IIT (ISM) Dhanbad successfully hosted a high-level Roundtable on Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) during IInvenTiv 2026, bringing together leading academicians, industry leaders, venture capitalists, and global experts on a unified platform to shape the future of India's innovation landscape. The roundtable served as a strategic forum fostering meaningful dialogue between academia and industry, with a focus on scaling innovation across key sectors and strengthening the pathway from research to real-world applications. Participants emphasized the importance of creating a seamless innovation pipeline—transforming ideas generated within academic institutions into scalable, market-ready solutions with tangible societal impact. The discussions also highlighted the need for co-creation models, cross-sector partnerships, and stronger global integration.

Vigilance Raid on Odisha Irrigation Engineer: Assets Worth Around Rs 1 Crore Unearthed

Bhubaneswar, 08 April (H.S.): The Odisha Vigilance on Wednesday conducted simultaneous raids at multiple locations linked to Rajesh Chandra Mohanty, Additional Chief Engineer of the Irrigation Circle, as part of an ongoing probe into alleged corruption and financial irregularities. The searches were carried out at six places across Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, and Jajpur, with his residence near Baramunda being the primary focus of the operation. Multiple teams of vigilance officials were involved in the early morning crackdown. During the course of the searches, officials reportedly recovered incriminating documents and valuables suspected to be worth around Rs 1 crore, though the exact valuation is yet to be officially confirmed. Among the items seized were cash amounting to Rs 7 lakh, mutual fund investments estimated at around Rs 30 lakh, travel-related expenditures of approximately Rs 14 lakh, and hotel bills worth about Rs 1.18 lakh. In addition, a collection of luxury watches, sunglasses, as well as gold and diamond ornaments were also recovered from the premises.

Sources indicated that the seizures are part of a broader investigation aimed at examining the financial transactions, assets, and possible disproportionate wealth linked to the senior official. The vigilance department is continuing its detailed scrutiny to ascertain the extent of alleged irregularities and accumulation of assets beyond known sources of income.

Unknown decomposed body of a woman floats in Paradip sea

Paradip : An unknown woman's decomposed body has been found floating in the sea near Southgate in Paradip. It is suspected that the body is a woman's body as it is wrapped in a saree. However, it is not known who or whose decomposed body is floating in the sea. Some local youths, who were walking on the beach, said that the body was floating in the sea and that a rotten smell was coming from it. While the police have not reached the spot yet, the name Janaki has been written on one of the hands of the decomposed body. This has made it clear that the decomposed body belongs to a woman. The reason and in what circumstances the woman died, her identity, and where she lives are unclear. The Jatadhara Muhan police have recovered the body and started an investigation after receiving information



40,811 Crore investment to Create 59000+ Jobs as Odisha Achieves Landmark Groundbreaking and

Khordha, 8/4: 36 Industrial Projects Grounded and Inaugurated in Odisha. April 8, 2026: "Odisha is moving with purpose from promise to performance, and from potential to prosperity. What we commit, we complete," said Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, underscoring the State's strong commitment to industrial growth and timely execution.

In a significant push to Odisha's industrialisation journey, the Chief

Minister today presided over a landmark Groundbreaking and Inauguration ceremony covering 36 industrial projects, with a cumulative investment of approximately 40,811 crore and employment potential of over 59,050 jobs. Spanning multiple districts, these projects represent a diverse range of high-impact sectors including

Green Energy Equipment, Metal & Downstream Industries, Textile & Apparel, Plastics, Tourism, Agro & Food Processing, Defence Manufacturing, IT & ITES, Automobiles, Cement, and Capital Goods, reflecting the State's rapidly evolving and diversified industrial ecosystem.

Among the prominent companies participating in this industrial expansion are Ampin Solar One Private Limited, Calderys India Refractories Limited, Page Industries Ltd., Adani Enterprises Limited, KPR Mill Limited, Jupiter

Tatravagonka Railwheel Factory Private Limited, ATC Tyres AP Pvt. Ltd. (Yokohama), Ambuja Concrete North Private Limited, Trimetro Garments India Pvt. Ltd. (EPIC Group

Company), and Danieli Corus Refractory Solutions Pvt. Ltd., underscoring strong investor confidence from leading national and global players.

Marking a day of twin milestones, the Hon'ble Chief Minister attended two major programs

first at Bhuinpur in Khordha district, followed by the

inauguration of a major textile manufacturing facility at Ramdaspur in Cuttack district.

At Bhuinpur, the programme was attended by Minister for Industries, Skill Development & Technical Education Shri Sampad Chandra Swain, Member of Parliament Mrs. Aparajita Sarangi, MLA Khordha, Prasanta

Jagdev, MLA Begunia & Bolagarh, Pradiip Kumar Sahu, ODISHA

NEW OPPORTUNITIES along with leading industry representatives and senior officials

of the Government of Odisha. The Chief Minister also chaired a high-level roundtable interaction with industry leaders, focusing on strengthening execution, addressing implementation challenges, and reinforcing Odisha's investor facilitation framework. A total of 34 projects were grounded and inaugurated at Bhuinpur, Begunia, Khordha, while 2 key projects were undertaken at Ramdaspur, Cuttack, with the combined events witnessing participation of more than 10,000 people, reflecting strong industry and public engagement. Addressing the gathering at

Bhuinpur, the Chief Minister emphasized that Odisha's industrial growth is now firmly anchored in execution, supported by a by a governance framework that prioritizes speed, transparency, and accountability. He highlighted that the State has successfully transitioned from an era of investment announcements to one of on-ground delivery, where projects are monitored in real time and supported through robust institutional mechanisms such as IPICOL at the State level and DIPA at the district level. He further noted that dedicated task force mechanisms are actively resolving implementation bottlenecks, ensuring that projects move seamlessly from approval to commissioning.

APP Infighting

ALL is not well within the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The rift between Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha and the Arvind Kejriwal-led top brass bodes ill for the party, especially in Punjab, which goes to the polls in less than 12 months. The high command has removed Chadha from the post of AAP deputy leader in the Upper House, presumably because of its perception that he deviated from the party line in Parliament. The decision has prompted him to hit back with the defiant



remark that he has been "silenced, not defeated". Senior AAP leaders such as Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, former Delhi CM Atishi and Delhi unit president Saurabh Bharadwaj have trained their guns on Chadha, accusing him of remaining silent on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and other key matters concerning the party and the Opposition.

Ironically, Chadha has been quite vocal both inside and outside Parliament, raising issues such as surge pricing by airlines, the plight of gig workers and anomalies in mobile data recharge plans. However, his apparent reluctance to confront the Modi government and take part in Opposition walkouts has not gone down well with the AAP leadership. A telltale sign was evident when Chadha kept mum on the discharge of Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and other AAP leaders by a Delhi court in the excise policy case over a month ago. He was also conspicuous by his absence from a rally addressed by Kejriwal at JantarMantar on March 1.

Having lost Delhi last year, AAP cannot afford to let infighting weaken its desperate bid to retain Punjab. The anti-incumbency factor and the presence of multiple rivals - the Congress, BJP, Shiromani Akali Dal, Akali Dal (Waris Punjab De) - are making things tougher for the ruling party. The onus is on AAP to reach out to disgruntled leaders and keep its flock together - before it's too late.

MSP Problems

DIGITISATION was meant to simplify farm procurement. In Haryana, it is doing the opposite. It is turning access to the minimum support price (MSP) into a maze of portals, passwords and procedural traps. Recent reports in The Tribune from mandis across the state reveal a pattern. The now mandatory portals for selling crops - e-Kharid and MeriFasalMeraByora (MFMB) - have been plagued by crashes, data mismatches and verification failures. In several districts, farmers have been denied gate passes because records did not match or servers failed at critical moments.

The consequences are immediate and harsh. Produce is ready for sale, but it is denied entry into mandis. Thus, many farmers are forced to turn to private traders, who offer lower prices but instant payment. In some places, government agencies have lifted only a fraction of arrivals, exposing a gap between promise and preparedness. The most damning evidence, however, is numerical. Notably, Haryana's quiet cut in wheat procurement from 80 lakh to 72 lakh tonnes denies farmers about Rs 2,068 crore at MSP. The unprocured grain flows to private traders at Rs 400-500 below MSP. It is a silent transfer of farmers' income, undermining the very purpose of MSP.

To be sure, digitisation has a logic: transparency and efficiency. But a system that works only when the server does and only for those who can navigate it. It excludes the very people - small and poor, illiterate farmers - it claims to serve. Worse, there is no fallback. When portals fail, procurement stops. MSP is meant to be a safety net. If access to it is filtered through fragile digital systems and shrinking targets, it ceases to be a guarantee. Technology should ease the farmer's path to the mandi, not block it.

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Counting the Nation, Shaping the Future

In the quiet yet profound act of counting its people, a nation rediscovers itself. The forthcoming Census 2027 is not merely an administrative exercise; it is a democratic mirror, reflecting the diversity, aspirations, vulnerabilities, and strengths of India. As the country prepares to embrace a more technologically driven model of enumeration—one that allows citizens to provide their own data through an online portal—the census enters a new phase, where participation becomes both a civic duty and a moral responsibility.

The census, historically, has been the backbone of governance. From the earliest systematic efforts in colonial India to the post-independence decennial exercises, it has shaped public policy, resource allocation, electoral boundaries, and social welfare schemes. It is through the census that the state understands how many children need schools, how many households require electricity, where healthcare infrastructure must expand, and which regions demand urgent attention. Census 2027, however, arrives at a time when India is navigating rapid urbanization, digital transformation, migration, and demographic shifts. This makes the exercise not only more complex but also more consequential.

One of the most significant features of Census 2027 is the introduction of self-enumeration through a digital portal. This innovation signals a shift from a purely enumerator-driven model to a participatory framework where citizens actively contribute

to nation-building. The portal, designed to be user-friendly and accessible, allows individuals to fill in their demographic, socio-economic, and housing details directly. This move is expected to enhance accuracy, reduce logistical burdens, and empower citizens with a sense of ownership over the data they provide.

Yet, with this empowerment comes responsibility. The accuracy of census data depends fundamentally on the honesty and diligence of respondents. In a country as vast and diverse as India, even minor discrepancies can lead to significant distortions in planning and policy outcomes. Overreporting, underreporting, or misrepresentation—whether intentional or inadvertent—can skew the data landscape, affecting everything from subsidy distribution to infrastructure development. Therefore, the act of self-enumeration must be guided by a strong ethical commitment to truth and transparency.

The operational dimensions of Census 2027 are equally noteworthy. The process is expected to be conducted in two phases: the House Listing and Housing Census, followed by the Population Enumeration. The first phase focuses on the condition of housing, availability of amenities, and assets, while the second phase captures individual-level data such as age, gender, education, occupation, and migration status. Enumerators will still play a critical role, especially in areas with limited digital access, ensuring inclusivity and completeness. The integration



Madhusudan Mishra

of digital tools, geospatial mapping, and real-time data validation mechanisms marks a significant advancement in census methodology.

However, the success of this hybrid model depends on bridging the digital divide. While urban populations may find it convenient to access the portal, rural and marginalized communities may face challenges due to limited internet connectivity, digital literacy, or awareness. It is imperative that the government undertakes extensive awareness campaigns, provides assistance centers, and ensures that no individual is left out of the process. Inclusivity must remain the cornerstone of the census, for a partial count is, in essence, an inaccurate count.

Another dimension that merits attention is data privacy and security. In an era where data breaches and misuse of personal information are growing concerns, citizens may be apprehensive about sharing sensitive details

online. The authorities must, therefore, ensure robust cybersecurity measures, transparent data usage policies, and strict legal safeguards to build public trust. The assurance that personal data will be used solely for statistical purposes and not for surveillance or punitive actions is crucial to encourage honest participation.

Beyond its administrative utility, the census carries a deeper philosophical significance. It is an exercise in collective identity. Each entry in the census register represents a life, a story, a contribution to the nation's tapestry. By participating sincerely, citizens affirm their presence in the national narrative. They assert their rights while acknowledging their responsibilities. In this sense, the census is not just about counting people; it is about making people count.

The academic and policy implications of Census 2027 are vast. Researchers, economists, sociologists, and planners rely heavily on census data to analyze trends, identify disparities, and propose interventions. Whether it is studying urban migration patterns, gender ratios, literacy rates, or occupational structures, the census provides the foundational dataset. High-quality data enables evidence-based policymaking, which is essential for achieving sustainable development goals and inclusive growth.

At a time when India aspires to become a developed nation, the importance of accurate demographic data cannot be

overstated. Visionary initiatives, infrastructure projects, and welfare schemes must be grounded in reliable statistics. Census 2027, therefore, becomes a critical instrument in shaping the trajectory of the nation's future. It informs not only where we stand today but also where we are headed tomorrow.

Public response to the census will ultimately determine its success. Citizens must view participation not as an obligation imposed by the state but as a contribution to the collective good. Educational institutions, civil society organizations, and community leaders have a vital role to play in fostering awareness and encouraging responsible participation. The narrative must shift from compliance to commitment, from enumeration to engagement.

In conclusion, Census 2027 stands at the intersection of tradition and transformation. It retains the fundamental purpose of counting every individual while embracing modern tools to enhance efficiency and participation. The introduction of self-enumeration through a digital portal is a progressive step, but its success hinges on the integrity, awareness, and cooperation of the people. As India prepares to undertake this monumental exercise, it must remember that the strength of a census lies not merely in numbers but in the truth those numbers represent. In counting ourselves honestly, we lay the foundation for a more equitable, informed, and prosperous nation.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer)

Alone in a Crowd: The Truth About Modern Friendships

Dr Vijay Garg

In today's hyper-connected world, friendship has taken on a new form—one that is shaped by screens, notifications, and digital interactions. We are more "connected" than ever before, with hundreds or even thousands of online contacts just a click away. Yet, paradoxically, many people feel more isolated and emotionally distant than ever. This contradiction defines the reality of modern friendship: connected, yet alone.

The rise of social media platforms has revolutionized how friendships are formed and maintained. Distance is no longer a barrier; people can stay in touch across continents in real time. Old schoolmates reconnect, long-lost relatives find each other, and new friendships blossom in virtual communities. On the surface, it appears that human connection has reached unprecedented levels.

However, beneath this digital closeness lies a deeper emotional gap. Online interactions often lack the depth and authenticity of face-to-face communication. A "like," a quick comment, or a short message cannot fully replace

the warmth of a genuine conversation, the comfort of shared silence, or the empathy conveyed through a simple touch. As a result, relationships may become shallow, sustained more by habit than by true emotional bonding.

Another challenge is the illusion of companionship. Social media creates a curated version of reality, where people present only their happiest moments. This can lead to unrealistic comparisons and feelings of inadequacy. Seeing others constantly surrounded by friends and joy can make individuals feel lonelier, even when they are not. The presence of many connections does not necessarily translate into meaningful friendships.

Moreover, the quality of time spent together has diminished. Even when friends meet in person, they are often distracted by their devices. Conversations are interrupted by notifications, and attention is divided between the real and the virtual world. This gradual erosion of presence weakens the foundation of genuine relationships.



Modern lifestyles also play a role. Busy schedules, career pressures, and geographical mobility leave little time for nurturing friendships. As people prioritize professional success, relationships sometimes take a backseat. Over time, this leads to emotional distance, even among close friends.

Yet, it would be unfair to view technology as entirely negative. It has also enabled support networks, especially for those who feel isolated in their immediate surroundings. Online communities can offer a sense of belonging, encouragement, and understanding. The key lies not in rejecting technology but in

using it mindfully.

To bridge the gap between connection and loneliness, individuals must consciously invest in meaningful relationships. This means prioritizing quality over quantity—fewer but deeper friendships rather than a large network of superficial ones. It involves being present, listening actively, and making time for real conversations. Small efforts, such as meeting regularly, sharing experiences, and expressing genuine care, can strengthen bonds significantly.

In conclusion, modern friendship exists in a complex space where digital connection coexists with emotional isolation. While technology has brought people closer in terms of communication, it has also distanced them in terms of true intimacy. The challenge of our time is to balance these two realities—to remain connected without losing the essence of what it truly means to be a friend.

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal? Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

“Moon’s Secret Reservoirs Power the Next Space Journey”

Dr Vijay Garg

For decades, the Moon was considered a barren and dry world. But recent scientific discoveries have dramatically changed this perception. The detection of water on the lunar surface has not only reshaped our understanding of Earth's closest neighbor but has also reignited global interest in returning humans to the Moon.

The presence of water on the Moon was first strongly confirmed through missions like Chandrayaan-1 and later observations by NASA. Scientists found that water exists in multiple forms—frozen as ice in permanently shadowed craters near the poles and even as molecules trapped in sunlit soil. This discovery challenged the long-held belief that the Moon was completely dry.

More recently, space agencies have intensified efforts to locate and map these water deposits. Missions such as NASA's Lunar Trailblazer and upcoming rover-

based explorations aim to identify where water is concentrated and how it behaves on the lunar surface. These efforts are not just scientific—they are strategic.

Water is the key to sustainable space exploration. It can be used for drinking, producing breathable oxygen, and even creating rocket fuel by splitting it into hydrogen and oxygen. This means future astronauts may not need to carry all essential resources from Earth, significantly reducing mission costs and complexity.

The Moon's south pole has emerged as a particularly important region. Deep craters there remain in permanent shadow, preserving ice deposits that may have existed for billions of years. These frozen reserves could support long-term human presence and serve as refueling stations for missions to Mars and beyond.

Beyond practical uses, the discovery of lunar water also holds

scientific significance. Studying it can provide clues about the origins of water on Earth and the history of the solar system. Scientists believe lunar water may have come from comet impacts or chemical reactions involving solar wind particles. As a result, the Moon is no longer just a destination of past glory—it is becoming a gateway to the future. International collaborations, including efforts by NASA, ISRO, and JAXA, highlight a shared vision of building a sustained human presence on the Moon.

In conclusion, the discovery of water has transformed the Moon from a lifeless satellite into a promising hub for exploration and innovation. It is this vital resource that is fueling humanity's return to the lunar surface—this time, not just to visit, but to stay. Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal? Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

Lack of Experts: How to Get Kids Ready for AI

Dr. Vijay Garg

Criterion intelligence in the modern era is rapidly changing every sector including education, health, agriculture, industry and employment. But with this change comes a bigger challenge—the cost of money. When technology advances, human resources are not developed at the same speed. The biggest question in SE: Are we preparing our children for an AI future? Why the shortage of experts?

AI is a high-level field that requires knowledge—understanding of math, logic, data, and programming. But there is a growing lack of experts for several reasons:

- the still-old curriculum in schools
- The paucity of practical and experiential learning
- Lack of equal access to technology
- Lack of teacher training
- The need to prepare children

for AI

Many jobs in the future will be related to AI. So kids will have to learn not only book knowledge, but also thinking and problem-solving skills.

(Critical Thinking) (creativity) (digital literacy). (adapting to change) The Role of Schools

Schools have to make changes in their education system:

- New curriculum
- Covering topics such as AI, coding and data science.
- Practical Education
- Not just theory, but learning through projects and experiences.
- Teacher training
- Making teachers aware of new technology. The role of parents
- Parents also play a vital role in preparing children for AI:
- Making children aware of technology motivating them to ask questions and learn new
- Maintaining a balance of screen time.

Delhi High Court Issues Notice to Centre on Transgender Amendment Challenge

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Delhi High Court issued notices to the Central Government on a petition challenging the constitutional validity of amendments to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act. A bench led by Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya scheduled the next hearing for July 22. Filed by advocate Dr. Chandresh Jain, the plea argues the amendments violate fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19(1)(a), and 21 by replacing self-declared gender identity with mandatory government verification and certification. It contends gender identity integral to dignity, autonomy, and privacy cannot be subjected to medical or



administrative scrutiny, contravening the Supreme Court's National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India ruling recognizing self-perceived identity as a constitutional right. The petition

highlights that this shift denies transgender persons welfare benefits and legal protections, breaching equality, free expression, personal liberty, and international human rights standards.

Government Confirms Stable Supply of Petrol, Diesel, and LPG



New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): Welcoming the West Asia ceasefire, the Central Government assured uninterrupted fuel availability amid regional tensions. Petrol and diesel supplies remain steady with refineries operating at full capacity on ample crude stocks; coal-based power meets ~70% of energy needs. Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma highlighted 890,000 5-kg LPG cylinders sold since March 23, including 110,000 yesterday. Over 1,600 awareness camps distributed 14,000 cylinders in five days, prioritizing households and fertilizer plants (95% gas supplied). C3/C4 streams diverted

to LPG pools; petrochemicals limited. Natural gas prioritizes domestic users, resuming for industries. Draft State CBG policy offers extra commercial LPG to adopting states—18 have complied. PNG connections up 387,000 since March; 17,000 dual users surrendered LPG. Vigilance intensified: 4,000 raids, 56,000 cylinders seized, 51 distributors suspended. MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal hoped for lasting peace, free Hormuz navigation, and Ukraine progress. Coal Ministry's Sanjeev Kumar Kasi confirmed ample stocks at mines, plants, ports—production matches consumption for reliable power. Citizens urged to ignore rumors, buy only as needed.

Cabinet Approves 14,106 Crore Kalai-II Hydro Project in Arunachal Pradesh

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, greenlit a ₹14,105.83 crore investment for the 1,200 MW Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project (HEP) on the Lohit River in Anjaw district. Slated for 78-month completion, this pioneering Lohit Basin initiative will generate 4,852.95 million units (MU) annually. Configured as 6x190 MW and 1x60 MW units, the project fortifies Arunachal Pradesh's power infrastructure, manages peak demand, and stabilizes the national grid. THDC India Limited and Arunachal Pradesh Government partner for execution. Central support includes ₹599.88 crore for roads, bridges, and transmission lines, plus ₹750 crore state equity aid. Arunachal gains 12% free power and 1% Local Area Development Fund (LADF), alongside infrastructure like 29 km roads/bridges and CSR benefits—jobs, compensation, and facilities in Anjaw and Namsai districts.

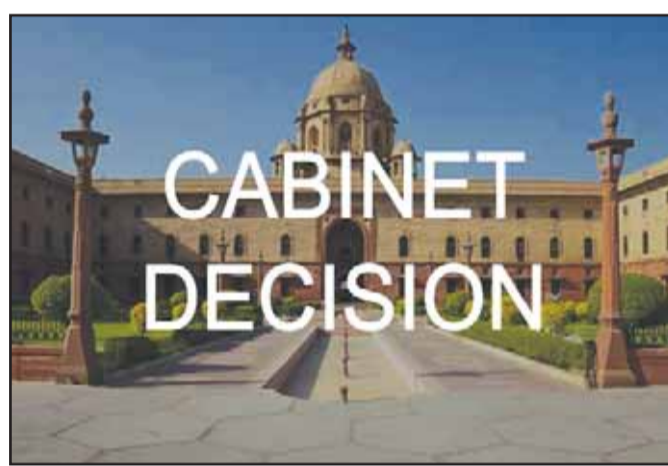
Cabinet Approves Jaipur Metro Phase-2 Expansion

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, greenlit the ambitious Jaipur Metro Phase-2 project—a 41 km North-South corridor from Prahladpura to Todi Mod with 36 stations—at a total cost of ₹13,037.66 crore. Implemented by Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRC), a 50:50 joint venture between the Governments of India and Rajasthan, the line connects key hubs like Sitapura Industrial Area, Jaipur International Airport (with underground stations), VKIA, Tonk Road, SMS Hospital, Stadium,

Ambabari, and Vidyadhar Nagar. It integrates seamlessly with the operational 11.64 km Phase-1 East-West line via interchanges and feeders. Phase-1 currently serves ~60,000 daily riders. Phase-2 promises exponential ridership growth, slashing private vehicle reliance, easing congestion, and cutting emissions in line with Rajasthan TOD Policy-2025, UMTA reforms, and national urban transport goals. Economic Internal Rate of Return exceeds 14%, affirming viability; funding blends equity, debt, and multilateral loans per Metro Rail Policy 2017. Targeting September 2031 completion, it advances Viksit Bharat and Viksit Rajasthan visions.

Cabinet Greenlights 26,069 Crore Kamala Hydro Project in Arunachal Pradesh

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a ₹26,069.50 crore investment for the 1,720 MW Kamala Hydro Electric Project (HEP) spanning Kamle, Kra Daadi, and Kurung Kumey districts. With a 96-month completion timeline, the project promises 6,870 million units (MU) annually. Configured as 8x210 MW and 1x40 MW units, Kamala HEP—a storage-cum-run-of-river facility—bolsters Arunachal Pradesh's power supply, aids peak demand, balances the national grid, and



moderates Brahmaputra floods. NHPC Limited and Arunachal Pradesh Government

form a joint venture (NHPC 74%, state 26%). Central aid totals ₹7,833.98 crore; ₹4,743.98 crore

for flood moderation, ₹1,340 crore for roads/bridges/transmission, plus ₹750 crore state equity aid. Arunachal secures 12% free power and 1% Local Area Development Fund (LADF). Infrastructure gains include 196 km roads/bridges and facilities like hospitals/schools funded by ₹8 crore project allocation, alongside jobs, compensation, and CSR. Complementing NHPC's Subansiri Lower (2,000 MW, 750 MW live, full by Dec 2026), Dibang Multipurpose (2,880 MW), and Etalin (3,097 MW), Kamala advances clean energy goals.

Delhi High Court Slams Rana Ayyub's Posts, Orders Action Against Journalist

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Delhi High Court expressed strong disapproval of journalist Rana Ayyub's social media posts from 2013-2017 targeting Hindu deities and Vinayak Savarkar, deeming them derogatory, inflammatory, and communal. Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav directed Delhi Police and X (formerly Twitter) to take necessary action and issued notices to Ayyub, police, and the Centre, with the next hearing on April 10. The court emphasized the need for serious consideration and coordinated response from X, Delhi Police, and the Centre. Sachdeva, a Sanatan Dharma follower, cited seven offensive posts mocking Lord Ram, Sita, Savarkar, and Hindu nationalism while promoting anti-India sentiments. She previously approached Saket Court, which ordered an FIR and investigation; police noted the posts were deleted from X.

Cabinet Approves Nutrient Subsidy Rates for Kharif 2026 Fertilizers

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers during the Kharif 2026 season (April 1 to September 30). The allocation totals approximately ₹41,533.81 crore—a ₹4,317.66 crore increase from Kharif 2025's ₹37,216.15 crore. This ensures 28 P&K grades, including DAP and NPKS, reach farmers at subsidized, affordable prices amid fluctuating global input costs like urea, DAP, MOP, and sulphur. Subsidies stabilize supply, rationalizing support based on international trends to maintain reasonable rates.

Cabinet Approves Cost Revision for Rajasthan's HPCL Refinery Project

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a significant escalation in project costs and equity investment for the HPCL Rajasthan Refinery Limited (HRRL) in Pachpadra, Balotra district, Rajasthan. The refinery's cost rises from ₹43,129 crore to ₹79,459 crore, with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) injecting an additional ₹8,962 crore in equity, bringing its total stake to ₹19,600 crore. A joint venture between HPCL (74% equity) and the Government of Rajasthan (26%),



the 9 MMTPA greenfield refinery-cum-petrochemical complex targets commercial operations by July 1, 2026 (SCOD). This high-complexity facility boasts over 26%

Assembly Elections: Assam, Kerala, Puducherry Set for Polling Today

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): Single-phase assembly elections will occur tomorrow (April 9) across Assam (126 seats), Kerala (140 seats), and Puducherry (30 seats), with the Election Commission and local authorities confirming comprehensive preparations for peaceful, fair, and transparent voting. Assam features 25,054,463 voters (12.53M men, 12.52M women, 318 third gender); 575K first-time 18-19-year-olds and 722 candidates; majority mark is 64. Kerala has 27.1M voters (13.2M men, 13.9M women, 273 third gender) and 890 candidates in a triangular contest; needs 71 seats. Puducherry: 944K voters (443K men, 500K women, 139 third gender), 294 candidates (34 national, 63 state parties); 16-seat majority, 5 SC-reserved. Security and Logistics Assam's 31,490 stations (all webcast live) deploy 151,132 staff, 41,320 ballot units, 43,975 control units, 44K VVPATs (reserves included); CAPF (CRPF) secures sensitive sites. Micro-observers and central observers oversee law/order, expenditure. Postal ballots aid seniors (85+) and disabled voters. Kerala: 30,495 stations (7 AM-6 PM). Puducherry: 1,099 stations, GPS vehicles transport EVMs/staff with police escort; post-poll EVMs sealed under CCTV, triple security to counting centers May 4.

Supreme Court Asserts Right to Identify Religious Superstition in Sabarimala Case

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): The Supreme Court stated during Sabarimala temple entry hearings that it holds authority to determine which religious practices constitute superstition. This came as the Centre argued secular courts lack jurisdiction over faith matters, given judges' legal rather than religious expertise. A nine-judge Constitution bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant entered day two of arguments. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta contended courts cannot define "essential religious practices," advocating true secularism as



non-interference between state and religion. Justice B.V. Nagarathna countered that public morality evolves—1950s obscenity standards no

longer apply—rejecting rigid historical lenses. Mehta urged judicial restraint on beliefs, citing state priest appointment laws as principle violations.

BJP Delegation Files Complaint Against Mamata Banerjee with Election Commission

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) delegation met the Chief Election Commission today, submitting a four-page complaint against West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee. The team included Union Ministers Virendra Kumar, Arjun Meghwal, and BJP General Secretary Arun Singh. The BJP accused Banerjee of delivering fear-mongering statements at election rallies, such as claiming "200 CRPF vehicles are coming to

attack people" and alleging "CRPF vehicles are bringing money." These remarks allegedly tarnish central security forces' image, incite fear, and undermine electoral fairness. Post-meeting, Arun Singh alleged Banerjee incited violence against CRPF personnel and highlighted Abhishek Banerjee's threats to "break BJP workers' hands and legs"—deeming both anti-democratic. The party demanded FIRs, strict action, and a ban on their campaign speeches.

Pakistan Brokers Historic US-Iran Ceasefire, Hosts Talks in Islamabad

Islamabad, 8/4 (H.S.): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emerged as a pivotal mediator on Tuesday, announcing an immediate ceasefire between the United States and Iran, along with their allies, extending to conflict zones like Lebanon. In a landmark diplomatic move, Sharif invited delegations from Washington and Tehran to Islamabad on Friday, April 10, for high-stakes negotiations aimed at forging a lasting peace accord. Sharif's announcement, posted on his official social media account late Monday, hailed the truce as a "sagacious gesture" from both sides. "With the greatest humility, I am pleased to announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, along with their allies, have agreed to an immediate ceasefire everywhere including Lebanon and elsewhere, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY," he stated. He extended "deepest gratitude" to the leadership of both nations, praising their "remarkable wisdom and understanding" in prioritizing peace. Pakistan's role as a neutral broker underscores its growing influence in regional diplomacy. Long-standing ties with Iran—sharing a 959-



kilometer border—and warming relations with the US under the Sharif government positioned Islamabad ideally for shuttle diplomacy. Sources familiar with the backchannel talks, including statements from Pakistan's Foreign Office, confirm that Islamabad facilitated secret communications over the past week, bridging gaps amid escalating tensions. Iran's Supreme National Security Council swiftly endorsed the two-week pause, but with a stern caveat. "It is emphasised that this does not

signify the termination of the war," the council declared in a formal communiqué. "Our hands remain upon the trigger, and should the slightest error be committed by the enemy, it shall be met with full force." The Iranian side agreed to "COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING" of the Strait of Hormuz—a vital chokepoint for 20% of global oil trade—in exchange for halting US strikes. US President Donald Trump corroborated the deal in his own statement, crediting

Sharif's personal intervention. Trump revealed he had "held off the destructive force being sent to Iran tonight" at Pakistan's behest, averting what he had earlier termed an existential threat to Iranian infrastructure. This followed Trump's Tuesday ultimatum: "A whole civilisation will die tonight, never to be brought back again," if Hormuz remained closed. The ceasefire triggered an immediate 8-10% plunge in global oil prices, easing pressures on energy-importing

nations like Pakistan, which relies on affordable crude for its economy. The Islamabad Talks, as Sharif dubbed them, mark a rare convergence of adversaries. Delegations are expected to address Iran's 10-point ceasefire demands, including curbs on uranium enrichment and US guarantees against future strikes. Pakistani officials, speaking anonymously to Reuters and BBC, expressed optimism: "Both parties have shown constructive engagement; we hope for sustainable peace and more good news soon." Critics, however, urge caution. Iranian hardliners, led by Mojtaba Khamenei, echoed the council's warning that the truce is tactical, not terminal. US Democrats and some Republican allies condemned Trump's rhetoric as reckless, while global markets remain volatile. Pakistan's invitation extends to allies on both sides, potentially drawing in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Gulf states. As preparations intensify in Islamabad bolstered by tightened security and diplomatic protocols, Sharif's gambit could redefine South Asian geopolitics.

US-Israel Halt Attacks on Iran; Hormuz to Reopen as Two-Week Ceasefire Takes Effect

Washington/Tel Aviv/Tehran, 8/4 (H.S.): The United States has finally agreed to a two-week ceasefire. Israel has also given its assent. Both nations have respected the mediator countries' positions and are now preparing for direct face-to-face negotiations with Iran. Since the war with Iran erupted on February 28, even America's and Israel's supporting countries have been scorched by its flames. US President Donald Trump's announcement of a two-week ceasefire on his Truth Social platform has brought immense global relief. According to reports from CNN, CBS News, Al Jazeera, and Dunya News, US officials state that the administration is now preparing for direct (face-to-face) talks with Iran. The US delegation will likely be led by Vice President JD Vance. The objective is to finalise a framework for a long-term agreement. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt acknowledged that discussions for face-to-face talks are underway. She clarified that the final announcement will come from the President or the White House. Some officials revealed that this meeting will likely occur in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. According to these officials, Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff, son-in-law Jared Kushner, and Vice President JD Vance are expected to participate in this meeting. However, Vance is currently on a visit to Hungary. Meanwhile, Israeli officials assisting the US in its military campaign against Iran are surprised by Trump's sudden change in stance. Nevertheless, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has endorsed Trump's agreement. This makes it clear that Israel will adhere to the ceasefire by following US President Donald Trump. In the meantime, a senior US official stated that the US military has paused strikes inside Iran. Iran has declared that during the ceasefire, its forces will control shipping passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's Supreme National Security Council issued a statement asserting that its 10-point plan has been accepted. The plan "emphasises certain fundamental issues," such as "controlled passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz under coordination with Iran's armed forces." The statement claims this will grant Iran "a specific economic and geopolitical status."

Trump Announces Two-Week Ceasefire with Iran Hours Before Infrastructure Deadline

Washington, 8/4 (H.S.): US President Donald Trump declared a two-week bilateral ceasefire with Iran late Tuesday, suspending planned strikes on civilian infrastructure contingent on Tehran's complete reopening of the Strait of Hormuz—just 90 minutes shy of his 8 p.m. ET ultimatum to "destroy a whole civilization." In a Truth Social post, Trump credited discussions with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir: "Based on conversations... I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double-sided CEASEFIRE!" He affirmed military objectives met and hailed Iran's 10-point proposal as a "workable basis," with most contentious issues resolved barring finalisation. Iran's Supreme National Security Council claimed "historic victory," asserting the US accepted Tehran's 10-point plan—including Hormuz control, nuclear enrichment rights, and sanctions removal. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated safe passage through Hormuz would be coordinated with Iranian forces for two weeks, provided attacks cease: "Our Powerful Armed Forces will cease defensive operations." First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref affirmed preparedness for "all scenarios," while military spokesperson Ebrahim Zolfaghari warned of infrastructure retaliation depriving the US and allies of regional energy "for years." A senior White House official confirmed Israel's adherence to the truce, pausing its campaign. Pakistan's Sharif described talks as "progressing steadily," urging Iran for a goodwill Hormuz gesture. UN rights chief Volker Turk condemned Trump's rhetoric as "sickening," warning attacks on civilians constitute war crimes. Pope Leo XIV called threats to Iranian culture "truly unacceptable."

Iran's Mojtaba Khamenei Orders Ceasefire Compliance Amid Defiant War Rhetoric

Tehran, 8/4 (H.S.): Iran's newly ascended Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has directed all military branches to halt fire under a fragile two-week ceasefire with the United States, while issuing a stark warning that the conflict remains far from resolved. In a statement broadcast on state-run Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), Khamenei emphasized strict adherence to his orders, declaring, "This is not the end of the war but all military branches should follow the Supreme Leader's order and cease their fire." This comes after U.S. President Donald Trump announced a temporary pause in strikes, contingent on Iran's agreement to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, following 39 days of intense hostilities that began with a U.S.-Israeli joint operation on February 28, which claimed the life of Khamenei's father, Ayatollah Ali



Khamenei. Iran's Supreme National Security Council reinforced Khamenei's position, stating that the truce does not

signal war's termination and that Tehran retains "hands upon the trigger" for any provocations by the U.S. or Israel. The council highlighted near-achievement of wartime objectives, crediting Iranian forces for rendering the enemy "historically helpless," and confirmed upcoming talks in Islamabad on Friday, April 10. Mojtaba Khamenei, who assumed leadership amid personal tragedies—including the deaths of his father, mother, wife, and a son—revised a U.S. 15-point ceasefire proposal into a 10-point counteroffer. Key demands include coordinated Hormuz passage under Iranian oversight, U.S. troop withdrawals from regional bases, full sanctions relief, reparations, asset releases, and a binding UN Security Council resolution. Background on Mojtaba Khamenei's Rise and Influence: Long viewed as a hardliner, Mojtaba Khamenei played a pivotal role in

suppressing the 2009 Green Movement protests using IRGC forces and Basij militias, enforcing regime ideology through brutal tactics. His ascension reflects Iran's shift to an offensive asymmetric doctrine, leveraging missiles, drones, proxies like Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis, and Hormuz leverage to sustain pressure despite battlefield setbacks. Analysts caution that Khamenei's overtures may embody a "hudna" a tactical truce for regrouping rather than genuine de-escalation, given his commitment to regional ambitions and rejection of ultimatums. Pakistan-mediated diplomacy, including the ceasefire channel, underscores Islamabad's intermediary role, though Tehran demands permanent war termination. Oil prices have plunged on the news, signaling market relief, while global stakeholders monitor for breaches.

Iran Accepts Two-Week Ceasefire With U.S., Agrees to Open Strait of Hormuz

Tehran, 8/4 (H.S.): Iran has accepted a two-week ceasefire with the United States, conditionally agreeing to reopen the Strait of Hormuz for commercial shipping, marking a dramatic de-escalation in the Middle East conflict that has rattled global energy markets. In a carefully worded statement, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi confirmed that Iran's armed forces will suspend defensive operations if attacks against Iran are halted, while affirming that safe passage through the strategic waterway will be possible for the duration of the truce. Araghchi announces conditional ceasefire writing on the social-media platform X (formerly Twitter), Araghchi announced on behalf of Iran's Supreme National Security Council that Iran would cease its defensive military actions if hostilities against the country are stopped. He explicitly tied the suspension of operations to the cessation of attacks on Iranian territory, framing the move as a reciprocal measure rather than a unilateral surrender. Araghchi also stated that for a period of two weeks, the Strait of Hormuz would remain open and allow safe

passage for shipping, provided navigation is coordinated with Iran's armed forces and remains within technical and operational limits. This signaled a retreat from Iran's earlier posture of effectively restricting or suspending transit through the chokepoint, which supplies roughly one-fifth of the world's seaborne oil flows. Strait of Hormuz: from chokepoint to open corridor The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow maritime channel linking the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, has long been a flashpoint in U.S.-Iran tensions because a significant share of global oil exports passes through it. In recent weeks, Iran had limited or obstructed access for certain vessels, particularly those linked to the United States and Israel, while maintaining that the route remained open to "neutral" or non-hostile countries. By now agreeing that safe passage "will be possible" for two weeks via coordination with Iran's Armed Forces, Araghchi's statement effectively transforms the strait from a tightly controlled war-zone corridor back into an open, albeit monitored, shipping lane, at least for the interim. Analysts note that this



concession is likely meant to reassure global energy markets and major trading partners such as China, India, and much of Europe, while still preserving Iran's authority over its own territorial waters. Pakistan's role and diplomatic groundwork Iran's acceptance of the ceasefire followed a flurry of shuttle diplomacy led by Pakistan, whose Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir have been mediating between Washington and Tehran. Araghchi publicly

thanked both Sharif and Munir, referring to them as "dear brothers" and crediting their "tireless efforts" to end the war in the region, underscoring the importance of Islamabad's role in brokering the temporary truce. Reports indicate that Pakistan floated a four-nation initiative involving Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye to create a framework for de-escalation, including a time-bound ceasefire as a confidence-building measure. U.S. and Iranian officials have signaled openness to a broader negotiation framework, with

sources suggesting that a potential meeting between U.S. and Iranian diplomats could be scheduled in Pakistan if the two-week truce holds. Trump's statement and conditions U.S. President Donald Trump, speaking late on Tuesday (local time), announced a "double-sided ceasefire" with Iran, insisting that the arrangement is contingent on the "complete, immediate, and safe opening" of the Strait of Hormuz. He claimed that the United States had already achieved its core military objectives and was "very far along" with a long-term peace agreement,

describing the two-week interval as a window to finalize and "consummate" a broader deal. Trump also acknowledged that the U.S. had accepted the general framework of Iran's 10-point proposal, while Iran, in turn, is expected to accept key elements of a 15-point U.S. counter-proposal. The exact details of both proposals remain opaque, but their convergence suggests a tentative consensus on issues such as shipping rights through the strait, limits on military escalation, and a de-confliction mechanism between the two sides. Geopolitical and economic implications The two-week truce and the conditional reopening of the Strait of Hormuz have already triggered a sharp drop in global oil prices, as traders price in the prospect of resumed, unimpeded flows from the Persian Gulf. Major energy-importing economies, including India, China and several European states, have cautiously welcomed the pause in hostilities, though officials warn that any recurrence of attacks or renewed blockade attempts could quickly revive market volatility. Strategically, Araghchi's statement

represents an attempt to frame the ceasefire as a diplomatic and political victory for Iran, rather than a military defeat, by emphasizing that Iran's armed forces are only suspending defensive operations and that control over the strait remains coordinated through Tehran-led mechanisms. At the same time, it leaves the door open for a more durable settlement, should the U.S. and its allies refrain from further strikes and engage in sustained negotiations. What comes next Over the next two weeks, the world will be watching three key indicators: whether attacks on Iranian territory cease, as demanded by Araghchi; how shipping through the Strait of Hormuz evolves in practice, including any incidents or frictions between Iran's navy and foreign vessels; and whether Pakistan-backed talks can produce a concrete long-term agreement that goes beyond the current ceasefire. For now, Abbas Araghchi's announcement marks a rare moment of calibrated de-escalation in a region that has been on the brink of all-out war, placing the onus squarely on Washington and its allies to avoid actions that could collapse the fragile truce.

Anant Ambani Announces 6 Crore Temple Donations, 12 Crore Rajarajeshwaram Renovation; Additional Support for Guruvayur Elephant Welfare

Mumbai, 6/4(DMS): Shri Anant Ambani, Executive Director of Reliance Industries Limited, visited two of Kerala's most revered temples—the Rajarajeshwaram Temple and the Guruvayur Temple—where he announced ₹6 crore in donations (₹3 crore each to the two temples), a 12 crore commitment for the comprehensive renovation of the Rajarajeshwaram Temple, including the restoration of its historic East Gopuram, and additional support for elephant welfare initiatives at Guruvayur. During his visit to the historic Rajarajeshwaram Temple in Taliparamba on April 2 at around 8 PM, Shri Anant Ambani made traditional offerings, including Ponnukudam, Pattam, Thaali, Neyyamrutu, and performed Ashwamedha Namaskaram. He also handed over a cheque of ₹3 crore towards ongoing renovation efforts. As part of his broader ₹12 crore commitment, Shri Anant Ambani pledged support for the restoration of the East Gopuram, a structure of immense aesthetic and archaeological significance believed to be as ancient as the temple itself. Having remained in a state of disrepair for over two centuries, its restoration marks a



significant moment for devotees and temple authorities. The committed funds will also support enhanced parking and infrastructure facilities to improve the overall experience for pilgrims. Shri Anant Ambani was accompanied by close associates and was received with traditional honours by temple authorities. Among those present were TTK Devaswom President Shri T. P. Vinod Kumar, Executive Officer Shri K. P. Vinayan, Chief Priest Shri E. P.

Kuberan Namboothiri, and members of the Devaswom Board. Earlier in the day, at around 5 PM, Shri Anant Ambani visited the Guruvayur Temple, where he offered prayers to Lord Guruvayurappan and donated ₹3 crore to the temple trust. In line with his deep commitment to animal care and conservation through Vantara, Shri Anant Ambani also expressed his intent to support initiatives for the welfare of temple elephants at Guruvayur. These include the

development of a dedicated elephant hospital, a chain-free shelter, and modern infrastructure designed to ensure humane, dignified, and scientific care for elephants associated with temple traditions. At Guruvayur, he was received by Devaswom Chairman Shri A. V. Gopinath and other officials, and was honoured with traditional mementos and prasadam. Senior officials from the Devaswom and Jeevadhan departments

were present on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Anant Ambani said: "India's spiritual traditions are not merely places of worship—they are living institutions that nurture faith, community, compassion, and our deep connection with nature. It is our collective responsibility to preserve and strengthen this sacred heritage for future generations. Through these initiatives, and through our work at Vantara, we seek to serve with humility—by enhancing the experience of devotees, while ensuring that the animals who are an integral part of our traditions are cared for with the utmost dignity, compassion, and scientific attention." Shri Anant Ambani's contributions reflect a broader vision rooted in India's timeless spiritual ethos—where faith, service, compassion, and harmony with nature are deeply intertwined. By supporting temple infrastructure, enabling the restoration of sacred heritage structures, enhancing the experience of devotees, and advancing the welfare of temple animals, these initiatives seek to preserve and strengthen the living traditions that form the bedrock of India's civilizational heritage.

RBI Holds Repo Rate Steady at 5.25% Amid Inflation Risks from Iran Crisis

New Delhi, 8/4(H.S.): The Reserve Bank of India kept its key policy repo rate unchanged at 5.25% on Wednesday, opting for monetary stability in the first Monetary Policy Committee review of fiscal year 2026-27. Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced the unanimous verdict following the three-day deliberations, maintaining a neutral stance despite global headwinds. This follows the February 2026 MPC meeting where the rate was last held steady after a cumulative 125 basis points of cuts since February 2025—the final reduction occurring in December 2025. Malhotra highlighted supply chain disruptions from the Iran conflict, noting India's relatively resilient economic foundation compared to peers, though inflation risks have resurfaced. He emphasized prioritizing growth-supportive measures over rate reductions in this environment. The repo rate represents the interest charged by RBI on short-term loans to commercial banks, directly influencing borrowing costs, EMIs, savings yields, and investment flows across the economy.

Gold Prices Extend Decline in Domestic Bullion Markets; Silver Holds Steady

New Delhi, 8/4(H.S.): Gold prices tumbled further in early trade across India's domestic bullion markets Wednesday, falling ₹750-820 per 10 grams, while silver rates remained unchanged for the third consecutive session. Benchmark 24-carat gold now hovers between ₹1,49,830 and ₹1,49,980 per 10 grams in major centres, down from prior levels amid ceasefire-driven risk-off sentiment. 22-carat gold followed suit, trading at ₹1,37,340-1,37,490 per 10 grams. Delhi quoted 24K at ₹1,49,980 and 22K at ₹1,37,490 per 10 grams; Mumbai at ₹1,49,830/₹1,37,340;

Ahmedabad ₹1,49,880/₹1,37,390; Chennai and Kolkata both ₹1,49,830/₹1,37,340; Bhopal ₹1,49,880/₹1,37,390; Lucknow and Jaipur ₹1,49,980/₹1,37,490; Patna ₹1,49,880/₹1,37,390. Silver held firm at Tuesday's close of ₹2,49,900 per kilogram in Delhi's bullion market, reflecting steady industrial and investment demand amid gold's slide. Weakness pervaded Karnataka, Telangana, and Odisha markets too: Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Bhubaneswar saw 24K gold at ₹1,49,830 and 22K at ₹1,37,340 per 10 grams, aligning with the national downtrend.

Sensex, Nifty Surge Over 3% on West Asia Ceasefire Optimism

New Delhi, 8/4(H.S.): Indian equities erupted in early trade Wednesday, with benchmark Sensex and Nifty indices leaping more than 3.5% on euphoria over the US-Iran two-week ceasefire in West Asia, shrugging off brief profit-taking. Benchmarks Power Higher After Volatile Open. The BSE Sensex opened at 77,290.63, up 2,674.05 points, dipped ~150 points on profit-booking, then roared back to 77,456.11 before settling at 77,205.80—a 2,589.22-point or 3.47% gain—by 10:15 a.m. NSE Nifty mirrored the action, launching from 23,855.15 (up 731.50 points), sliding to 23,828.50, peaking at 23,961.25, and trading at 23,883.25—a 759.60-point or 3.28% rise. Tuesday's closes—Sensex at 74,616 (up 0.69%) and Nifty at 23,123.65 (up 0.68%)—set the stage for this geopolitical relief rally. Heavyweights InterGlobe Aviation, Shriram Finance, Adani Enterprises, Adani Ports, and L&T surged 6.18-9.50%. Coal India, ONGC, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, and Sun Pharma lagged 0.29-3.19% lower. Of 2,916 active stocks, 2,755 traded green versus 161 red; Sensex's 30 shares saw 26 advance, 4 decline; Nifty 50 had 42 gainers against 8 decliners.



Strengthening last-mile health care in Odisha and Chhattisgarh

Bhubaneswar 8/5(DMS): Odisha and Chhattisgarh are proverbial paradox states that sit at the heart of the country's mineral economy, supplying coal, bauxite, aluminium, and iron ore that power industrial growth. Yet, across large swathes of their rural districts, health indicators continue to lag behind national averages. Inaccessibility, nutritional vulnerability, and the absence of quality care remain a bane for the people. CSR and health interventions in mining and industrial corridors navigate these geographical challenges to ensure last-mile connectivity and bridge barriers to healthcare services. For Vedanta Aluminium, operating in underserved areas of Odisha and Chhattisgarh, the focus in recent years has increasingly been on last-mile health service delivery, charting pathways from village-level detection to tertiary treatment and care. Government surveys underscore why this approach matters. The National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) reveals that challenges persist in nutrition, maternal health, and early disease detection, particularly in underserved districts. It is in this realm that last-mile healthcare interventions, including those supported by industry, become imperative. Through the years, Vedanta Aluminium's integrated



health model has demonstrated measurable impact across its operational regions. With sustained community engagement and expanded infrastructure, the company has impacted over 7 lakh beneficiaries across Odisha and Chhattisgarh, reached 4,09,079 people through health awareness initiatives, and recorded a combined 1.74 lakh footfall across its three hospitals. In rural districts, the pathway to care often begins with first contact. The nearest primary health facility may be several kilometres away, with limited transport options and irregular outreach. In such settings, delayed care is often a function of geography rather

than intent. Vedanta Aluminium's health interventions therefore work in close collaboration with frontline health workers, ASHA and ANM cadres, to strengthen first-level detection, referrals, and follow-up care in these hard-to-reach communities. It is within this access gap that mobile healthcare models have emerged as a critical first layer. Across industrial and mining corridors in districts such as Jharsuguda, Kalahandi and Sundargarh in Odisha, and Korba in Chhattisgarh, Vedanta Aluminium has deployed Mobile Health Units (MHUs) to take basic medical services directly into villages. Functioning as travelling

clinics, these MHUs provide primary consultations, essential medicines and basic diagnostics, alongside preventive health awareness. Among the many beneficiaries is Mrs. Aasha Patel from Korba, who had been living with arthritis and diabetes for years. Routine tasks had become painful, and she often felt dependent on her family for even the simplest activities. When Vedanta BALCO's Mobile Health Unit began visiting her village, the doctors treated her ailments, counselled her on medicines, exercises, and daily care. Over time, she experienced a noticeable reduction in pain, regained mobility, and found new confidence in managing her

health. The MHUs cover more than 200 villages across Odisha and Chhattisgarh with doorstep healthcare services. Dr. Netrananda Nayak, Head, Community Health Centre, Kashipur, said, "I would like to commend Vedanta for providing quality healthcare at the doorstep through its Mobile Health Units. This vital initiative enhances medical access and raises health awareness, fostering a healthier community." However, outreach alone is not sufficient without places to refer patients to. Recognising this, Vedanta Aluminium's healthcare efforts have extended beyond mobility to the creation of local health infrastructure, aimed at reducing the distance between detection and treatment. In Kalahandi, the MSJK Hospital serves as a secondary care facility for surrounding villages, providing inpatient care, emergency services and specialist consultations that would otherwise require travel to distant hospitals. Speaking about her family's experience, Ranu Majhi, a resident of Bongaon Gram Panchayat, Kalahandi, shared, "When my mother fell seriously ill, reaching a hospital in a town was simply not possible for us that day. MSJK Hospital became our lifeline. The doctors attended to her immediately, and the treatment she received here saved us from making a long, difficult journey."

Indian Steel Association Delegation Meets Odisha Chief Minister, Seeks Priority Iron Ore Allocation to Odisha Steel Industries

Bhubaneswar, 7/4(DMS): A high-level delegation from the Indian Steel Association (ISA), led by Hon'ble Member of Parliament and President of ISA, Sri Naveen Jindal today met Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Mohan Majhi to discuss key challenges and opportunities concerning the steel industry in the state. The meeting witnessed the presence of senior government officials including the Chief Secretary Ms. Anu Garg, Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary (Steel & Mines) Mr. Deorajan Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary (Industries) Mr. Hemant Sharma, Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Mr. Saswata Mishra, and OMC's

Chairman Mr. Girish S.N. and OMC's Managing Director Mr. Sudhansu Mohan Samal. The delegation emphasized Odisha's pivotal role as a leading steel-producing state in India and expressed its appreciation to the State Government for its continued support to the steel sector. The ISA delegation suggested a set of measures to the State Government and the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) to boost iron ore availability for state-based industries. The delegation also requested fiscal incentives for the steel industries to attract the investments necessary to meet Odisha's ambitious target of 100 MTPA steel production capacity by 2030. Furthermore, the ISA urged the government to constitute a dedicated Task



Force to design a comprehensive logistics and infrastructure roadmap capable of supporting this massive 100 MTPA capacity. Briefing the media after the meeting, Sri Naveen Jindal said, "Under the dynamic leadership of the Chief Minister, significant progress is

being made, with steel plants expanding rapidly and supporting infrastructure being strengthened across the state. The mining policy and auction process followed by Odisha is the best in the country. The state earns highest revenue for this. We thanked Hon'ble Chief

Minister for the same." "We informed the Chief Minister about the need to scale up iron ore production to sustain the growth of the steel sector. We also requested that Steel Industries in the State be given priority by the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) for iron ore allocation. I am thankful to the Hon'ble Chief Minister for his assurance that there will be no shortage of iron ore for industries operating in Odisha," he added. Responding to the media on middle east situation and impact on Indian economy Shri Jindal said that the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' by our Hon'ble Prime Minister is a big insulation for our Country and Countrymen against the potential risks to our economy in the prevailing

situation. Senior officials present in the meeting also shared their perspectives and assured necessary coordination among departments to address industry concerns effectively. The ISA delegation included industry stalwarts including Tata Steel's Managing Director Mr. TV Narendran, Indian Steel Association's Secretary-General Mr. Alok Sahay, Tata Steel's Vice-President (Corporate Services) Mr. DB Sundar Ramam, JSW Steel's President Mr. Anil Singh, JSW BPSL's Mr. Arun Maheswari, AMNS' Director Mr. Alok Mehta, Jindal Stainless's Chief Business Officer Mr. Shashibhushan Upadhyay and representatives of various other steel companies operating in Odisha.

Global Markets Rally on Ceasefire Relief; Asian Indices Surge 3-7%

New Delhi, 8/3(H.S.): Global markets signaled robust recovery Wednesday following the US-Iran two-week ceasefire announcement amid West Asia tensions, with Asian bourses posting broad-based gains despite mixed US and European closes. American indices ended flat-to-mixed Tuesday under pre-ceasefire pressure, but Dow Jones futures exploded 2.32% or 1,082.12 points to 47,666.58 in early trading. The S&P 500 eked out a 0.08% gain at 6,616.85, while Nasdaq dipped 0.03% to 21,990.75. European markets closed lower amid escalating hostilities: FTSE fell 0.85% to 10,348.79, CAC 40 shed 0.68% at 7,908.74, and DAX plunged 1.08% or 246.49 points to 22,921.59.

Aditya Dhar credits Mukesh Chhabra for pushing him to think bigger on Dhurandhar

As 'Dhurandhar 2' continues its strong run at the box office, Aditya Dhar took a moment to appreciate the man behind the faces, casting director Mukesh Chhabra, whose vision and support helped bring the film to life. Dhar took to his Instagram account to share a heartfelt note for his "friend" and "well wisher," speaking about the importance of casting in filmmaking. In his post, Dhar mentioned how Chhabra believed in the film's vision from the very beginning and helped shape it in many ways. "Here's to Mukesh Chhabra, the man who saw Dhurandhar long before I truly did. There are people who come into a film and do their job and then there are people who quietly reshape the film itself. Mukesh was the latter. From the very first narration, he believed in the scale, the ambition, the sheer possibility of Dhurandhar far more than I did. Where I was cautious, he was fearless," Dhar wrote. The filmmaker went on to speak about how the casting process was not easy due to the large number of characters, but it was Chhabra and his team who went "all guns blazing" to find the right actors. Explaining how the casting became a "mission," Dhar wrote, "Where I was thinking within limits, he pushed me to think bigger, not just in numbers, but in depth, in detail, in truth. The casting of this film was never going to be easy. The sheer number of actors, the range of characters, the responsibility of getting every single face right, it was overwhelming. But Mukesh and his team just went all guns blazing." Dhar concluded his post by saying that he hopes the film makes people understand the "power of casting," which is often an "overlooked" aspect of filmmaking. "But beyond the craft, what I found in him was something even more rare, a friend, a well-wisher, a brother. Someone who stood by the film with complete faith, even when mine wavered."



"Life can turn into hell...": Rajinikanth urges youth to focus on education, not drugs or alcohol

Megastar Rajinikanth has shared a strong message for the youth, urging them to stay focused on their future and make the right choices in life. The veteran actor was seen speaking to the media outside Chennai airport, where he emphasized the importance of discipline, education, and a healthy lifestyle. When asked about the growing influence of film actors in politics and how many youngsters follow them, sometimes leading to risky behaviour like bike stunts and accidents, Rajinikanth gave a clear and thoughtful response. During his interaction with reporters, he spoke about how the youth should "think seriously" about their lives and future. He said young people must be careful in their actions and avoid harming themselves through wrong habits. "The youth should think seriously about their education and future," said Thalaiva. He went on to warn youngsters about the dangers of addiction and bad company. Speaking about how such habits can affect not just individuals but also their families, he said, "Youngsters should be careful. If they get injured, it's their loss.. They should focus on their studies and stay healthy.. Please don't get addicted to drugs or alcohol.. Life can turn into hell not just for you, but for your parents and loved ones. If any of your friends are using them, don't go near them..." Meanwhile, on the work front, Rajinikanth has a busy year ahead with several projects lined up. The actor recently wrapped up the shoot of his much-awaited film 'Jailer 2,' which is now in the final stage of post-production. The sequel follows the success of the original 'Jailer,' which performed strongly at the box office. Beyond 'Jailer 2,' Rajinikanth also gave a major update on his new collaboration with fellow industry icon Kamal Haasan. He is also set to appear in 'Thalaivar 173,' directed by Cibi Chakravarti and backed by Kamal Haasan.



SPORTS

Sindhu Secures Thrilling Win at Badminton Asia Championships; Sen Exits Early

Ningbo, 8/4 (H.S.): Double Olympic medalist P.V. Sindhu advanced to the second round of the Badminton Asia Championships 2026 with a gritty comeback victory on Wednesday. Returning after nearly two months, Sindhu overcame Malaysia's world No. 38 Wong Ling Ching 15-21, 21-11, 21-19 in a 67-minute thriller. She'll next face second seed Wang Zhi Yi of China. Ayush Shetty stunned world No. 7 and defending bronze medalist Lee Shifeng of China 21-13, 21-16 in 51 minutes, setting up a pre-quarterfinal clash with Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei. Lakshya Sen suffered a



straight-games defeat to Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu (12-21, 19-21). Malvika Bansod lost to Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunghan (10-21, 19-

19 Busanan Ongbamrunghan (THA) def. Malvika Bansod 21-10, 21-19K. Letshana (MAS) def. Tanvi Sharma 21-19, 21-14 Men's Singles (Round of 32): Ayush Shetty def. Lee Shifeng (CHN) 21-13, 21-16 Lee Cheuk Yiu (HKG) def. Lakshya Sen 21-12, 21-19 Women's Doubles (Round of 32): Li Yi Jing/Luo Shu Min (CHN) def. Kavipriya Selvam/Simran Singhi 21-9, 21-8 Hataithip Mizaad/Napaporn Tungkasatan (THA) def. Ashwini Bhat K./Shikha Gautham 21-10, 21-10 HS Prannoy, Kidambi Srikanth, and Unnati Hooda feature in later matches.

Allu Arjun, Deepika Padukone's upcoming Atlee film officially named Raaka, new poster out

Mumbai: On the occasion of superstar Allu Arjun's 44th birthday, the makers have revealed the title of his upcoming project with director Atlee. The film, which was earlier referred to as 'AA22xA6,' has now been officially titled 'Raaka.' The announcement was made on social media along with a new poster. The title reveal came as a special surprise for fans on the actor's birthday, making the day even more memorable for his followers. In the striking poster, Allu Arjun can be seen in bald look, with part of his face covered in thick fur. A tusk-like detail adds a raw and intense feel to the look, while his eyes appear strong and mysterious. Sharing the poster, the team wrote, "#AA22xA6 is now #Raaka Prepare yourself for a vision beyond limits". The film



marks the first collaboration of Allu Arjun with director Atlee and also stars Deepika Padukone. The project has already created a strong buzz among fans. More details about the film are still under wraps. Allu Arjun's last release, 'Pushpa 2: The Rule,' directed by Sukumar, did very well at the box office after its release in 2024. The film was a sequel to 'Pushpa: The Rise' and featured Rashmika Mandanna, Fahadh Faasil, Jagapathi Babu, Sunil and Rao Ramesh. Deepika Padukone was last seen in 'Kalki 2898 AD,' which also performed well in theatres.

24-Member Indian Women's Hockey Team Named for Argentina Tour

New Delhi, 8/4 (H.S.): Hockey India announced a 24-member Indian women's hockey squad for the Argentina tour from April 13-17 in Buenos Aires, featuring four test matches against the hosts. This tour is crucial preparation for the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 and Asian Games. The squad balances experience and youth, with midfielder Salima Tete captaining once again, known for her composure and skill. Forward Deepika returns from injury, bolstering penalty corner threats; her absence saw Navneet Kaur, Manisha Chauhan, Udit, and Annu excel. Goalkeeper Savita's comeback adds stability, complementing Bichu Devi's recent qualifier heroics for healthy rivalry. Defender Jyoti and forward Mumtaz Khan strengthen the lineup, while young guns Baljeet



Kaur, Vaishnavi Phalke, Rutuja Pisal, Ishika, and Sakshi Rana draw attention after impressive form. Chief Coach Sardar Mirjan called the tour ideal for gaining international exposure and refining combinations. Matches are scheduled for April 13, 14, 16, and 17 at 11:00 AM local time (7:30 PM IST). Indian Women's Hockey Team (24 players): Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Defenders: Nikki Pradhan, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu, Manisha Chauhan, Lalhantluangi, Jyoti, Udit Midfielders: Vaishnavi Phalke, Sakshi Rana, Sunelita Toppo, Salima Tete (C), Neha, Deepika Soreng, Rutuja Pisal, Ishika Forwards: Baljeet Kaur, Navneet Kaur, Deepika, Annu, Beauty Dungdung, Lalremsiami, Mumtaz Khan

Deepika Padukone gives befitting reply to trolls questioning her alleged silence on Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar 2



Dhurandhar: The Revenge has been garnering praise from the Bollywood celebrities ever since its release in theatres on March 19. However, the alleged silence of Deepika Padukone, wife of Ranveer Singh, on the film's success has been a point of discussion among the fans of the couple. Deepika Padukone has now broken her silence regarding the ongoing chatter on the internet and highlighted her support for husband Ranveer Singh and Dhurandhar after she skipped the sequel's screening in Mumbai. Talking to her Instagram handle, Deepika Padukone commented on a reel on social media which highlighted her absence at the Dhurandhar 2's screening and asked if "her silence was a delivery statement or is it the internet reading too much into celebrity social media silence?" Deepika has addressed the long-pending discussion with a befitting reply in the comment section of the post. Taking to the comment section, Deepika wrote, "The latter my friend... P.S. I watched it way before any of you did. Now who is the joke on?" While the netizens came in support of her, saying, "Have you forgotten she stays with him?" Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone are a prominent Bollywood power couple who married in 2018 after dating since 2013, following their collaboration in Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela. Renowned for their on-screen chemistry in films like Bajirao Mastani and Padmaavat, they welcomed their first child, daughter Dua, in September 2024. 'Dhurandhar: The Revenge', the sequel to last year's 'Dhurandhar', has shown remarkable performance at the box office. The critics and moviegoers have been praising the performance of Ranveer Singh in the film. 'Dhurandhar' franchise marks Aditya Dhar's second directorial venture after his National Award-winning debut 'Uri: The Surgical Strike', which starred Vicky Kaushal. The second features a powerful lineup including Arjun Rampal, R Madhavan, and Sanjay Dutt, with a cameo appearance by Yami Gautam. In the first part, Akshaye Khanna played a key role as gangster Rehman Dakait. The film's music, including the track 'Aari Aari' composed by Shashwat Sachdev in collaboration with Bombay Rockers, has also contributed to its popularity among audiences.