

# Dumani Mail

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## Delhi HC judge recuses from PIL on viral court recording case involving Kejriwal, AAP leaders

New Delhi : Justice Tejas Karia of the Delhi High Court on Wednesday recused himself from hearing a plea that sought contempt proceedings against former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and several others for allegedly uploading videos of court proceedings on social media platforms.

The matter, initially listed before a bench comprising Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Karia, will now be heard by a different bench on Wednesday.

The petition, filed as a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) by advocate Vaibhav Singh, raises serious concerns over the unauthorised recording and circulation of court proceedings held on April 13, 2026, before Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma. Kejriwal had personally appeared that day to argue



his plea seeking the judge's recusal in a case linked to the Delhi Liquor Policy probe being conducted by the CBI and ED.

According to the petitioner, the hearing--lasting approximately 45 to 50 minutes--was recorded without permission and subsequently disseminated across platforms such as X, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Singh contends that the clips were shared

in a manner that distorted the context, created misleading narratives, and damaged the judiciary's image.

The plea specifically names several political leaders, including Digvijaya Singh and Saurabh Bharadwaj, for allegedly posting or amplifying the recordings. It further claims that Kejriwal himself reposted certain clips, thereby contributing to

their wider circulation. Other figures mentioned include journalist Ravish Kumar and AAP leaders Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh, Sanjeev Jha, Pardeep Sahni, Jarnail Singh, Mukesh Ahlawat, and Vinay Mishra.

The petition argues that such actions violate the High Court of Delhi Rules for Video Conferencing, 2021 and the Electronic Evidence and Video Conferencing Rules, 2025, both of which expressly prohibit unauthorised recording or sharing of court proceedings.

Calling the incident "grave and unprecedented," the petitioner has urged the court to order the immediate removal of the recordings from all platforms and initiate legal action against those responsible. The matter will now be taken up by another bench for further consideration.

## Heatwave conditions likely in most parts of northwest, central and eastern India: IMD

New Delhi: Heatwave conditions are likely to prevail over major parts of northwest, central and eastern India during the next four to five days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Wednesday.

Isolated parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, and Delhi, may expect heatwave conditions on April 24 and 25.

"Western Uttar Pradesh during April 23-25; eastern Uttar Pradesh during April 22-26; Rajasthan during April 24-26; Madhya Pradesh during April 23-26, Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh during April 24-27; Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand on April 22 and April 23," are expected to witness heatwave conditions, the IMD said.

## Kedarnath Dham opens; devotees witness spiritual fervour, CM Pushkar Singh Dhama offers prayers

New Delhi: A remarkable confluence of faith, devotion, and spirituality was witnessed today at Kedarnath Dham as the sacred doors of Lord Kedarnath were ceremonially opened for devotees amid full rituals and traditions. On this auspicious occasion, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama visited the shrine and participated in the prayers.

Marking the opening of the temple, Chief Minister Dhama performed special prayers with Vedic chants and complete rituals. During the ceremony, he took a solemn pledge and offered the first prayer in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He prayed to Lord Shiva for the happiness, prosperity, and well-being of the people of the state.

Thousands of devotees from across the country and abroad gathered at Kedarnath Dham to witness the historic moment. As the temple doors opened, the

premises resonated with chants of "Har Har Mahadev," creating a deeply spiritual atmosphere. The devotees' faces reflected immense faith and joy.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama stated that Kedarnath



Dham, along with the Char Dham, represents the spiritual identity of Uttarakhand.

He reaffirmed that the state government is fully committed to ensuring a safe, smooth, and well-organised pilgrimage experience for all devotees. He added that he is

personally reviewing arrangements regularly to ensure that no pilgrim faces inconvenience.

The Chief Minister also directed officials to maintain high standards in travel routes, healthcare services, drinking water, cleanliness, and security arrangements. He emphasised that, given the increasing number of pilgrims, all necessary preparations must be completed on time.

Extending his best wishes on the occasion, the Chief Minister expressed hope that the blessings of Baba Kedarnath remain with everyone and that Uttarakhand continues to progress on the path of development.

The Chairman of the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee, Hemant Dwivedi, urged devotees to visit and seek the blessings of Baba Kedar and Lord Badrinath as the portals of the world-famous Kedarnath Temple opened.

## Delhi: Fake ENO, Nescafe Coffee manufacturing racket busted; 4 nabbed

New Delhi: In a major crackdown, the Delhi Police Crime Branch has uncovered a large-scale racket involved in manufacturing counterfeit ENO and fake Nescafe coffee products in the national capital. Acting on specific intelligence, police conducted a raid in the Madhu Vihar area, where two illegal units were found operating.

These units were producing fake ENO powder and counterfeit coffee sachets, which were then supplied to markets across multiple regions through wholesale and retail channels.

During the operation, authorities seized goods worth approximately Rs 20 lakh. The recovered items included three packaging machines, nearly 1 lakh ready-to-sell ENO sachets, around 50,000 fake coffee sachets, 500 kg of coffee powder, acid-filled drums, packaging rolls, stickers, cartons and other manufacturing materials.

Officials highlighted the serious public health risks posed by such counterfeit products.

**Four individuals—Uttam Das, Papai Das alias Pankaj, Nitin Bhardwaj, and Sanjay Bansal—have been arrested in connection with the case. Investigations revealed that the accused had rented two flats and had been running the illegal operation for the past two months. While Nitin Bhardwaj initially managed to evade arrest, he was later tracked down using technical surveillance and apprehended from the Sahastradhara area in Dehradun. Sanjay Bansal was subsequently arrested near Kashmiri Gate.**

ENO, commonly used to treat acidity, gas, and indigestion, is directly linked to consumer health—making the circulation of fake variants potentially dangerous.

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Representatives from the concerned companies confirmed after inspection that the seized ENO and coffee products were counterfeit. They stated that the items were neither manufactured by them nor authorized under any licensing agreement.

Police have launched further investigations to trace the distribution network and identify additional links in the supply chain.

## Kedarnath Dham and Chardham yatra reflects faith, unity and tradition: PM Modi

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the journey to Kedarnath Dham and the Chardham is a divine celebration of the country's faith, unity, and rich traditions. He said that these journeys give glimpses of India's eternal culture.

In a letter to the countrymen, the Prime Minister informed that the

doors of Kedarnath Dham on the sacred land of Uttarakhand have been opened for all devotees with full rites and rituals. Mr Modi said that every step of the Chardham Yatra connects one more with the sanctity of nature, the country's rich cultural heritage and our responsibilities towards the

nation. In his letter, the Prime Minister has urged citizens to adopt five resolutions. He appealed to people to maintain cleanliness at pilgrimage sites and in surrounding areas, contribute to keeping rivers clean, and take a pledge for a single-use plastic-free journey. He also urged people to remain sensitive

towards nature and contribute to environmental conservation.

In the third resolution, the Prime Minister emphasized service, cooperation, and unity. Additionally, he urged people to include the purchase of local products in their spending. He

appealed to those visiting the Char Dham Yatra to follow rules and traffic instructions to ensure the pilgrimage is safe and smooth. The Prime Minister also asked content creators and influencers to make efforts to take the local stories and small traditions of Uttarakhand to the masses.

## ONGC cancels jack-up rig tender after spotting abnormal pricing patterns

New Delhi : State-run Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has cancelled its tender for hiring jack-up rigs, citing significant pricing anomalies and concerns over competitive integrity, according to a clarification issued by the company. Responding to a recent media report, ONGC said it follows "strict adherence to established public procurement principles, with a strong emphasis on transparency, fairness, and the promotion of healthy competition."

"The company noted that during the evaluation process, the pricing levels and bid patterns observed indicated an unusually steep escalation of approximately 60%, from a day rate of USD 35,606 to USD 56,195, within a span of about nine months." "This increase was considered significantly beyond the bounds of reasonable and competitive market behaviour," ONGC said, adding that when assessed alongside overall bidding pattern and prevailing global conditions, the trends raised concerns of potential collusive practices. ONGC said it is "duty-bound to examine these concerns," and the assessment ultimately led to the decision to cancel the tender. Reiterating its position, the state owned company said its actions are guided by the objective of safeguarding organisational interests, ensuring the prudent utilisation of public funds, and upholding the integrity and credibility of the procurement process. It further clarified that the decision was taken based on pricing reasonableness, competitive integrity, and alignment with established procurement norms, without any extraneous influence.

ONGC also underlined its commitment to the industry, stating it "remains committed to maintaining transparent and constructive engagement" and will continue to encourage fair, competitive, and responsible participation, while taking steps to prevent cartelisation and preserve the sanctity of its procurement processes.

## India will never forget, terror will be met with strength: Rajnath Singh pays tribute to victims of Pahalgam terror attack

New Delhi : Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday paid tribute to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack, asserting that India's response to terrorism remains "firm, decisive and unwavering" as the nation marked one year since the deadly incident in which 26 tourists were killed in Jammu and Kashmir.

Remembering the victims of the April 22, 2025, terror attack, Singh said, "Remembering and paying my heartfelt tributes to the innocent people who lost their lives in the cowardly terror attack at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April 2025. We share the enduring pain of their loved ones and families. We will never forget those wounds inflicted on our nation. India has endured decades of cross-border terror, but today our response is firm, decisive and unwavering. Through determined action, we have demonstrated that any attempt to harm our people or disrupt our unity will be met with strength and clarity."

Earlier in the day, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi also paid homage to the 26 victims of the attack, reiterating the country's unified stand against terrorism. In a post on X, the Prime Minister said the lives lost would "never be forgotten" and expressed solidarity with grieving families.

"As a nation, we stand united in grief and resolve. India will never bow to any form of terror. The heinous designs of terrorists will never succeed," Modi stated.

The terror attack, carried out in Pahalgam, one of Jammu and Kashmir's prominent tourist destinations, had shocked the nation after Pakistan-backed terrorists entered a village and killed 26 civilians. The assailants reportedly targeted victims based on their religious identity, drawing widespread condemnation and outrage across the country.

In response, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, 2025, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and

Kashmir (PoJK). The Indian armed forces struck multiple terror launchpads linked to groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Hizbul Mujahideen, significantly damaging their operational capabilities.

The operation triggered retaliatory actions from Pakistan, including drone attacks and cross-border shelling, leading to a brief four-day military escalation. Indian forces responded with precision strikes, reportedly targeting key radar installations in Lahore and areas near Gujranwala.

Following the escalation, both countries agreed to a ceasefire on May 10 after communication between their respective Directors General of Military Operations (DGMO).

On the eve of the anniversary, the Indian Army also recalled the operation, underlining its message of deterrence. "When boundaries of humanity are crossed, the response is decisive. Justice is served. India stands united," the Army said.

## Fire damaged SAMS records in Ananadpur college

Keonjhar/Bhubaneswar: A sudden fire broke out in +3 Students Academic Monitoring System (SAMS) of the south block of Ananadpur College today, creating panic. According to reports, more than 10 computers and many important documents and files of students were completely burnt down due to the sudden fire inside the room.

After the fire broke out, there was panic and unrest in the college premises. On receiving the information, the Ananadpur Fire Department personnel reached the spot and brought the situation under control. Their quick action prevented a major mishap,



as boys and girls common rooms are located near this room. From the initial investigation, it is suspected that the fire broke out due to an electrical circuit fault. While the exact estimate of the loss is not yet known, the college is investigating the incident.

Narayan Mishra, Principal of the College said "the fire broke in +3

SAMS center where machines like AC, Xerox machines, three PCs, UPS and other official records have been damaged. The admission register, scholarships register, orissa state open university examination papers are also damaged due to water spray. The cause of fire though not confirmed, but we suspected due to short circuit". (EOM)

## Happiness : The Ultimate Objective

Hemanta Kumar Parida

Happiness, through tranquility, the ultimate objective of every man, seems to elude him because of his preponderant preoccupation in the acquisition of wealth, power, position etc. He gets agitated at trifles, worries for each and everything and attributes to the present age all the problems he now faces, leading to stress and strain. There is nothing wrong with the age, because it has fantastic achievements to its credit in the material, scientific and other fields. But in the midst of glorious achievements, man remains a picture of worry, violence and sorrow.

Stress is the result of severe and sustained disturbance in the mind and the body caused by the inadequacy of the inner world of man to cope with the ever changing and adverse situations in the outer world. A few minutes of disturbance caused by lower emotions like anger, anxiety, fright etc., can use up more energy, than a whole day's physical labour. During such emotions all muscles are tensed, blood pressure increases, heart beats faster, digestive system is affected and shock waves are produced in the nervous system. After these lower emotions subside, the demon continues to drain energy in "Mental Fatigue" or "Tension". Many people drive themselves throughout the day, palpitate with panic when faced with leisure and worry themselves during nights with thoughts of anxiety and fright about things that may never come to pass. For the above problem.

Thoughts precede action and speech. Every emotion negative and harmful or positive and beneficial is but a thought. Flow of thoughts in mind, just as flow of water is a river. The nature of the thoughts determine the state of the mind, happy or unhappy, calm or agitated. Discipline will enable us to lead a life free from thoughts of regrets of past, anxiety of the future and also excitement of the present. In the Bhagawad Gita, Lord Krishna says not to get attached to the impermanent and to worry for it. The contact of senses with objects causes heat and cold, pleasure and pain, they have a beginning and an end and are impermanent. He directs us to endure it bravely. Krishna adds that having made pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the same, act in daily life. One should lift himself by his own self and let him not lower himself, for the self alone and is the friend of oneself and this self is the enemy of oneself. The mind is difficult to control and restless, but by practice and by dispassion it can be restrained.

It is unfortunate but true that a vast majority of people both rich and poor, educated and uneducated seem to have lost, due to incessant worry and stress, the capacity to readily smile. It has been proved that even forcibly putting on a smile, helps us to relax the body and the mind. The effect of a smile is reflected on the body and mind by relieving them of their tensions. A merry heart doeth good like an effective medicine.

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## April 17 Was a 'Black Day' for Women in the Country: Aparajita Sarangi.

Sambalpur, April 21(DMS) : Following the setback to the Women's Reservation Bill in the Lok Sabha, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has reacted strongly, triggering debates across the country.

In this context, a press conference was held today at Hotel River Inn in Sambalpur, where BJP National Spokesperson and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi presented her views and the party's stand on the issue of the Women's Reservation Bill and the Nari Shakti Vandan Act.

Addressing the media, Sarangi said that April 17 could be termed a "black day" for women in India, as the bill faced opposition. She stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP have always been committed to ensuring the safety and dignity of women. With that objective, the Central Government had introduced two bills in the Lok Sabha along with the Nari Shakti Vandan initiative.

She noted that although discussions were held for three days, the bill ultimately faced opposition. According to her, parties such as the Indian National



Congress, Samajwadi Party, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and All India Trinamool Congress opposed the proposal, which she described as unfortunate.

Sarangi highlighted that the Women's Reservation Bill was first introduced in 1996 by then Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, and later in 2010 during the tenure of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Although it was passed in the Rajya Sabha, it was not introduced in the Lok Sabha at that time. She added that when the current government brought

the bill again under Modi's leadership, it faced resistance.

She alleged that the opposition opposed the bill fearing political advantage for the BJP, but emphasized that her party has always stood for women's dignity and will continue to do so.

Pointing out representation gaps, Sarangi said that women currently hold only about 13% seats in Parliament, despite making up nearly half the population. She compared this with countries like Uganda (64%), Sweden (46%), and Switzerland (45%), and

neighboring Nepal (33%), stating that India lags behind significantly.

She accused the opposition of "betraying women" by opposing the bill and later celebrating it, calling it an "insult" and "injustice" to women.

Sarangi further stated that while opposition parties claim to support women's reservation, they oppose delimitation, which she termed contradictory. She clarified that the current effort was aimed at implementing the Nari Shakti Vandan Act passed in 2023.

She also pointed out that while India's population has grown from around 55 crore to over 140 crore, the number of Lok Sabha seats has remained unchanged. The government aims to increase seats based on population so that representation, including that of women, can improve. According to her, without increasing seats as per constitutional provisions, implementing reservation would be difficult, and the government aimed to implement it by 2029.

Reiterating her stance, she said Prime Minister Modi and the BJP have consistently worked for women's safety and respect and will continue to fulfill that responsibility.

On this occasion, several BJP leaders including District President Ramchandra Meher, former Rengali MLA Nauri Naik, State Executive Member Sabita Nanda, District Vice President Sushant Purohit, Mahila Morcha President Sushama Sahu, and State BJP Spokesperson Manas Baxi were present along with Sarangi. Other leaders including Runu Pradhan, Sarojini Banchor, Surya Panigrahi, Salila Panda, and Pushpanjali Jena also attended.

## Jharsuguda District Junior Girls Hockey Team leaves for Rourkela.



Jharsuguda : District Junior Girls Hockey Team left for Rourkela by train at 9 am today to participate in the inter-district hockey competition started by Jharsuguda-Hockey Association of Odisha. The team will play its first match tomorrow morning, 23rd. While Rajeshwari Nayak is the captain of this junior team, Princy Naik, Aarushi Sahu, Mama

Pradhan, Rasmita Bagh, Sneha Bagh, Ankita Kisan, Lisa Minj, Riya Majhi, Palak Singh, Angel Mirig, Namrata Sahu, Archana Sahu, Vishrupriya Deheri and Lisa Naik are representing the team. Sakund Naik has left as the team manager and Madhumita Khalkho has left as the coach.

This morning, the team was met by Odisha Hockey Association Vice

President Jiban Mohanty and Clement Ronald at Jharsuguda Railway Station and congratulated them. District Sports Officer Amrit Acharya, District Hockey Association President and District Collector Kunal Motiram Chauhan, Secretary ADM Brajabandhu Bhoi, Member Prajwal Patel and District Sports Education Officer Sushant Behera congratulated the team.

## Block-Level Workshop Held for Formation of Healthy Gram Panchayats

Rayagada, April 22, 2026: A block-level workshop aimed at the formation of healthy Gram Panchayats was successfully conducted on Tuesday. The program was held at the Block Sadbhavana Hall and was inaugurated by BDO Sujit Kumar Mishra.

The training session was facilitated by state-level resource person Smt. Sangeeta Mangaraj, GPDO Smritirekha Nayak, resource person Nilanchal Mishra, and PESA Coordinator Jogendra Nayak. The workshop witnessed active participation from officials and representatives of the Women and Child Development Department, elected representatives, MBKs, CRPs, and ASHA workers.

Speakers at the event emphasized that good health is the key to overall development. Maintaining a healthy body is essential for individuals to effectively perform their duties in society. Sound health enhances efficiency, whereas poor health leads to reduced productivity, affecting work style and punctuality.

The importance of mental health was also highlighted, noting its significant impact on personal responsibilities, family life, environment, and workplace performance. The program stressed the need for increased awareness at the Gram Panchayat level to build a healthy society. Chief Development Officer Shri Akshaya Kumar Khemundu stated that such initiatives are being organized across every block by the Panchayati Raj Department to promote health awareness and community well-being.

## Congress protest delimitation not Wo- men's reservation - DCC

Jagatsinghpur, District Congress Committee organised one Special Press - meet at Sarada Mandap, Jagatsinghpur regarding allegation of BJP upon Congress for protest of Wo- men's reservation bill. Congress spokes man Advocate Lalatendu Das and advocate Nishi kanta Misha said that Congress not protesting Wo- men's reservation bill rather protested land delimitation bill which was technically presented in the name of Wo- men's reservation bill. Congress supported 33 percentage Wo- men's reservation bill in 2023 September but BJP Govt kept the bill in cold store. Now BJP Govt trying to pass the land delimitation bill before First Census in the name of Wo- men's reservation bill and blaming Congress. But Congress supported 131 constitution amendment bill for Wo- men's reservation but Congress protest hypocrisy movement of BJP to pass the land delimitation bill before completion of Census. In the press meet District Congress president Deba Prasad Nayak, Bishnu Barick, Dipti rani, Prasant Mohapatra and Abhijit were present.

## 23rd National Theatre Festival CANFEST-2026 off to a bright start in Paradip

Paradip, (DMC): The 23rd National Theatre Festival CANFEST-2026 organised by CANMASS kick started here at Jayadev Sadan in the Port city of Paradip on April 21, 2026 Tuesday. Joining as chief guest, the festival was declared open by Paradip Port Authority (PPA) Chairman P.L. Haranadh. In the inaugural function, Paradip

the mission & vision of CANMASS.

Afterwards the Chief Guest Mr. P. L. Haranadh, Chariman, Paradip Port Authority formally inaugurated the drama festival and said that CANMASS has not only provided entertainment to the residents of the port city by organizing it every year, but has also given Paradip a unique place



Municipality chairman Basant Biswal and Capt was present as the special guest. Several troupes from different parts of the State and country are participating in the event, which is being organised by the leading cultural organization CANMASS in collaboration with Union Ministry of Culture, Paradip Port Authority (PPA), IFFCO Paradeep unit and Indian Oil Paradip Refinery. In the inaugural Ceremony, organised under the chairmanship of Mr. Sushil Ch. Nahak, Senior member of Canmass, the President of Canmass Captain Atulya Kumar Mohapatra presented the welcome address and highlights

in the map of Theatre and Cultural segment of the country, for which CANMASS is worthy of praise.

The festival is being organised and coordinated by CANMASS Secretary Sriman Narayan Mishra and assisted by all members. It is noted that besides Jayadev Sadan, the eight days festival will performed parallel at Sanskrit Bhawan of IFFCO Township and Utsav Auditorium at Paradip Refinery on April 28, 2026. In the inaugural evening, Hindi play 'Karna' was performed by "Sampoornam" theatre group of Mumbai, Maharashtra directed by Kulwinder Bakshish Singh.

## 49 couples wed under CM's Kanya Vivah Yojana in khordha



Khordha-21/4- District administration organised a mass marriage ceremony under the Chief Minister's Kanya Vivah Yojana at Barunei temple, khordha. A total of 98 families from the district benefited from the state government's welfare initiative aimed at ensuring social security and promoting gender equality. The couples had earlier registered under the scheme through the district social welfare department and completed their court marriages before participating in the traditional hindu wedding ceremony on the day. The event was jointly organised by the district social welfare department and women and child development department with the support from volunteer organisation People's

Forum. Collector, Khordha Amrit Raturaj, MLA & Chairmn Khordha district planning committee Prasanta Kumar Jagdev, MLA, Begunia, Pradeep Kumar Sahu, MLA, Ananta Narayan Jena, Zilla Parishad President Rupshree Rani Gumansingh, Chairman Khordha Municipal council, Kanaka Laxmi Mohanty, ADM, Pratap Chandra Beura, Zilla Parishad Chief Development and Executive Officer, Jyoti Shankar Sahu, Addl.SP, Anadi Charan Sethi, Excise Superintendent, Sumati Tripathy, BDO, Siddharth Pattnaik attended the event and blessed the newly weds. Collector, Mr. Raturaj highlighted that the scheme provides hope to poor families

unable to afford marriage expenses. He stressed that the initiative not only offer's social recognition but also ensures legal protections through marriage registration certificates. MLA, Prasanta Jagdev praised the scheme for enabling daughter's from economically weaker families to start married life with dignity. MLA, Mr. Jagdev added that such mass marriage program help curb social evils like dowry. During the ceremony each bride received a cheque of ₹45000 and a marriage registration certificates. Voluntary organisations, district level officers and social welfare staffs extended full cooperation to make the event successful. The program reinforced the government's commitment to supporting poor families and promoting social welfare.

## Kankanhar Fifth Annual Palli Mahotsav Inaugurated.



Khordha-21/4- Fifth Annual Palli Mahotsav was inaugurated by MLA and Chairman Khordha District Planning Committee Prasanta Kumar Jagdev. The function was held under the chairmanship of the festival committee Madhab Chandra Rautray, Khordha Municipal Council Vice- Chairman Sourya Ranjan Mohanty, former Sarpancha of Bangida GP, Kartik Chandra Rautray, social activist Ramakanta Mohapatra were among the prominent guests present. MLA, Mr. Jagdev

promised for the all-round development of Bangida Panchayat. On behalf of the state government's Culture Department, Gurukula Gottipuo Dance, Nartaki Dance Academy Sambalpur Dance Academy performed. Among others, Rajinikanta Ranabijuli, Sridhar Behera, Srikanta Kumar Sahu, Bhabani Shankar Rautray, Dibakar Pradhan, Sameer Badajena were co-ordinate the program. IIC, Khordha Sadar, Basudev Jaisingh, Tushar Kant Parida along with other police personnel cooperated.

## Census Operations May Be Suspended if Heatwave Intensifies in Odisha: Minister

Bhubaneswar, 22 April (H.S.): Census operations in Odisha may be temporarily suspended if the ongoing heatwave worsens, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said on Wednesday, as the state government reviews the impact of extreme weather on field personnel.

Amid rising temperatures across the state, the minister said a review meeting has already been conducted with officials of the Revenue and Disaster Management Department to assess the situation. He added that enumerators engaged in



fieldwork may also be consulted in the coming days, depending on how weather conditions evolve. "If the heatwave intensifies further, census

operations may be paused and resumed at a later stage. The safety of government officials and the general public remains our top priority," Pujari told reporters.

The review follows reports that several officials involved in census duties have fallen ill due to prolonged exposure to extreme heat. The department is closely monitoring developments and evaluating whether continuing field operations could pose health risks to personnel.

After initial discussions

with senior officials, the government is expected to hold another round of consultations with staff directly engaged in enumeration work. Based on their feedback and the prevailing weather conditions, a decision will be taken on whether to temporarily halt field activities.

The minister also indicated that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will be issued shortly to ensure the safety and well-being of enumerators, as the state continues to grapple with rising temperatures.

## Attack on senior journalist Padmanabh Biswal:- Various media representatives meet SP demanding immediate arrest of accused.

Khordha, 22/4 - In protest against the incident of an anti-social person entering the house of senior journalist Padmanabh Biswal of Tangi, Khordha assaulting, abusing and threatening to kill him while publish a news, a large number of media representatives today met the SP, Khordha and submitted a memorandum demanding the immediate arrest of the accused. OUIJ, Khordha district unit President Prakash Kumar Hati has warned that all media representatives will take a protest if the accused is not arrested within 7 days. This has been supported by the members of Khordha District Press Club and Tangi Block Journalists Association. As per the report, Tangi Block Journalists Association President and senior citizen Padmanabh Biswal (82) had broadcast a news about the suicide of a married woman in a newspaper on the 8th



and 9th this month. Incited by this, on the 16th, the miscreants from Badapari area under Tangi police station along with his supporters entered Mr. Biswal's house, abused him in obscene language and brutally attacked him. He even alleged that he was threatened with death if he broadcast the news again. Mr. Biswal is a senior citizen and a prominent person, while after this incident, Mr. Biswal's couple is in a state of fear and insecurity. He has filed a written complaint in this regard at Tangi police station. But even after 7 days

of the complaint, the tangi police have not registered a case yet, rather it is alleged that the police officer is trying to find a way for an anti-social person to escape from the case.

The District Press Club and Tangi Block Journalists' Association have condemned such a sensitive incident and taken it seriously. The associations have today met SP, Vivekananda Sharma and demanded that the accused be arrested and Mr. Biswal be provided security. If immediate action is not taken against the accused, the media representatives have

warned that they will protest in front of the SP office after 7 days. The SP has promised that a special officer from the district police headquarters will be given the charge to inquire the incident. Among others, Khordha District Press Club President, Subhransu Ranjan Samantray, Secretary, Dillip Kumar Pattnaik, OUIJ, Khordha District President, Tapan Kumar Nayak, OUIJ, Khordha District, President Prakash Kumar Hati, UJA, Khordha District President, Ahyakta Harihar Khadnga, Tangi Block Journalists Union Secretary, Manoj Pattnaik, Senior Member Pradeep Kumar Mahapatra, Treasurer Damodar Sahu, Alok Maharana, Umesh Pattnaik, Manas Pradhan, Rajnikant Mishra and all members of Khordha District Press Club and Tangi Block Journalists Association were present.

## NCC Alumni Association installed water & food containers on trees for survival of birds in Paradip

Paradip/Bhubaneswar: In a commendable eco-friendly initiative, the Paradip College NCC Alumni Association has taken steps to protect birds from the intense summer heat. Members of the association have installed earthen water pots and food containers on trees in and around the college surrounding and Bank Lane, Model Police Station square and Badapadia Market area and also arranged water facilities on the rooftops of college and nearby buildings. This initiative will help birds easily access water and food during extreme heat, thereby supporting their survival. Additionally, discarded plastic bottles have been



creatively reused to provide a safe and sustainable system for feeding and watering birds, setting an example for environmental conservation.

While the NCC Alumni Association regularly conducts beach cleaning drives every Sunday and hold Swachhata Drive. For the past one month they have also been actively

placing water pots and arranging food for birds. Every year, the Association organizes blood donation camps, collecting more than 100 units of blood. Besides, they continue to conduct awareness programs such as "Say No to Plastic," "Say No to Drugs," "Tree Plantation Drives, and "Swachhata Hi Seva." NCC cadets and

alumni members are also playing a significant role in spreading awareness about various government schemes and social messages among the public.

Through such social initiatives, the association aims to raise awareness about environmental protection and bird conservation. Members stated that if every citizen takes small steps like these, it can help to preserve nature and create a healthier environment for all living beings.

The President of the Association, Ambika Prasad Mohapatra, stated that such environment-friendly and social service activities will continue in the future.

## 23rd National Theatre Festival CANFEST-2026 off to a bright start in Paradip

Paradip/Bhubaneswar (DMC): The 23rd National Theatre Festival Canfest-2026 organised by CANMASS kick started here at Jayadev Sadan in the Port city of Paradip on April 21, 2026 Tuesday. Joining as chief guest, the festival was declared open by Paradip Port Authority (PPA) Chairman P.L. Haranadh. In the inaugural function, Paradip Municipality chairman Basant Biswal, renowned Odia film Actor Samresh Routray, PPA CME Sushil Nahak attended the function as distinguished guests. On the occasion, Samresh Routray was bestowed with Rang Prativa award and Nalini Nihar Nayak, youth theatre director was awarded with Manoj Pradhan Smruti Samman. Canmass president Capt.



Atulya Kumar Mohapatra presided over the inaugural function and vice president Dr. Santosh Samal tendered vote of thanks.

Several troupes from different parts of the State and country are participating in the event, which is being organised by the leading cultural organization CANMASS in collaboration with Union Ministry of Culture, Paradip

Port Authority (PPA), IFFCO Paradeep unit and Indian Oil Paradip Refinery.

Afterwards the Chief Guest Mr. P. L. Haranadh, Chariman, Paradip Port Authority formally inaugurated the drama festival and said that CANMASS has not only provided entertainment to the residents of the port city by organizing it every year, but has also given

Paradip a unique place in the map of Theatre and Cultural segment of the country, for which CANMASS is worthy of praise.

It is noted that besides Jayadev Sadan, the eight days festival will be performed parallel at Sanskrit Bhawan of IFFCO Township and Utsav Auditorium at Paradip Refinery Township and concludes on April 28, 2026.

On the inaugural evening, Shadow Theatre group of Bhopal staged the Hindi play 'Prakash Hazir Ho' under the direction of eminent Director Manoj Nair. The play is inspired by a story of Vijaydan Detha, known for weaving powerful narratives that blend the mystical with the real, often reflecting deep social and psychological currents.

## Odisha Govt Issues Directives to Ensure Safety of Census Enumerators

Bhubaneswar, 22 April (H.S.): The Government of Odisha has issued directives to ensure the safety and well-being of personnel engaged in the ongoing Census operations across the state. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Additional Chief Secretary of the Revenue and Disaster Management Department, has written to all district collectors and municipal commissioners in this regard.

According to the official communication, the first phase of Census 2027—House Listing and Housing Census—commenced on April 16 and will continue until May 15, 2026. During this period, enumerators are



conducting door-to-door surveys to collect data on housing conditions, household amenities, and assets.

The directive follows several concerning incidents reported from various districts. In Sonepur District, an enumerator reportedly

died of a heart attack after returning from duty. In Mayurbhanj District, a female enumerator has been reported missing. Additionally, multiple cases of heatstroke and minor accidents have been reported in Balasore District, while another accident was

reported from Rourkela.

In view of these incidents, the state government has instructed all Collector-cum-Principal Census Officers and Municipal Commissioners to take immediate steps to mitigate heatwave-related risks, identify potential hazards during fieldwork, and ensure regular monitoring of enumerators.

The communication also emphasizes the need to sensitize field staff about safety protocols and precautionary measures, aiming to safeguard their well-being while ensuring the smooth and uninterrupted conduct of Census operations.

## Odisha Vigilance Nabs Jharsuguda Health Official for Taking Bribe

Bhubaneswar, 22 April (H.S.): In a crackdown on corruption, officials of Odisha Vigilance on Wednesday apprehended a staff member of the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) in Jharsuguda while allegedly accepting a bribe for processing an official application.

The accused, Anit Kumar Guru, Section Officer in the office of the CDM & PHO, Jharsuguda, was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting ₹2,500 from a teacher of a GNM (General Nursing and Midwifery) training school. The bribe was allegedly sought to facilitate the attachment of GNM students



to PHC/CHC facilities for practical training for the 2026-27 academic session.

According to vigilance sources, there had been prior allegations against the official for repeatedly harassing nursing institutions in the district and demanding bribes to process similar

applications. When the concerned teacher approached Guru for approval, he allegedly demanded ₹2,500, prompting the complainant to alert vigilance authorities.

Acting on the complaint, a vigilance team laid a trap and successfully

apprehended the accused while he was accepting the bribe. The entire tainted amount of ₹2,500 was recovered from his possession and subsequently seized.

Following the arrest, simultaneous searches are being conducted at two locations linked to the accused to probe possible disproportionate assets.

In this connection, a case has been registered at Rourkela Vigilance Police Station under relevant sections of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. Further investigation into the matter is currently underway.

## Angul, Kendrapara, Koraput, Sambalpur Shut Schools Amid Heatwave

Bhubaneswar, 22 April (H.S.): In response to the prevailing heatwave conditions, district administrations in Angul, Kendrapara, Koraput, and Sambalpur have ordered the temporary closure of schools to safeguard students from extreme heat exposure.

The District Education Offices in Kendrapara and Koraput have directed all schools to remain shut from April 23 to April 25. In Sambalpur, authorities have extended the closure period from April 23 to April 27, citing worsening weather conditions. Similarly, the Angul district administration has announced school



closures from April 23 to April 25.

According to the India Meteorological Department's Regional Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar, at least 18

locations across the state recorded temperatures of 40°C or above on Tuesday. Jharsuguda was the hottest place in the state, registering a maximum temperature of 43.6°C. Authorities said the

decision to suspend classes was taken as a precautionary measure, with officials closely monitoring the situation and further steps likely depending on weather co

## Equal Value for Capital and Labor: Call for Presidential Intervention Regarding Workers' Rights

Bhubaneswar: Badal Moharana, President of the Odisha State unit of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), has submitted a memorandum to the President of India, seeking constitutional intervention against alleged exploitation of workers in the country's industrial sectors, impediments to the freedom of labor unions, and rising instances of retrenchment. In the letter addressed to the President, Badal Moharana stated unequivocally, "Capital and labor must be accorded equal value. We are demanding our rights; we are not begging from anyone." He alleged that workers are being prevented from organizing themselves not only in Noida but also in industrial zones across other states, including Odisha a same situation that has led to numerous workers facing forced retrenchment.

Setting forth seven key demands in the memorandum, he called for the compilation

of comprehensive data on retrenched workers nationwide and their subsequent reinstatement a demand he linked to the fundamental Right to Life and Dignity enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution. Furthermore, he advocated for granting workers the freedom to form and lead labor unions, asserting that this constitutes their fundamental right under Article 19(1)(c).

He raised a demand to ensure the mandatory presence of a labor union in every industry, institution, and mine, thereby enabling the resolution of labor disputes at an institutional level. Additionally, emphasizing the need for regular labor audits across all establishments in the country, he stressed that measures must be taken to ensure that workers are not being subjected to excessive workloads relative to their numbers.

Moharana also raised

pertinent questions regarding whether work of a permanent nature is being assigned to contract employees, and whether all industries maintain the requisite number of statutory permanent employees. He proposed that an 'Employee Component' be made a mandatory requirement in every tender process, and that a face-detection attendance system be implemented to ensure transparency and to secure verifiable proof of workers' actual attendance.

The memorandum further asserted that the prevailing tendency to view workers merely as commodities must cease, and that they should instead be treated as citizens deserving of full dignity and civil rights. Citing an international perspective, he noted that in Iceland, approximately 97 percent of workers and in Sweden, over 70 percent are affiliated with labor unions; this leads to a reduction in labor disputes and

ensures that workers' rights remain robust.

Clarifying the stance of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), Moharana stated that the organization places its faith in peaceful struggle and continuous dialogue. He maintains that capital and the sweat of workers hold equal value in the nation's development, and that it is essential to align the interests of industry, labor, and the nation. The memorandum identifies profiteering and the taking of commissions as primary causes of worker exploitation, asserting that if transparency and the independence of labor unions are ensured, it would not only improve the standard of living for workers but also bolster the country's productive capacity. In conclusion, BMS State President Badal Moharana appealed to the President to take the necessary constitutional and legal measures to ensure justice for the workers in this matter.

## HEALTH CARE

HEALTH CARE in India is grappling with a paradox. Nearly half the country's population has some form of health insurance cover, yet out-of-pocket medical expenditure remains high, according to a new survey by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Government-backed schemes have spurred the expansion of coverage, especially in villages, where it is now higher than in urban areas. However, for crores of families,



falling ill still carries the risk of acute financial distress. The survey has exposed a glaring fault line: the average out-of-pocket bill for each case of hospitalisation is over Rs 34,000, more than what the majority of the households in India can afford. Even as the insurance umbrella gets bigger, the economic burden of medical treatment continues to rise, often outpacing inflation.

A key factor is the growing dominance of private healthcare. More Indians are preferring private hospitals, where the costs are far above those in government-run institutions. With public healthcare's share in hospitalisation declining, patients are inevitably being pushed towards more expensive options, diluting the benefits of the insurance safety net. Flawed implementation of flagship schemes such as Ayushman Bharat Yojana is another impediment. Delayed reimbursement threatens to disrupt pocket-friendly services. If empanelled hospitals back out, the very backbone of publicly funded insurance could weaken, leaving underprivileged citizens in the lurch.

The takeaway is obvious: insurance coverage alone is not enough. India must strengthen its public healthcare infrastructure, regulate expenses in the private sector and ensure timely payments under government schemes. In the absence of these reforms, the expansion of insurance will be just a statistical achievement rather than a meaningful safeguard. Access to healthcare cannot merely be about enrolment; it must focus on affordability. This yawning gap needs to be bridged, failing which hospital bills will continue to eat into the earnings and savings of hapless people — regardless of whether they are insured or not.

## Road Safety

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OUR roads continue to expose a brutal contradiction: grand infrastructure promises coexist with everyday lawlessness and neglect. On the same day that headlines reported a woman professor's car plunging into an unmarked pit in Gurugram and a bus tumbling into a gorge in Udhampur, the Supreme Court's warning a couple of days earlier that highways must not become "corridors of peril" sounded painfully apt. The Gurugram incident was not an unforeseeable mishap. Residents alleged there were no barricades, no warning signs and no visible safeguards around the excavation site in one of the country's most affluent urban enclaves. If basic precautions are absent in such areas, one can imagine conditions elsewhere. The Udhampur tragedy, reportedly triggered by a tyre burst, underlines another chronic malaise: poor vehicle fitness, weak enforcement and fragile emergency response systems on difficult terrain.

These episodes share the common denominator of preventable negligence. Roads do not kill; indifference does. Fatal crashes are often presented as random accidents, allowing authorities to escape accountability. Yet unsafe worksites, unchecked overloading, unfit vehicles, bad engineering, missing signage and delayed rescue are all human failures. The SC has rightly elevated road safety to a constitutional issue under Article 21, the right to life. That principle must move beyond courtrooms into administrative culture. Every excavation should require mandatory barricading and illumination. Every commercial vehicle must undergo rigorous fitness checks. Accident-prone stretches need audits, signage, guardrails and patrols. Ambulances and trauma care cannot remain afterthoughts.

While there is no shortage of rules, the country suffers from a shortage of enforcement. Compensation after death is no substitute for prevention before disaster. Ministers often inaugurate roads with ribbon-cutting ceremonies, but governance begins after the cameras leave. Until safety becomes non-negotiable, mobility will remain a gamble.

## Women's Reservation, Delimitation, and the Emerging Political Debate

Tejeswar Patnaik

Women constitute nearly half of India's population, making their political empowerment both necessary and urgent. As of early 2026, India's population is estimated at around 1.48 billion, with women accounting for approximately 48.46%. Despite this substantial share, their representation in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies remains dismal. Political parties have largely failed to allocate an adequate number of tickets to women candidates, thereby limiting their participation in the democratic process.

In any democracy, inadequate representation restricts a group's ability to influence policymaking. Global norms, such as those articulated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, emphasise the need to eliminate barriers to women's participation in political and public life. India has made notable progress in this regard at the grassroots level.

A landmark decision was taken in Odisha by the then chief minister Sri Biju Patnaik, who introduced 33% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and Municipalities in 1991 during his tenure. This model was implemented by the Union Government through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992 thus mandating one-third reservation for women in Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies. As a result, nearly half of the approximately 3 million elected representatives in these institutions today are women, significantly enhancing their participation in local governance. While issues relating to effectiveness and proxy representation persist, these measures have contributed meaningfully to reducing gender inequality in political participation.

To extend similar representation at higher levels, the Women's Reservation Act, 2023—popularly known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam—was enacted. It

provides for reserving one-third of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women. However, its implementation has been linked to a delimitation exercise based on the first Census conducted after the Act's commencement, as provided under Article 334A of the Constitution. This month 2026, the government tabled in the Lok Sabha a series of legislative measures to operationalise this framework, including the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Delimitation Bill, 2026, and amendments to Union Territory laws. The proposed amendment sought to modify Article 82 by removing the requirement that delimitation be based only on the first Census conducted after 2026, thereby allowing the use of existing 2011 census data. It proposed changes to Article 334A to enable the implementation of women's reservation based on the 2011 Census instead of waiting for a future Census. The government's objective was to implement the women's reservation framework and the seat expansion in the Lok Sabha before the 2029 general elections.

The opposition, however, contested that women's reservation should be implemented immediately within the existing strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats, without linking it to delimitation. This demand was not accepted by the government. Subsequently, the Constitution Amendment Bill failed to secure the required two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha. Out of 528 members present, 298 voted in favour and 230 against, falling short of the required 352 votes. In a rare display of unity, opposition parties voted collectively against the Bill, citing concerns over its broader implications.

The debate has brought into sharp focus the complex linkage between women's reservation and delimitation. Under Article 82 of the Constitution, the readjustment of

Lok Sabha seats is mandated after each Census, while Article 170 provides for a similar process in State Assemblies. However, delimitation has remained frozen since 1976, when it was suspended during the Emergency and later extended through the 84th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001. This freeze, based on the 1971 Census, was intended to encourage population control and is set to expire in 2026.

A key concern raised by opposition parties relates to the consequences of delimitation based on updated population data. States that have successfully controlled population growth, particularly in southern India, fear a reduction in their political representation. These states account for around 18% of India's population but contribute nearly 35% to country's GDP. A population-based redistribution of seats could shift political power towards northern states with higher population growth, potentially disturbing the federal balance and influencing future policy, funding, and investment decisions.

To address these apprehensions, the central government has suggested a proportional increase in Lok Sabha seats across all states, including a possible 50% pro rata expansion, so that the relative share of representation of each state remains broadly stable. The proposed amendment envisages increasing the maximum strength of the Lok Sabha from 550 to 850 members, with up to 815 seats for states and 35 for Union Territories. Some economists are critical of the proposal for expansion of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats almost by 50% as it would cost the state exchequer heavily. However, the assurances from the treasury bench could not fully satisfy the opposition, which has demanded the total withdrawal of the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Delimitation Bill.

At the core of the issue lies the principle of "one person, one vote, one value," which underpins delimitation. The leaders of southern states argue that factors such as economic performance, governance quality, and success in population stabilisation should also be considered in determining representation. A purely population-based approach, they contend, may inadvertently penalise such states for their good performance in ensuring good family planning policies and good governance.

Another contentious aspect is the use of Census data. The proposed framework allows the use of the "latest published Census" at the time of constituting the Delimitation Commission, which could mean reliance on the 2011 Census. Critics argue that this may complicate representation and delay the effective implementation of women's reservation.

The proposed Delimitation Commission would be tasked with redrawing constituency boundaries and reallocating seats in accordance with constitutional provisions. While there is broad consensus on the need to enhance women's representation, some critics caution that reservation alone may not ensure genuine empowerment. Structural reforms—such as curbing the criminalisation of politics, strengthening internal democracy within political parties, and reducing the influence of money power—are equally necessary to create a more inclusive political environment.

The debate over women's reservation and delimitation shows deeper tensions within India's democratic and federal framework. Although the objective of gender justice commands widespread support, its implementation has been entangled in complex political, demographic, and regional considerations. A balanced and inclusive resolution therefore requires broad political consensus and sensitivity to federal concerns.

## For happiness, you need to sow happy seeds

Bibhuti Bhusan Sahoo

Have you wondered why some people go through life smoothly while others face all kinds of challenges? The law of karma answers such questions. It states that life is governed by a system of cause and effect. It is a universal law, like the law of gravity. These laws are impartial. There are no exemptions. The law of karma is akin to Newton's law. It says every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Action includes the desire, intention and thought behind it. Action is like a seed that grows into a sapling, plant and tree. An apple tree will yield an apple tree. It cannot become a mango tree. Similarly a negative action will only result in grief and sorrow; it cannot give happiness. If you want happiness, you must sow happy seeds!

Karma, action, is the axle around which life revolves. You are a sportsperson because you desire it, with continuous investment of thought in that field, through vasana, deep rooted interest, your inclination for it. You are a combination of all your vasanas put together; they are the blueprint that determines the kind of body, family and environment you have. Every action leaves a distinct footprint on your personality. A good act will create good vasana, a bad act deposits bad vasana. Musical acts create musical vasana, and business actions make business vasanas. Vasana results in thought that consolidates as desire, which manifests as action. Action rebounds as more vasana. All living beings are victims of their vasanas. Only humans are gifted with choice of action. You can choose to passively follow your vasana or break free and chart your own course.

The theory of reincarnation connects the unexplained disappearance of traits and aspirations at death with the inexplicable appearance of the same at birth. It says the inner personality of a person just moves from one physical body to

another. The movement of mind, intellect and vasanas from one body to another is called death of the former body and birth of the latter. Just as a person discards old clothes to don new ones, a person discards a body and environment no longer conducive for the fulfilment of his desires and moves to another body and atmosphere that may fit the bill. Thus death allows you to start afresh on your journey to enlightenment. Of the total vasanas one

**Karma, action, is the axle around which life revolves. You are a sportsperson because you desire it, with continuous investment of thought in that field, through vasana, deep rooted interest, your inclination for it. You are a combination of all your vasanas put together; they are the blueprint that determines the kind of body, family and environment you have.**

has, a few powerful ones exert pressure for fulfilment. They are called prarabdha vasanas. They determine your birth in an environment that is tailor-made for their exhaustion. Once they are fulfilled, the next batch of prarabdha vasanas starts playing up. So you move to another body and surrounding, that is customised for this fresh set. This cycle of birth and death goes on as long as one has desires.

During your lifetime, your prarabdha vasanas will be fulfilled. However, you also have the option of changing your sanchita vasanas (past karmas). You can add to or subtract from them, upgrade or downgrade them or even eliminate them. Action performed free of desire and with no anxiety for its fruit, does not create further desire. So continue action, dropping desire and anxiety. The action will be perfect and give immense success. You will be happy. And your desires will reduce. Eventually all desires will go and you will be enlightened.

Napanga, Itua, Tangi, Cuttack, Mob.: 9338111355

## How does one achieve the impossible?

Kabir Kumar Jena

Let's begin by examining the concept of the impossible before trying to answer such a tantalising question. Some things are clearly impossible in a physical sense. A nonagenarian who hopes to qualify for the Olympics for high jump is clearly hoping for the impossible unless of course one has a seniors' Olympic event in mind.

But when Napoleon said that the word 'impossible' is found in the dictionary of fools, then clearly, he did not have such impossibilities in mind. What he perhaps had in mind was that certain goals or accomplishments, which we normally consider out of reach, may be capable of being achieved if only one was daring enough to entertain them and determined enough to go after them. One might have considered it impossible of France to achieve the kind of military victories that Napoleon achieved for his country.

This idea of the impossible becomes even more relevant when we come to the individual, who might consider certain accomplishments impossible without realising that with persistent effort and determination they could be achieved. Perhaps, in such a context, the word 'impossible' is best understood as really denoting the improbable, which our imagination considers impossible. With these introductory remarks let us now consider what some sages have to say about achieving the impossible.

We should focus our attention entirely on the means with the same passion with which we covet the goal itself. That would be one way of treating the means as the end. And then once such a concrete step is realised, similarly, the success we have achieved should be considered only a step in relation to what remains to be achieved to accomplish the goal. This would be one way of treating the end as the means.

Do seem to shed light on the exciting question under discussion. He says that one should begin by doing the necessary; then one should do the possible, and then he adds that if one does so one would find oneself accomplishing the impossible. His remarks clearly bear a family resemblance to what was uttered by Pavahari Baba in response to the question put to him by Swami Vivekananda.

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## Engineer Rashid's Interim Bail Verdict Reserved for April 24 Amid Father's Critical Illness

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Patiala House Court Additional Sessions Judge Prashant Sharma reserved judgment on terror funding accused MP Engineer Rashid's interim bail plea, seeking release to visit his ventilator-bound father, scheduling pronouncement for April 24. NIA counsel suggested custody parole as alternative during hearing. Rashid, Baramulla MP who trounced Omar Abdullah by nearly 100,000 votes in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, secured custody parole for prior parliamentary sessions (Jan 28–Apr 2; Nov 2025) and voted in Sep 2025 VP elections despite 2016 NIA arrest. Arrested in 2016, Rashid faces charges alongside Hafiz Saeed, Syed Salahuddin, Yasin Malik, Shabir Shah,



Masarat Alam, Zahoor Ahmad Watali, Bitta Karate, Aftab Ahmad Shah, Avatar Ahmad Shah, Naem Khan, Bashir Ahmad Butt (Pir Saifullah). Court framed charges Mar 16, 2022 under IPC §§120B, 121, 121A; UAPA §§13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 38, 39, 40. NIA

alleges ISI-backed LeT, Hizbul, JKLF, JeM orchestrated J&K civilian/security attacks via APHC (formed 1993). Hafiz Saeed channeled funds through hawala for unrest, school burnings, assaults—prompting Home Ministry probe.

## NITDRD Achieves Zero Waste to Landfill Milestone

New Delhi, 22/4(H.S.): The National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases (NITDRD) has earned 'Zero Waste to Landfill' certification from the central government under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0, pioneering sustainable waste management in India's healthcare sector. Spanning 27 acres and generating 1-1.2 tons of waste daily—including 500-650 kg wet refuse—NITDRD implemented source segregation, recycling, and composting via the Why Waste Wednesdays Foundation's Swachh Sankalp, backed by South Delhi Municipal Corporation.



Initiated through waste audits and baseline surveys, the initiative featured 50 staff awareness sessions, a Wet Waste Composting Centre, Dry Waste Resource Centre, horticulture shredders, 40 GOBARdhan composting bins,

and dedicated monitoring—ensuring full diversion under 2026 Solid Waste Rules for bulk generators. Mehroli ward's 40 Aerobin units inauguration formalized this benchmark, inspiring healthcare's green evolution.

## Railway Vaishnav Vows Paramount Priority to Track Maintainers' Safety, Welfare

New Delhi, 22/4(H.S.): Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav underscored the pivotal role of track maintainers as the backbone of safe train operations and rail modernization, assuring topmost priority to their safety, working conditions, and welfare during the All India Track Maintainers Conference organized by the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) at Talkatora Indoor Stadium. Addressing over 3,000 delegates nationwide, Vaishnav pledged ample modern equipment, superior facilities, and resources for these frontline workers. He highlighted a 90% plunge in rail accidents over the past decade—a monumental feat—yet urged pushing toward single-digit incidents, aligning Indian Railways with developed nations' safety benchmarks. Vaishnav detailed the 'Rakshak' VHF-based safety system's limitations in curved tracks, hilly terrains, and long



stretches, now supplanted by a more reliable mobile phone-based alternative undergoing pilot testing. Modernization strides include 36,000 km of new tracks laid in a decade, 1,800 track machines scaling to 3,000 for streamlined inspections, and innovative rail-cum-road vehicles piloted in Bhavnagar Division—enabling equipped, seated physical assessments to supplant

arduous manual methods. Drone surveillance, precision gauges for turnouts, 60-kg rails, 90 UTS rails, 207m panels, frictionless switches, and weldable CMS crossings aim for nationwide ubiquity. Railway Board Member (Infrastructure) Vivek Kumar Gupta emphasized stringent safety adherence and regular audits, pledging positive action on staffing shortages and work hours.

## Horror in Amar Colony: IRS Officer's Daughter Strangled in Brutal Home Slaying

New Delhi, 22/4(H.S.): A ghastly murder has sent shockwaves through southeast Delhi's affluent Amar Colony, where the 21-year-old daughter of a 1997-batch senior IRS officer was savagely killed inside her family home. The recent engineering graduate, immersed in UPSC preparations at home, was discovered lifeless after her parents stepped out—leaving the family reeling from this unfathomable indoor atrocity. Preliminary investigation reveals a barbaric execution: suspicions of prior sexual assault followed by

strangulation using a mobile charger cord, though postmortem will confirm rape allegations. A Rajasthan native, sacked two months earlier over misconduct while serving as domestic staff, was spotted loitering nearby Wednesday morning before vanishing—prompting intensified suspicion. Forensic teams and senior officers cordoned the scene, securing the body for autopsy as multi-agency raids target his probable lairs. Police assure imminent arrest and full disclosure, yet palpable dread engulfs the neighborhood.

## PM Modi Bestows Blessings as Char Dham Yatra Dawns in Uttarakhand

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended heartfelt felicitations to pilgrims nationwide as the Kedarnath temple gates swung open, heralding the Char Dham Yatra's commencement in the sacred Devbhoomi of Uttarakhand. Gangotri and Yamunotri portals opened on April 19, Kedarnath followed suit, with Badrinath unveiling on April 23—these Himalayan abodes embodying unshakeable faith, spiritual awakening, and cultural unity, fortified by Aditi's a heartfelt post on X, PM Modi invoked Uttarakhand's pivotal role in Viksit Bharat, spotlighting surging tourism, infrastructure,

## India International Water Week Charts Climate-Resilient Course

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): India's Ministry of Jal Shakti announced the 9th India International Water Week (IIWW) for September 22–26, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam, spotlighting climate-sensitive water management to tackle floods, erratic monsoons, and scarcity. Union Minister CR Patil formally launched the event Wednesday at Shram Shakti Bhawan, unveiling a concurrent International WASH Conference (Sep 22–24) drawing experts, researchers, states, ministries, and NGOs. Patil stressed dwindling availability demands reduced



consumption, amplified storage, and conservation at scale, warning population-industrial pressures will intensify strains. Initiatives like Yamuna rejuvenation, Amrit Sarovars, and Jal Jeevan Mission extension to 2028 aim for tap water in every rural home. Water Resources Secretary VL Kantha Rao highlighted rebranding to IIWW with expanded global participation—technical sessions, exhibitions, field visits covering governance, optimization, technology, community roles, climate risks, and financing.

## Justice Karia Recuses from Kejriwal Contempt Case Over Court Video Leak

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Delhi High Court Justice Tejas Karia recused himself from adjudicating a contempt petition against former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Aam Aadmi Party leaders, and journalist Ravish Kumar for allegedly uploading proceedings from Justice Swamkanta Sharma's bench to social media. Filed by advocate Vaibhav Singh, the plea objects to recordings from the hearing on CBI's appeal against Kejriwal's acquittal in the Delhi excise scam trial—specifically his bid to recuse Justice Sharma. It accuses Kejriwal, Congress's Digvijay Singh, AAP's Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh, Sanjeev Jha, Purandeeep Sahni, Jarnail Singh, Mukesh Ahlawat, and Vinay Mishra of peddling baseless,



defamatory arguments to erode court prestige. The petitioner demands video takedowns from X, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, alleging orchestrated dissemination misled the public and pressured judiciary and government. Singh had previously

petitioned the Registrar General for action. A reconstituted bench excluding Justice Karia will hear the matter. Notably, Justice Sharma dismissed Kejriwal's own recusal plea on April 20, ruling mere conjecture insufficient for exclusion.

## Rashtrapati Bhavan Unveils Dawn Timing for Iconic Change of Guard

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Rashtrapati Bhavan's famed Change of Guard ceremony, a Saturday staple in the presidential forecourt, shifts to 7:30 AM: 8:30 AM starting April 25. Ceremonial Precision Meets Public Ease. The President's Secretariat announced this adjustment to the time-honored military tradition, where the President's Bodyguard (PBG)—seniormost Indian Army regiment—executes flawless drills amid resplendent uniforms, towering steeds, and regimental band harmonies. Beloved by tourists for its grandeur, the hour-long spectacle symbolizes seamless duty transitions, rooted in ancient palace sentries' legacy. This tweak enhances accessibility amid Delhi's clime.

## Rajnath Singh Extends Olive Branch to German Industry for Atmanirbhar Synergy

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh invited German industrial giants to co-innovate under Atmanirbhar Bharat against burgeoning security threats, paying homage to Rabindranath Tagore at Humboldt University in Berlin while emphasizing enduring Indo-German cultural and intellectual bonds. Addressing German parliamentarians on his three-day tour's first day before the Standing Committee on Defence and Security, Singh clarified self-reliance transcends mere procurement—it's a clarion call for joint evolution. He passionately advocated deeper fusion of defence-industrial ecosystems, lauding Germany's established might complemented by India's burgeoning startups and private entities amplifying legacy public firms. In a tech-disrupted era spawning intertwined perils, Singh called



for adaptive innovation and trusted strategic pacts, mirroring EU convergences fueling the India-EU Defence and Strategic Partnership. West Asia's tumult exemplified by Hormuz

blockades imperiling India's energy lifeline demands global vigilance, Singh noted, unveiling a ministerial task force for real-time assessments and mitigations. Indo-German ties, he

prophesied, will epitomize diplomacy: two mature democracies advancing not reactively, but with ironclad resolve amid geopolitical tremors threatening energy, food, and economic stability.

## Leaders Unite in Tribute on Pahalgam Terror Anniversary

New Delhi, 22/4(H.S.): President Droupadi Murmu, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi led the nation in solemn homage to victims of the April 22, 2025, terrorist attack in Jammu & Kashmir's Pahalgam, reaffirming unwavering resolve against terrorism. President Murmu's poignant X message mourned the "heinous act" claiming innocent lives, etched eternally in collective memory, extending deepest sympathies to bereaved families and declaring the nation's solidarity. Such atrocities, she affirmed, cannot erode India's steadfast commitment to peace, with firm determination to eradicate terror in all forms. Speaker Birla paid respects to the fallen civilians, conveying profound condolences to shattered families whose loved ones endure in national remembrance. India, he stressed, has consistently confronted terrorism decisively, its resolve against inhumanity unyielding. Defence Minister Singh recalled the "cowardly" assault, vowing unforgettable retribution for wounds inflicted on the nation. Decades of cross-border terror have forged a response that is resolute, decisive, and uncompromised, proving any assault on unity meets full force. Rahul Gandhi offered heartfelt tribute, asserting the irreplaceable loss lingers in the nation's heart, with perpetrators unforgiven. BJP chief Nitin Nene declared India unbowed by terror's forms, its peace-and-security pledge firmer than ever. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge grieved 26 civilian deaths, urging unified national front against terror while consoling families. UP CM Yogi Adityanath termed the scars indelible, pledging 'New India's' zero-tolerance eradication of terror's scourge.



the yatra safer and smoother. He urged a "digital detox" amid nature's embrace, alongside five sacred vows: upholding sanctity, safeguarding ecology, embracing

and honoring discipline—eschewing single-use plastics, preserving rivers, and immersing in community ethos for profound enrichment.

## Iran Unleashes Fury in Hormuz: Ship Bridge Blitzed Amid Trump Ceasefire Skepticism

Kuwait City/Tehran/Washington, 23/4 (H.S.): Iran escalated tensions in the Strait of Hormuz by unleashing sustained gunfire on a vessel 8 nautical miles (15 km) off its coast, severely damaging the bridge amid U.S. port blockades, as Tehran dismissed President Trump's fresh ceasefire overture. Al Jazeera and NBC reports detail a prior attack on Panama-flagged cargo ship Euphoria—UAE-owned, en route from Dammam to Jeddah or Singapore—15 nautical miles (28 km) northeast of Oman. Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) gunboats hammered it for 30 minutes after ignored warnings, crippling the nerve center from which captains orchestrate navigation via radar, GPS, and controls. Iran's Tasnim agency framed it as maritime law enforcement under new strait



protocols; all crew remain safe, though the captain halted post-strike. UK Maritime Trade Operations noted frenzy in the chokepoint, with prior IRGC fire on a Greek-owned

tanker. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi branded U.S. port sieges wartime acts breaching ceasefires, vowing retaliation while doubting Trump's word. Trump extended the truce

indefinitely pending Tehran's proposal, maintaining blockades until negotiations. Pakistan pushes final talks; Iran demands its seized vessel's release first.

## Diplomacy Paused, Pressure Continues: Trump Extends Iran Truce

Washington, 22/4 (H.S.): President Donald Trump has extended the ceasefire with Iran, saying the pause in hostilities will remain in effect until Tehran submits a "unified proposal," while U.S. naval forces continue to maintain a blockade on Iranian ports in the Strait of Hormuz. The move signals that Washington is keeping military pressure in place even as it leaves the door open for a negotiated settlement. In a post on Truth Social on Tuesday, Trump said the United States would "extend the Ceasefire" after Pakistan's leaders reportedly asked for more time to allow Iranian officials to present a unified position. He said the truce would remain in place until Iran's leadership and representatives could agree on a single proposal to end the conflict. The extension came just hours before the previous ceasefire was expected to expire. According to the



reported statement, the White House also indicated that Vice President JD Vance would not travel to Pakistan for a second round of peace talks. Even with the ceasefire extended, Trump said the U.S. military would continue its blockade of Iranian

ports. The reported aim is to keep strategic pressure on Tehran while negotiations continue, rather than easing all military constraints at once. This combination of diplomacy and deterrence suggests Washington is trying to force a clearer response from Iran

before making any broader concessions. Trump said the request to delay further action came from Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. That detail places Pakistan in a delicate position, appearing to act as an intermediary while the conflict remains unresolved. The reported involvement of Pakistan also reflects the wider regional stakes, especially because any escalation around the Strait of Hormuz can affect energy flows and maritime security across Asia, the Middle East, and beyond. The ceasefire extension matters because the Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most sensitive shipping routes, and any disruption there can ripple through global markets. The situation also shows how quickly the crisis has moved from battlefield confrontation to high-stakes bargaining, with military readiness preserved in parallel with diplomatic outreach.

## Nepal Home Minister Resigns Following Controversy Over Financial Dealings

Kathmandu, 22/4 (H.S.): Nepal's Home Minister, Sudan Gurung, who was also one of the prominent faces of the Gen-Z movement in last September, announced his resignation from the post on Wednesday following a controversy over his financial dealings. In recent days, Gurung has been in the spotlight over his alleged business links with controversial businessman Deepak Bhatta, who is in police custody in connection with money laundering charges. Gurung announced his resignation via a social media post. "In order to ensure an impartial investigation into matters related to me and to avoid any conflict of interest while continuing to hold office, I have resigned from the position of Home Minister, effective from today," he wrote on Facebook. "For me, ethics is greater than position, and there is no power greater than public trust." He is the second Cabinet minister to leave office in less than a month since the new government, led by Prime Minister Balendra

Shah, was formed on March 27 following the March 5 elections. On April 9, Prime Minister Shah had sacked Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security Deepak Kumar Sah on the recommendation of his party, the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP). Sah was found to have misused his office to retain his wife, Junu Shrestha, as a member of the Health Insurance Board, a position that had remained largely inactive for a long time. The current government was formed with a strong mandate to curb persistent corruption in the country. Along with Prime Minister Balendra Shah and other ministers, Gurung also disclosed his property details on April 12. He was found to be among the richest ministers in the cabinet, with cash deposits, shares in various companies, and, above all, land ownership far exceeding the ceiling allowed by law. The minister had defended his accumulation of wealth on social media, writing that being born poor is not an individual's fault, but dying poor is.

## India Steps Up LNG Push With Shipment Flag-Off From US

Washington, 22/4 (H.S.): India has stepped up its energy security push as GAIL (India) Limited flagged off an LNG vessel from a US terminal, signalling deeper India-US cooperation in securing cleaner fuel supplies. The LNG vessel Energy Fidelity was flagged off on April 20 from the Sabine Pass LNG Terminal by India's Consul General in Houston, D.C. Manjunath, according to official statements. "GAIL (India) Limited proudly marks a significant milestone in India's global energy journey," the company said on Tuesday (local time). It described the development as part of its long-term LNG shipping portfolio. Within this portfolio, the 174,000 cubic metre LNG carrier Energy Fidelity "stands as a testament to India's growing strength in building a robust, future-ready energy ecosystem," the company said. It added that the vessel would "strengthen India's energy logistics, ensuring a resilient supply chain and a reliable flow of cleaner fuel to support the country's growth." The Houston consulate said the ceremony "marks an important milestone in India's expanding global energy engagement and GAIL (India) Limited's long-term LNG shipping portfolio." It described the vessel as a "state-of-the-art 174,000 cbm LNG carrier" that strengthens India's energy logistics chain. The consulate said it supports "the country's transition toward cleaner and more sustainable fuel sources." The milestone "reflects the deepening energy partnership between India and the United States, anchored in mutual trust, shared goals of energy security, and expanding economic collaboration," the statement said.

## Vance's Islamabad Trip Halted Amid Iran's Ceasefire Indecision

Washington, 22/4 (H.S.): US Vice President JD Vance's anticipated journey to Islamabad for pivotal peace negotiations with Iran has been abruptly deferred, injecting fresh uncertainty into an already fragile truce set to expire imminently. The postponement stems from Tehran's reluctance to confirm participation, compounded by accusations of US "unacceptable actions" linked to the ongoing blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. White House officials confirmed Vance remained in Washington on Tuesday, to engage in urgent policy consultations rather than boarding his scheduled flight to Pakistan's capital. A terse statement noted, "Additional policy meetings are taking place at the White House in which the vice president will participate,"

underscoring the fluid dynamics as the ceasefire deadline loomed at midnight GMT. Meanwhile, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei articulated Tehran's position on state television, declaring no final decision on attendance due to "contradictory messages, inconsistent behaviour, and unacceptable actions from the American side." He specifically decried the Hormuz blockade as "maritime piracy and state terrorism," particularly citing two detained Iranian vessels, signaling deep-seated grievances impeding progress. US special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law, rerouted from Miami to Washington, their Islamabad-bound flight diverted per tracking data, to bolster high-level

## Hezbollah Fires Back: Rockets Defy Fragile Truce Amid Lebanon Border Tensions

Lebanon, 22/4 (H.S.): Hezbollah claimed responsibility for launching rockets and attack drones at a northern Israeli military site on Tuesday, marking the first reported retaliation since a 10-day ceasefire took hold last Friday. The group cited repeated Israeli ceasefire violations, including artillery shelling on southern Lebanese towns, civilian attacks, and the destruction of homes near the border, as justification for its defensive strike. The Israeli military confirmed intercepting a drone from Lebanon before it entered Israeli airspace and reported Hezbollah rockets targeting troops in southern Lebanon, prompting an immediate counterstrike on the launch site. Lebanon's National News Agency documented ongoing Israeli artillery fire and demolitions in border villages, with a prior drone strike wounding six in a southern town. Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz affirmed that troops would deploy full force against threats, invoking truce terms that permit action against imminent attacks, even as soldiers remain active in southern Lebanon following major strikes initiated after Hezbollah joined Iran's regional campaign on March 2. This flare-up coincides with U.S. President Donald Trump's indefinite extension of a separate ceasefire with Iran, requested by Pakistan's leadership to allow Tehran time to submit a unified peace proposal amid its reportedly fractured government. The Hormuz Strait blockade persists, with U.S. forces recently seizing an Iranian vessel attempting to breach it, underscoring unresolved naval tensions despite the truce.



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## South Asian Countries Prefer India To China For Help To Tide Over Fuel Crisis: Report

New Delhi, 22/4: With the conflict in the Middle East leading to disruption in oil supplies and soaring prices in global market, South Asian countries are turning to India, rather than China, to tide over the fuel crisis, according to an article published by OCRA (Organisation for Research on China and Asia). For South Asian economies already operating with limited buffers, a prolonged disruption could translate into sustained price pressures and mounting fiscal strain. In this context, how India and China, the two regional powers, choose to respond, whether by extending sustained assistance, scaling up engagement, or retreating inward, will shape longer-term regional alignments, the article written by Ophelia Yumlembam states. For smaller South Asian countries, the implications are severe and immediate. These economies depend heavily on Gulf-based hydrocarbon imports and have limited buffers to absorb shocks. In such conditions, the value of a regional power is defined by its ability to respond quickly and

reliably to a crisis. Despite deep economic and infrastructure ties with China, South Asian states have preferred to turn to India when the crisis unfolds. That choice is not incidental. It reflects a consistent pattern across crises, where India emerges as the preferred partner and first responder, a perception that could be leveraged for long-term strategic influence, the article states. It highlights that over the past decade, both India and China have significantly expanded their energy footprints across South Asia, but in different ways. China's approach has been anchored in large-scale infrastructure development under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with investments in ports, pipelines, and refining capacity aimed at strengthening connectivity. For instance, last year, Sri Lanka received \$3.7 billion from China as foreign direct investment for an oil refinery with a 200,000-barrel capacity at southern Hambantota. On the other hand, India has operated a less financially-

intensive, but functional approach. Leveraging its geographical proximity to Bangladesh, New Delhi has built a cross-border energy pipeline with Dhaka, transporting diesel from the Numaligarh refinery in Assam to Parbatipur in Bangladesh since 2023. With Nepal, India has a B2B agreement between the Indian Oil Corporation and the Nepal Oil Corporation since 2024 to enhance petroleum infrastructure, integrating its energy system with neighbouring economies. It has enabled faster mobilisation of supply, making its energy partnerships more immediately actionable under stress conditions. The article points out that Sri Lanka, after receiving urgent fuel assistance from India in March, sought additional support from China only in early April. Although Beijing subsequently offered assurances, the scale and modalities of its assistance remain unclear. A similar dynamic is visible with the Maldives.



deliberations. President Trump, in a Truth Social post, affirmed the ceasefire's indefinite extension at Pakistan's behest attributed to leaders like Shehbaz Sharif and Asim Munir while vowing to sustain the naval blockade and military readiness until Iran proffers a "unified proposal." This move buys time but preserves coercive pressure on Tehran's oil

export lifeline. Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar publicly noted Iran's lack of formal commitment via X, even as Islamabad ramped up security with thousands of personnel patrolling airport routes. Regional actors, including China as Iran's key trading partner, loom large, with Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar convening separately with US and

Chinese counterparts. UN Secretary-General António Guterres hailed the extension as "an important step toward de-escalation," fostering "space for confidence" between adversaries, though skepticism persists given Trump's prior bellicosity—he had warned of imminent strikes absent a deal. Iran's internal leadership fractures, as Trump described, further complicate unified responses, while heightened Islamabad security reflects fears of sabotage amid the high-stakes diplomacy. As consultations intensify ahead of Wednesday's original deadline, the Vance-led talks—envisioned with Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf—hang in precarious balance, with the Hormuz stranglehold emblematic of unresolved flashpoints.

## Marginal Dip in Gold, Silver Plummet 10,000 Amid Bullion Volatility

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): India's bullion markets witnessed a subtle softening in gold prices for the third consecutive session during early trading, while silver endured a steeper plunge of up to ₹10,000 per kilogram, invigorating buyers across major trading hubs. In Delhi's bustling sarafa bazaars, 24-carat gold oscillated between ₹1,55,270 and ₹1,55,980 per 10 grams, with 22-carat variants trading from ₹1,42,330 to ₹1,42,980 per 10 grams. Silver, the day's stark underperformer, tumbled to ₹2,64,900 per kilogram, reflecting robust retail interest amid the correction. City-wise, Mumbai quoted 24-carat gold at ₹1,55,270 per 10 grams and 22-carat at ₹1,42,330; Ahmedabad mirrored with ₹1,55,320 and ₹1,42,380 respectively. Chennai saw elevated levels at ₹1,55,980 for 24-carat and ₹1,42,980 for 22-carat, while Kolkata and Bengaluru aligned closer to Mumbai's benchmarks at



₹1,55,270 and ₹1,42,330. Lucknow and Jaipur both pegged 24-carat gold at ₹1,55,420 per 10 grams, with 22-carat at ₹1,42,480; Bhopal and Patna hovered around ₹1,55,320 and ₹1,42,380. Southern centers like

Hyderabad and Bhubaneswar echoed Bengaluru's rates, underscoring a uniform downward trajectory nationwide. This synchronized dip in gold—coupled with silver's dramatic retreat—

signals easing inflationary pressures from global cues, including geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, positioning the metals as attractive hedges for investors and jewelers alike

## Geopolitical Shadows Eclipse Indian Bourses: Sensex, Nifty Plunge in Early Trade

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Domestic equities buckled under mounting pressures from Iran's rebuff of the second-round peace talks in the Middle East and frail global cues, propelling benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty into a pronounced downturn at the session's outset. The BSE Sensex commenced trading at 79,019.34, shedding 253.99 points, before relentless selling intensified the slide; by 10:15 AM, it had cratered 767.11 points—or 0.97%—to 78,506.22. Similarly, the NSE Nifty opened at 24,470.85, down 105.75 points, and further eroded 200.55 points—or 0.82%—to 24,376.05 amid pervasive bearish momentum. Sporadic buying attempts faltered against overwhelming sell-offs, reversing Tuesday's gains where Sensex had surged 753.03 points (0.96%) to close at 79,273.33 and Nifty ascended 211.75 points (0.87%) to



24,576.60. Among Sensex heavyweights, Nestle, Trent (TMPV), Tata Consumer Products, Hindustan Unilever, and Hindalco Industries bucked the trend, advancing 0.96% to 2.26%. Conversely, IT and financial titans bore the brunt: HCL Technologies plunged 8.69%, trailed by Tech

Mahindra, Infosys, ICICI Bank, and TCS, each declining 1.28% to steeper losses. Trading activity encompassed 2,708 stocks, with 1,366 in green and 1,342 in red; Sensex's 30 constituents saw 4 gainers versus 26 decliners, while Nifty's 50 stocks reflected 12 advances against 38 retreats.

## Crude Oil Rally Persists: Brent Nears \$98 as Hormuz Shadows Linger

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Crude oil prices remain elevated amid unrelenting West Asian tensions, with Brent crude hovering around \$98 per barrel despite the US-Iran ceasefire extension, underscoring persistent supply vulnerabilities in the Strait of Hormuz. International markets opened Wednesday with Brent crude trading near \$98 per barrel, reflecting a 10% surge over the past two days that has propelled it close to the \$100 psychological threshold. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude mirrored the firmness, trending around \$90 per barrel, as traders weighed geopolitical risks against temporary de-escalation signals. Experts attribute this tenacity to supply disruptions rather than mere demand fluctuations; the Hormuz chokepoint—handling 21% of global petroleum flows—remains a flashpoint, with US naval blockades and Iranian vessel detentions stifling flows from key



producers like Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Analysts caution that without normalized transit through Hormuz and a durable peace accord, elevated prices could endure, stoking global inflation as refiners scramble for alternatives that add weeks to shipping timelines. Early crisis peaks saw Brent spike to \$120 per barrel,

followed by partial retreats on ceasefire announcements, yet underlying shortages perpetuate volatility. This precarious equilibrium threatens economic ripple effects, particularly for import-dependent economies like India, where sustained crude highs exacerbate trade deficits and fuel cost pressures.

## Global Markets Wobble: Weak Cues from Wall Street Filter to Mixed Asia Amid Iran Standoff

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): International bourses signaled frailty, with US indices closing lower in the prior session due to Iran's dismissal of second-round peace talks in the volatile Middle East, though Dow futures hinted at a rebound; European markets echoed the pessimism, while Asia presented a bifurcated landscape. Wall Street succumbed to bearish pressures, as the Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbled 292.96 points—or 0.59%—to 49,149.60. The S&P 500 shed 0.63% to 7,064.01, and Nasdaq retreated 144.43 points—or 0.59%—to 24,259.96, underscoring investor aversion amid escalating West Asian tensions disrupting oil flows. Yet, Dow Jones futures staged a nascent recovery, climbing 220.27 points—or 0.45%—to 49,369.65, suggesting potential stabilization if risk appetite revives. Continental Europe fared no better: London's FTSE index plunged 110.99 points—or



1.06%—to 10,498.09; France's CAC 40 slid 95.33 points—or 1.16%—to 8,235.72; and Germany's DAX dipped 146.93 points—or 0.61%—to 24,270.87, reflecting contagion from transatlantic volatility and energy cost anxieties. Asian markets carved a divided path, with nine major indices splitting

evenly: five in red, four in green. Taiwan Weighted surged 410.16 points—or 1.09%—to 38,015.27; Japan's Nikkei ascended 232.83 points—or 0.39%—to 59,582; Shanghai Composite leaped 0.24% to 4,095.07; and SET Composite edged up 0.19% to 1,486.37. Conversely, Gift Nifty

weakened 174 points—or 0.71%—to 24,401, presaging softer Indian opens; Straits Times fell 0.46% to 4,992.05; Hang Seng cratered 299.48 points—or 1.14%—to 26,188; Jakarta Composite eased 0.13% to 7,549.27; and Kospi slipped marginally 0.02% to 6,387.24.

## Brent Crude Inches Toward Century Mark Despite Ceasefire Lifeline

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Crude oil benchmarks defied the US-Iran ceasefire extension orchestrated by President Donald Trump, surging perilously close to \$100 per barrel in early trading, as lingering blockades in the Strait of Hormuz throttled supply chains and amplified market anxieties. Brent crude opened robustly at \$99.24 per barrel before cresting to \$99.29, only to ease marginally to \$98.34 by 9:15 AM IST amid volatile swings. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude mirrored the ascent, surpassing \$90 to touch \$90.38 and \$90.71 intraday, settling at \$89.47 later, underscoring the tenuous foothold of de-escalation rhetoric. This rally persists even as Trump mandated the truce's prolongation, explicitly preserving naval strictures in Hormuz—precluding merchant and tanker transits through the conduit for one-fifth of global petroleum—thereby sustaining



supply disruptions that eclipse diplomatic overtures. Rajiv Dutta, CEO of Capex Gold and Investments Pvt Ltd, highlighted the derailment of second-round US-Iran parleys, with Vice President JD Vance's Islamabad

itinerary shelved, eroding prospects for swift West Asian pacification. Persistent regional strife imperils oil flows, propelling prices toward triple digits and risking inflationary contagion worldwide. While the

ceasefire averts imminent escalations, experts caution that absent Hormuz normalization, crude's elevated trajectory endures, a silver lining residing in mutual restraint forestalling major offensives.

## AI Boom To Push Global IT Spending To \$6.31 Trillion In 2026: Report

New Delhi, 22/4 (H.S.): Global IT spending is pegged to reach \$6.31 trillion in 2026, an increase of 13.5 per cent from 2025, because of the accelerating adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), a report said on Wednesday. The surge is fuelled by rapid investments in AI infrastructure, advanced memory, and high-performance computing systems as enterprises scale AI workloads, according to a Gartner analysis. Segment-wise, data centre systems are expected to record the fastest growth, rising nearly 56 per cent in 2026 to approximately \$788 billion, indicating strong demand from hyperscale cloud providers and enterprises investing heavily in AI-driven capabilities. Other segments such as devices, software, IT services, and communications services are also expected to grow by up to

15 per cent in 2026. According to the Gartner forecast, data centre systems spending is expected to reach \$787.9 billion in 2026. Meanwhile, software spending is projected to increase to \$1.44 trillion, while IT services—the largest segment—is set to grow to \$1.87 trillion. Device spending is estimated to reach \$856.1 billion, while communications services are likely to expand to \$1.35 trillion. The report highlighted that spending on software sees robust growth due to increased investments in generative AI (GenAI) model development and AI-enabled applications. Meanwhile, device spending growth may be moderated by rising memory costs and extended replacement cycles, the report added. "This latest forecast underscores the accelerating momentum in AI infrastructure and advanced memory," said John-David

Lovelock, Distinguished VP Analyst at Gartner. "As AI workloads scale, data centre investment is ramping rapidly, which in turn is driving increased demand for high-performance compute," he added. Gartner noted that strong demand, coupled with supply constraints, has led to record price increases in high-bandwidth memory, making it a key opportunity area for semiconductor companies. The report highlighted a widening divergence in the IT market, with AI infrastructure and GenAI software segments witnessing significantly stronger growth compared to traditional IT categories. However, hyperscale cloud demand is expected to further accelerate investments in servers and data centres, reinforcing AI infrastructure as the most attractive segment for capital deployment.

## India's Textile Exports Rise 2.1 Pc To Over Rs 3.16 Lakh Crore In FY26

New Delhi: India's textile sector remained resilient in global markets, with textile exports, including handicrafts, rising 2.1 per cent to Rs 3,16,334.9 crore in FY26 from earlier fiscal (FY25) when it stood at Rs 3,09,859.3 crore, an official statement said

on Wednesday. Ready-made garments (RMGs) remained the largest contributor to exports with the segment increasing 2.9 per cent to Rs 1,39,349.6 crore, while cotton yarn, fabrics, made-ups and handloom exports were broadly stable at Rs 1,02,399.7

crore, an official statement said. Man-made yarn, fabrics and made-ups posted a stronger growth of 3.6 per cent, with exports increasing from Rs 41,196.0 crore to Rs 42,687.8 crore, the Ministry of Textiles said in a statement. Among value-added

segments, handicrafts excluding handmade carpets recorded the strongest growth, rising 6.1 per cent to Rs 15,855.1 crore. Exports reached 120 destinations during April 2025 to February 2026 over the corresponding period of the previous year, indicating broad-

based geographical expansion in India's textile export basket. A notable growth has been observed in key markets such as the UAE (22.3 per cent), the UK (7.8 per cent), Germany (9.9 per cent), Spain (15.5 per cent), Japan (20.6 per cent), Egypt (38.3 per cent),

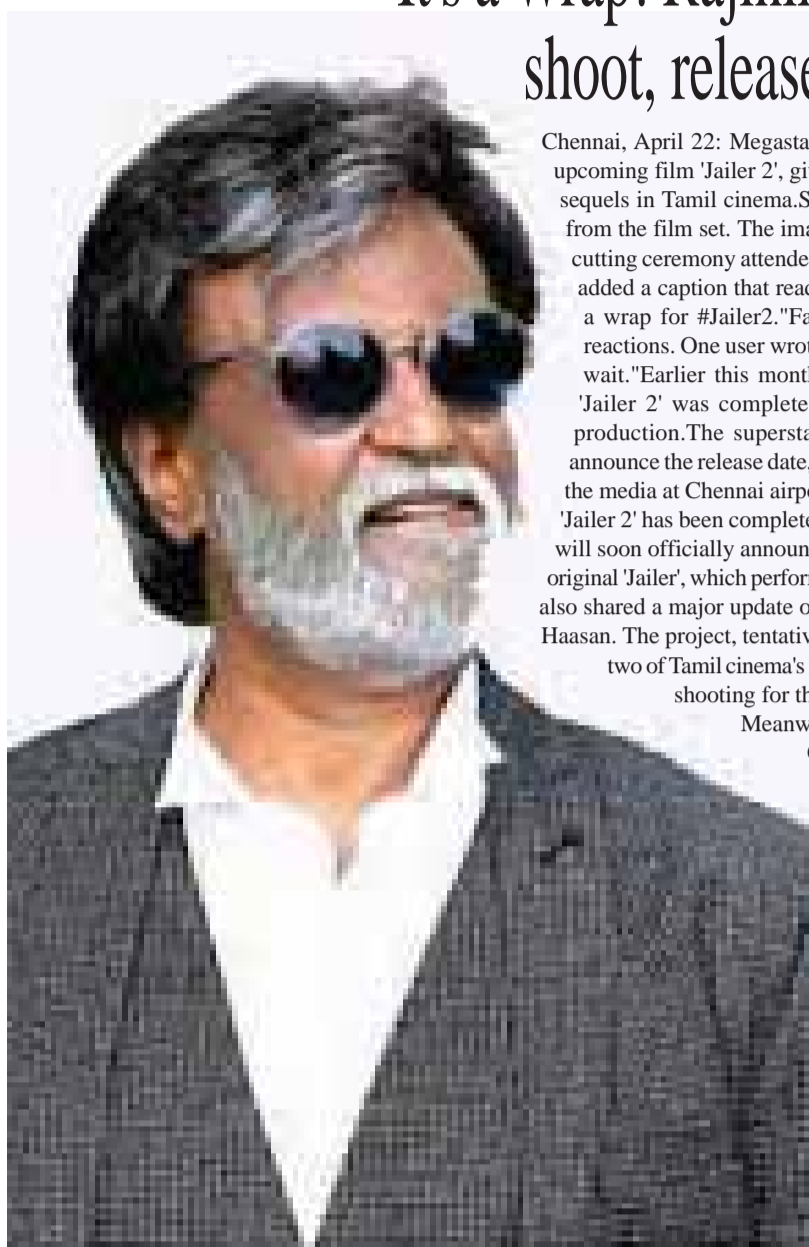
Nigeria (21.4 per cent), Senegal (54.4 per cent), and Sudan (205.6 per cent), etc. The government has continued to support the sector through key export facilitation and remission measures, including the extension of the Rebate of State and Central Taxes and

Levies (RoSCTL) Scheme and the RoDTEP Scheme beyond March 31, 2026. India's FTA agenda also saw major progress during 2025-26, with important implications for the textile and apparel sector. The India-EFTA TEPA entered into force on October 1, 2025.

## It's a Wrap! Rajinikanth completes 'Jailer 2' shoot, release date expected soon

Chennai, April 22: Megastar Rajinikanth has officially wrapped up the shoot of his upcoming film 'Jailer 2', giving fans a major update on one of the most talked-about sequels in Tamil cinema. Sun Pictures took to X to share pictures that appear to be from the film set. The images show the team celebrating the occasion with a cake-cutting ceremony attended by the cast and crew. Along with the pictures, the makers added a caption that read, "Alapparai Kelappurom, Thalaivaru Nerandharam! It's a wrap for #Jailer2." Fans quickly flooded the comments section with excited reactions. One user wrote, "This is going to be huge," while another added, "Can't wait." Earlier this month, Rajinikanth had also confirmed that the shooting of 'Jailer 2' was complete and that the film had entered its final stage of post-production. The superstar added that the production team will soon officially announce the release date, further heightening expectations among fans. Speaking to the media at Chennai airport, Rajinikanth said, "The shooting of the upcoming film 'Jailer 2' has been completed and is currently in its final stages. The production team will soon officially announce the release date." The sequel follows the success of the original 'Jailer', which performed strongly at the box office. Beyond 'Jailer 2', Rajinikanth also shared a major update on his new collaboration with fellow industry icon Kamal Haasan. The project, tentatively referred to as KH x RK, is expected to bring together two of Tamil cinema's most influential figures on screen. According to Rajinikanth, shooting for the film is scheduled to begin in August 2026.

Meanwhile, he is also set to appear in 'Thalaivar 173', directed by Cibi Chakravarti and backed by Kamal Haasan.



## Deepika Padukone resumes work following second pregnancy announcement

Bollywood star Deepika Padukone has reportedly resumed professional commitments shortly after announcing her second pregnancy with actor Ranveer Singh, as revealed by filmmaker Punit Malhotra through a behind-the-scenes Instagram post. The couple, who welcomed their daughter Dua Padukone Singh in 2024, shared the news of expecting their second child on April 19, delighting fans across social media. The announcement featured a charming picture of Dua holding a pregnancy test kit, capturing widespread attention online. In the recent Instagram post, Deepika was seen in a simple yet elegant white outfit, maintaining a minimal and graceful look on set. Director Punit Malhotra praised her professionalism, writing: "This shoot? 10/10. No notes! Thank you @deepikapadukone for being so warm, gracious and wonderful... truly grateful! I owe you one." Deepika and Ranveer tied the knot on November 14, 2018, at Lake Como in Italy after dating for six years. The couple first met on the sets of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela' and later starred together in hits like 'Bajirao Mastani' and 'Padmaavat', establishing themselves as one of Bollywood's most celebrated on-screen and real-life couples.



## SPORTS

### Wembanyama's Concussion Blow Levels Spurs-Blazers Playoff Series

Portland, 22 /4(H.S.): San Antonio Spurs' talismanic center Victor Wembanyama sustained a concussion in Tuesday's NBA playoff clash against the Portland Trail Blazers, plunging the Western Conference first-round series into a 1-1 deadlock after a 106-103 defeat.

In the second quarter, Wembanyama crumpled face-first to the court following a spin move, lying motionless for 30 seconds before medical staff escorted him off, adhering to league concussion protocols that mandate 48-hour rest and rigorous evaluations prior to clearance. Coach Mitch Johnson confirmed the diagnosis, dimming prospects for his availability in Friday's Game 3 here. The 7-foot-4 French prodigy, fresh off Defensive Player of the Year honors with season averages of 25 points, 11.5 rebounds, and 3.1 blocks, had notched five points, four boards, one assist, and a block in 12 minutes before



departing. Luke Kornet stepped up admirably with 10 points and nine rebounds at center. Teammate Devin Vassell urged collective resolve to

compensate for Wembanyama's void, as the Spurs—playoff-bound for the first time since 2019—confront a pivotal juncture

against a defensively stout Portland side. This setback tests San Antonio's depth, with the series' trajectory hinging on the phenom's swift recovery.

### Brighton Crushes Chelsea 3-0, Exposing Blues' Dismal Slump Under Rosenior

New Delhi, 22/4(H.S.): Brighton & Hove Albion delivered a masterclass in dismantling Chelsea 3-0 in the Premier League on Tuesday, propelling the Seagulls to sixth place with 50 points while consigning the Blues to seventh amid their protracted malaise. Ferdi Kadioglu ignited proceedings in the third minute, converting a corner into a clinical opener that left Chelsea shell-shocked. The visitors mustered zero shots on target in the first half, their attacking impotence persisting into the second despite hopes of resurgence. Jack Hinshelwood doubled the advantage in the 56th minute from a Georginio Rutter assist, before Danny Welbeck sealed the



route with a late third, underscoring Brighton's tactical supremacy under coach Liam Rosenior—

whose alterations failed to stem Chelsea's tide. The Blues, enduring just one victory in nine outings and

a barren goalless streak across five consecutive defeats, confront an arduous path ahead.

### Priyanka Chopra, Richard Madden's 'Citadel 2' to be out on May 6

Los Angeles, April 21: There's great news for the fans of 'Citadel' as the new season is all set to stream on Prime Video on May 6. On Tuesday, the streaming giant released the action-packed trailer of the second season, announcing the premiere date for the return of the spy series, which stars Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden as leads.



Citadel is a heart-racing spy thriller following Mason Kane (Richard Madden), Nadia Sinh (Priyanka Chopra Jonas), and Bernard Orlick (Stanley Tucci) - elite operatives of a legendary agency destroyed by Manticore, a ruthless network backed by the world's most powerful families. When a terrifying new threat emerges, "the three are pulled back into action. Now they must recruit an unlikely team of skilled new operatives and launch a globe-spanning mission to stop a conspiracy that could reshape humanity," read a press note. Returning cast members this season include Lesley Manville and Ashleigh Cummings, alongside an expanded ensemble cast featuring Jack Reynor as Hutch, Matt Berry as Franke Sharpe, and Lina El Arabi as Celine. Other notable additions include Merle Dandridge, Gabriel Leone, and Rayna Vallandingham.

From Amazon, MGM Studios, and the Russo Brothers' AGBO, Citadel is executive produced by Anthony Russo, Angela Russo-Otstot, and Scott Nemes for AGBO, with David Weil serving as showrunner, director, and executive producer. Joe Russo and Greg Yaitanes also serve as directors in addition to executive producers.

### Subhash Ghai Lauds Riteish Deshmukh's 'Raja Shivaji': Full Of Nationalistic Energies

Mumbai: Filmmaker Subhash Ghai has heaped praise on Riteish Deshmukh's directorial "Raja Shivaji" and said that the film is made passionately and with full nationalistic energies. Subhash shared the poster of the upcoming historical action drama film co-written and directed by Riteish and said that the trailer is "so rocking" - "Imagine if the trailer is so rocking - what will be the film? Just a magical experience in theatres... That's #RAJA SHIVAJI A film made by writer, director, actor #RIETESH DESHMUKH n produced by jyoti deshpande for Jio. So passionately with full of nationalistic energies. I can see (sic)," he wrote. The filmmaker also lauded actors Sanjay Dutt and Abhishek Bachchan for the

support they have given to Riteish. "Genuinely supported by stars like Sanjay Dutt, Abhishek Bachchan n the whole industry to see that it becomes an excellent film. Look forward to see this film soon. My blessings always," he wrote. Raja Shivaji is based on the life of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire. The film features an ensemble cast led by Riteish in the title role, alongside Sanjay Dutt, Abhishek Bachchan, Mahesh Manjrekar, Sachin Khedekar, Bhagyashree, Fardeen Khan, Jitendra Joshi, Amole Gupte, and Genelia Deshmukh. The film brings to life the extraordinary legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on a scale rarely seen before in Marathi cinema, mounted as a

truly pan-India spectacle. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was the founder of the Maratha Empire in western India. He established an independent kingdom by challenging the Deccan Sultanates and the Mughal Empire. In 1663, Shivaji led a successful raid on Pune, targeting Mughal general Shaista Khan, which weakened Mughal control in the region. In 1664, Shivaji conducted the first sack of Surat, a major Mughal port city, disrupting imperial trade. Presented by Jio Studios, Raja Shivaji a Mumbai Film Company production, produced by Jyoti Deshpande and Genelia Deshmukh, the film is set to release in cinemas worldwide on May 1, 2026 in Marathi, Hindi, and Telugu.