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Trump claims Iran agreed to give "nuclear dust" to US

"It is very important that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon".



US President Trump speaking to reporters -File photo

APRIL 17, 2026 WASHINGTON, DC (TIP)

US President Donald Trump on Thursday, April 16, claimed that Iran has agreed to return its "nuclear dust" to the United States, asserting that the understanding comes as part of broader assurances from Tehran, as part of the peace deal, not to pursue its ambition to acquire a nuclear weapon.

Speaking to reporters outside the White House, Trump emphasized that preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons remains a top priority for his administration.

"It is very important that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon. And they've agreed to that. Iran's agreed to that and they've agreed to it very powerfully," he said.

CONTD ON PAGE 36

UN chief welcomes Israel-Lebanon ceasefire, urges full compliance



Welcoming Israel-Lebanon ceasefire, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged everyone to "fully respect the ceasefire and to comply with international law at all times."

APRIL 17, 2026 NEW YORK (TIP)

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday, April 17, welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon,

while commending the role of the United States in facilitating the agreement.

In a post on X, Guterres said, "I welcome the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel & Lebanon, and commend the role of the US in facilitating it. I hope this will pave the way for negotiations towards a long-term solution to the conflict & contribute to ongoing efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive peace in the region."

The Secretary-General also called on all parties to uphold the truce. "I urge everyone to fully respect the ceasefire and to comply with international law at all times," he added.

I welcome the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel & Lebanon, and commend the role of the US in facilitating it.

CONTD ON PAGE 36

Sundar Pichai, Ranbir Kapoor, Vikas Khanna among three Indians on TIME's 100 Most Influential list

The list also includes global leaders such as US President Donald Trump, Pope Leo XIV, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

APRIL 16, 2026 NEW YORK (TIP)

Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Michelin-star chef Vikas Khanna, actor Ranbir Kapoor, YouTube Chief Neal Mohan and New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani have been named among the 100 most influential people in the world by TIME this year.

TIME released its list of the '100 Most Influential People of 2026' on Wednesday, a compilation that includes global pioneers, leaders and titans to artists, innovators and icons.

The list includes global leaders such as US President Donald Trump, Pope Leo XIV, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Prime Minister of Canada Mark Carney,



Sundar Pichai, Ranbir Kapoor, Vikas Khanna are among the Three Indians on TIME's 100 Most Influential List

Chinese President Xi Jinping, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and commander of the 2026 Artemis II Reid Wiseman.

CONTD ON PAGE 36

India's Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra interacts with Indian Americans in New York

I.S. SALUJA APRIL 12, 2026 NEW YORK (TIP)

India's Ambassador to the United States Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra visited New York on April 11, 2026 and interacted with a gathering of Indian Americans at the Indian Consulate. Ambassador Kwatra was accorded a warm welcome by the Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya and President Sreekanth Akkapalli.

CONTD ON PAGE 36



India's Ambassador to the United States Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra addressing the Indian American community at the Indian Consulate in New York on April 11, 2026

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COMMENT

A Gentle Wake-Up Call to Indian Americans: Love India, But Live Your Allegiance to America



There are moments in the life of a community when celebration must give way to introspection, when pride must be accompanied by honesty, and when identity must be examined with clarity rather than comfort. For the Indian American community, that moment has arrived.

We have, over decades, built a remarkable story in the United States. From the early arrivals who came seeking opportunity in the 1960s, to the professionals, entrepreneurs, academics, and workers who followed in waves over the past forty years, the Indian diaspora has flourished. Today, Indian Americans are among the most successful, educated, and influential communities in this nation.

We celebrate that success. We showcase it. We take pride in it.

And yet, beneath this success lies a question that demands to be asked plainly, without embellishment, and yes, even uncomfortably: why is it that we celebrate India's Independence Day and Republic Day with unmatched enthusiasm, yet remain conspicuously subdued, if not indifferent, when it comes to celebrating the Fourth of July?

This is not a trivial question. It goes to the very heart of identity, allegiance, and responsibility.

Let there be no misunderstanding. There is nothing wrong, indeed, everything right, in celebrating India. India is our motherland. It gave birth to us, nourished us, shaped our values, and instilled in us the cultural and civilizational richness that we proudly carry across oceans. Our emotional, cultural, and even spiritual bonds with India are deep and enduring. They deserve to be honored, preserved, and celebrated.

But let us not confuse affection with allegiance.

For most Indian Americans today, America is not a temporary shelter. It is not a transit lounge. It is not a place where we merely earn our livelihoods before turning our gaze elsewhere. It is our home. It is the country whose passport we carry, whose Constitution protects us, whose laws we are bound to obey, and whose prosperity enables our success.

Many among us stood before a judge, raised our right hand, and took the oath of allegiance to the United States of America. That oath was not a ceremonial formality. It was not a bureaucratic checkbox. It was a solemn declaration-one that required us to "absolutely and entirely renounce and

abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty."

Those are not casual words. They are binding words.

And yet, how often do we reflect upon them?

We organize grand parades, cultural programs, and community gatherings for India's national days. We drape ourselves in the tricolor, sing patriotic songs, and relive the history of India's freedom struggle with passion and pride. There is energy. There is visibility. There is commitment.

But when the Fourth of July arrives-the Independence Day of the United States-where are we?

Where are the large-scale community celebrations?

Where are the organized gatherings?

Where is the visible, collective expression of patriotism?

Yes, many individuals celebrate privately. Some attend local fireworks. Some display the American flag. But as a community-cohesive, organized, and visible-we are, at best, muted participants.

This is not merely an oversight. It reflects a deeper hesitation-perhaps even a reluctance-to fully embrace the identity of being American.

It is time to confront that hesitation.

Patriotism is not a zero-sum game. Loving America does not diminish our love for India. Honoring the Stars and Stripes does not require us to forget the Tricolor. But allegiance demands clarity. It demands priority.

India may be the land of our birth. But America is the land of our belonging.

This is where we earn our bread and butter. This is where we build our homes. This is where our children are educated, where our businesses thrive, where our freedoms are protected. This is the nation that has opened its doors to us, often more generously than many nations would.

And let us be candid: America has not merely tolerated us; it has embraced us.

From the corridors of academia to the heights of corporate leadership, from public service to entrepreneurship, Indian Americans have been given opportunities that have transformed lives and futures. We have prospered not in spite of America, but because of it.

Is it too much, then, to expect that we celebrate its Independence Day with the same enthusiasm that we bring to India's?

The forthcoming Fourth of July carries even greater significance. As the United States marks 250 years of its independence, it is not merely commemorating a historical milestone. It is reaffirming a set of ideals-liberty, democracy, equality, and justice-that have inspired people across the world, including many of us who chose to make this nation our home.

This is not just America's celebration. It

is ours.

And yet, unless we consciously change, we risk remaining spectators-beneficiaries of a system we hesitate to fully embrace.

This must change.

It is time for Indian American organizations to step forward and organize Fourth of July celebrations with purpose and pride. It is time for our community leaders to speak openly about the importance of visible allegiance. It is time for families to ensure that their children grow up not with divided identities, but with a clear understanding of where they belong.

Let our homes proudly display the American flag-not as a token gesture, but as a statement of identity. Let our community centers host Independence Day events that reflect our gratitude and participation. Let us engage with our neighborhoods, our cities, and our nation-not as outsiders looking in, but as citizens who belong.

Above all, let us send a clear message to the next generation.

Our children must not inherit confusion. They must not grow up wondering whether their primary identity lies elsewhere. They are Americans-by birth, by law, and by destiny. It is our responsibility to ensure that they feel it, live it, and celebrate it.

This is not a call to abandon India. That would be both unrealistic and undesirable. Our heritage is our strength. Our roots enrich us. Our connection to India is a source of pride.

But roots must not become chains.

We can honor India with love, respect, and cultural continuity. But we must honor America with loyalty, participation, and visible patriotism.

To do otherwise is to live in contradiction.

This editorial is not meant to offend. But if it unsettles, it has served its purpose.

For too long, we have avoided this conversation, preferring comfort over clarity. But communities, like individuals, grow only when they are willing to confront their own inconsistencies.

The Indian American community has achieved much. But maturity demands that we align our celebrations with our commitments.

We are no longer merely people of Indian origin living in America. We are Americans of Indian origin.

And that distinction must not only be understood; it must be lived.

As the Fourth of July approaches-particularly this historic 250th anniversary-let this be the year we step forward with conviction.

Let us celebrate India with love.

But let us celebrate America with loyalty.

Not quietly. Not reluctantly.

But proudly, visibly, and without hesitation.

God Bless America!

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



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UNGA Meeting to debate the situation as to which veto was cast on 7 April 2026 in the Security Council under agenda item "The Situation in the Middle East"

Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, Permanent Representative of India made a statement

**APRIL 17, 2026
UNITED NATIONS (TIP)**

Speaking on the situation in the Middle East, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni urged that safe and unimpeded freedom of navigation and global commerce through the Strait of Hormuz be restored at the earliest.

Here is the PR's statement.

"Since the outbreak of the conflict in Iran and the Gulf region on 28 February 2026, India had expressed deep concern and urged all states to exercise restraint,

avoid escalation and prioritize safety of civilians. We have urged all states to promote dialogue and diplomacy and de-escalation of tensions, and to purposefully address underlying issues. We have also called for respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

An aspect of particular concern for India for its energy and economic security relates to commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. India has deplored the fact that commercial shipping was made a target of military attacks in this conflict. The precious

lives of Indian seafarers aboard ships have been lost during the course of the conflict.

We reiterate that the targeting of commercial shipping and endangering innocent civilian crew members or otherwise impeding the freedom of navigation and commerce in the Strait of Hormuz are unacceptable. International law in this regard must be fully respected.

We strongly urge that safe and unimpeded freedom of navigation and global commerce through the Strait of Hormuz be restored at the earliest."



India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni speaking at the United Nations. -File photo

18 Years of Leadership: Ravi Bhooplapur's Impact on Xavier University School of Medicine

Eighteen years ago this week, I had the distinct honor of assuming the presidency of Xavier University School of Medicine with a clear and purposeful vision: to provide high-quality, accessible medical education that empowers students to serve communities across the globe. It has been a privilege to work alongside our dedicated faculty and staff in preparing physicians who are making meaningful contributions worldwide. I extend my sincere gratitude to our Chairman, Board of Trustees, our investors, and our Chancellor, Dr. Bhat, Dr. Dubey, Chief Academic Officer, whose steadfast guidance has been instrumental in maintaining our leadership in medical education.



Ravi Bhooplapur, President, Xavier University School of Medicine

Over the past eighteen years, Xavier has reached significant milestones. These include achieving unconditional accreditation by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (A.C.C.M.), recognized by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (E.C.F.M.G.) and the

National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (N.C.F.M.E.A.) under the U.S. Department of Education. We have also secured approval from the New York State Education Department, achieved an 85% residency match rate this year, and maintained strong academic outcomes over time, including an average first-time pass rate of over 85% on USMLE Step 1 and 90% on Step 2 CK. In recent years, we have further expanded opportunities for our students by establishing residency placements in Canada and facilitating access to provincial loan programs for our Canadian students.

Guided by the principles of the One Health initiative, we launched our Veterinary Medicine program in 2023, which is currently progressing toward accreditation. Our Nursing program has also demonstrated early success, having graduated two cohorts to date. Looking ahead, we anticipate the launch of our online Master of Public Health program and additional graduate offerings in September 2026. Concurrently, the development of our state-of-the-art campus, advanced laboratory facilities, newly acquired land for veterinary education, and the continued expansion of our residential and academic infrastructure in Aruba will further enhance the Xavier experience.

Recognized among the top Caribbean medical schools, Xavier University School of Medicine remains steadfast in its commitment to empowering aspiring physicians, veterinarians, and nurses to achieve their professional goals and to serve humanity with excellence, compassion, and integrity.

SUNNY MEHTA NAMED THE GENERAL MANAGER OF NEW JERSEY DEVILS

**APRIL 17, 2026
EDISON (TIP)**

The New Jersey Devils announced today, April 17 that the team has hired Sunny Mehta as its sixth general manager in team history.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Sunny and his wife, Nicole, back home to New Jersey," said Devils' Managing Partner David Blitzer. "We quickly realized this job was in high demand and were incredibly fortunate to meet with many qualified candidates. Sunny's familiarity with our organization and experience with a two-time Stanley Cup-winning team are characteristics that will serve as a foundation for future success. Our expectations are to be a perennial playoff team and compete for the Stanley Cup, and I look forward to Sunny leading us there."

"This is a dream come true for a New Jersey kid, who grew up watching Devils' practices just 20 minutes away in Totowa," said Mehta. "After meeting with David Blitzer, Josh Harris, Bob Myers, and other members of the organization, I knew this was the place I wanted to be. Thank you to Vinnie Viola, Bill Zito and the entire Florida Panthers organization for a fantastic six years and for the opportunity to take the next step in my professional career. New Jersey has a tremendous young core that will be looking to get back to being a contender, a complement of young assets and draft picks, and a passionate fan base hungry for success. I was fortunate enough to watch the New Jersey Devils raise three Stanley Cups and am excited to get to work to return to that level."

Mehta, 48, joins New Jersey after spending six seasons with the Florida Panthers- the last three serving as assistant general manager and head of analytics. He originally joined the Panthers in 2020 as vice president of hockey strategy & intelligence. Mehta was a key part of the Florida management group that helped deliver back-to-back Stanley Cups in 2024 and 2025, making the team just the fourth in the last 30 years to achieve consecutive championships. While with Florida, Mehta collaborated with the management and coaching staff on amateur player and free agent evaluation, trade deadline opportunities, and roster decisions.

Mehta returns to the organization where he



Ravi Bhooplapur, President, Xavier University School of Medicine

first started his NHL management career. He was part of the first wave of analytics-focused executives who joined front offices and established the NHL's first full-time analytics department when he was named as Director of Hockey Analytics in 2014. Hired by David Blitzer, Josh Harris, and then-Devils' President/General Manager Lou Lamoriello, Mehta brought a data-centric and process-oriented vision to support the team in scouting, draft preparation, and player evaluation. He spent four seasons in New Jersey, 2014-15 to 2017-18, under Lamoriello and, later, Ray Shero. His NHL front-office experience also includes consulting for the Washington Capitals during the 2019-20 season and the Phoenix Coyotes in 2010-11.

Mehta studied Jazz Guitar and Studio at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where he graduated in 2000 and later received his master's degree in data science from City University of New York. Following his graduation, he ventured out as a professional musician in New Orleans and later as a poker player in Las Vegas. Mehta has co-authored two best-selling books on poker strategy: Professional No-Limit Hold 'Em, Volume 1 (2009) and Small Stakes No-Limit Hold 'Em (2007).

Following his professional poker career, he served as a Proprietary Derivatives Trader at Peak6 Capital Management at the Chicago Board of Trade.

Born in Grand Rapids, MI, and raised in Wyckoff, NJ, Mehta played varsity hockey for Ramapo High School in Franklin Lakes, NJ. He and his wife, Nicole, returned to Ramapo with the Stanley Cup in June of 2024.

A Baisakhi like no other: Gurdwara in Tehran marks harvest festival amid war

One of Iran's oldest gurdwaras, Bhai Ganga Singh Sabha in Tehran, dates back to 1941

APRIL 16, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

One of Iran's oldest gurdwaras, Bhai Ganga Singh Sabha, Tehran, marked Baisakhi on Tuesday in the shadow of the ongoing war.

The gurdwara which dates back to 1941 has become integral to Tehran's life and pulse.

Heartwarming pictures of devout Sikhs marking the festival of harvest and joy in the midst of a massive crisis went viral today. The Sikhs celebrated along with the local residents of Tehran with the day complete with rituals, including the recital of Shri Akhand Path Sahib, shabad kirtan and customary replacement of the Nishan Sahib. This replacement was undertaken as



Photo for representation only. File

part of the traditional Chola Charauna (changing the robe) ceremony, which ensures the flag stays clean and vibrant.

Pictures of the celebrations also capture the serving of langar - a sight that inspires hope and resilience despite the darkness of war.

Bhai Ganga Singh Gurdwara is an essential element in the itinerary of Indian leaders who visit Iran. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the shrine in Tehran on May 22, 2016, at the start of his two-day state visit to the country. The state visit was the first official bilateral state visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 15 years. The last such visit was by Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2001.

Canadian MP Sukh Dhaliwal, former PAU VC among Khalsa College, Amritsar, alumni body office-bearers

Retired IPS officer Mukhwinder Singh Chhina, sportsperson Kartar Singh Pahalwan also among announced functionaries

APRIL 16, 2026
AMRITSAR / NEW YORK (TIP)

With an aim to rope in its global alumni network, the Khalsa College Governing Council (KCGC) on Wednesday announced the re-formation of the Khalsa College Amritsar Global Alumni Association (KCAGAA).



A view of the iconic Khalsa College in Amritsar. -File photo

Five-time Canadian MP Sukh Dhaliwal, retired IPS officer Mukhwinder Singh Chhina, sportsperson Kartar Singh Pahalwan, and former PAU Vice-Chancellor BS Dhillon were among those named office-bearers.

KCGC secretary Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina, patron of the alumni association, said the tenure of the office-bearers and members of various committees had been extended for another two years.

He said the decision aimed to reinforce institutional connections with alumni in India, and abroad, and to enhance their participation in academic, cultural, and developmental areas.

KCGC president Satyajit Singh Majithia, Khalsa University VC Mehal Singh and Khalsa College Principal Atam Singh Randhawa will serve as chief patrons of the association.

Patrons include US-based Punjabi entrepreneur Bakhshish Singh Sandhu, Kuldeep Singh Sandhu of Canada, Sikh historian and scholar Bhupinder Singh of the Netherlands, and entrepreneurs Gurinderpal Singh Josan of New York, and Mehtab Singh Kahlon of Washington. Sikh educator and culture curator Davinder Singh Chhina was named the convenor.

He said the forum would play a vital role in fostering alumni engagement, facilitating knowledge exchange, and contributing to the global stature of 1892-built Khalsa College through international collaborations. DS Rataul was named co-convenor, while Harpreet Singh Bhatti and Kulwinder Singh Chhina were named media coordinators.

Canadian Punjabi journalist sentenced to 5.5 years in smuggling case

Sukhvinder Kaur Sangha (47) pleaded guilty to unlawful importation that took place in 2024

APRIL 16, 2026
VANCOUVER (TIP)

A prominent Punjabi-language journalist and broadcaster who reported on crime and interviewed high-profile politicians, ministers, celebrities, and police officers has been sentenced to 5.5 years in prison for attempting to smuggle more than 100 kilograms of methamphetamine into Canada from the United States.



Photo for representational purpose only. iStock

plates in October 2021.

Justice John Gibb-Carsley of the B.C. Supreme Court handed down the sentence on April 10 in New Westminster. The court found that a search of the vehicle revealed four duffel bags containing 108 kilograms of methamphetamine, valued between \$1 million and \$10 million.

Sangha, who was born in Prince George and worked for a decade as a Punjabi-language radio and television producer and host, claimed she had been in Washington State for her aunt's funeral. She fled during a secondary inspection, leading to a police chase before she was stopped on 16th Avenue in Surrey.

The judge ruled that Sangha gave "untruthful testimony" by claiming she had been threatened and coerced into the smuggling operation. Text message evidence showed she was likely a "trusted and willing participant" and had imported drugs on previous occasions. The court noted that her language and tone in arranging the trips did not match her claims of fear.

"Sangha has some celebrity profile in her community as a Punjabi language radio and television host and media presence," the ruling stated.

Justice Gibb-Carsley told Sangha in court: "I derive no pleasure in sentencing you. What I hope you heard and understand is that there are significant risks, dangers and consequences associated with the illegal drug trade. It is not a victimless crime."

He added that he hoped she would use her time in custody productively so it would be her last interaction with the criminal justice system. The case has drawn attention in British Columbia's media and Punjabi community due to Sangha's public profile as a journalist covering crime and conducting interviews with prominent figures.

According to a Global News report by The Canadian Press, Sukhvinder Kaur Sangha (47), pleaded guilty to unlawful importation that took place in 2024. She was arrested by the Canada Border Services Agency after fleeing a border crossing in Surrey, B.C., at high speed in a rental vehicle with Florida

Indian national among two charged in Singapore SGD 1.6 million cheating case: Duo allegedly rigged open tender to secure contracts

If convicted, the accused could face up to 10 years in jail and fines.

APRIL 16, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

An Indian national is among two individuals charged with allegedly cheating a cultural organisation of more than SGD 1.6 million (about USD 1.3 million), according to local media reports.

Between April and December 2023, Alagappan Muthu, 53, and Singaporean Ching Wai Leng, 81, allegedly conspired on nine occasions to defraud Kwong Wai Siew Peck San Theng in Bishan, Channel News Asia reported. The organisation operates a columbarium housing cinerary urns.



Photo for representation only. iStock

Citing the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB), the report said Ching was then head of the maintenance section at the columbarium, while Muthu was a director at KKV Construction, a private firm. Ching also owned and served as a director of Asiabuild Enterprises, which provides general construction and waterproofing services.

The duo allegedly arranged for KKV Construction to secure contracts - including plastering, painting, washing and repair works - through an open tender process. In turn, KKV Construction subcontracted the projects to Asiabuild Enterprises.

By concealing this arrangement from the management committee, they allegedly misled the organisation's president into approving payments totalling about SGD 1,661,785 (approximately USD 1.3 million) to KKV Construction.

Both men face nine similar cheating charges at the State Courts, with a pre-trial conference scheduled for May 21. If convicted, they could face up to 10 years in jail and fines.

From Golden Temple kitchen to Time 100 list, chef Vikas Khanna narrates his journey

APRIL 16, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

"This is a very big moment for India," Khanna told PTI in an exclusive interview from New York where he runs the popular restaurant Bungalow that dishes up Indian food with a twist.

Khanna makes it to the annual Time list along with actor Ranbir Kapoor, Google CEO Sundar Pichai, YouTube chief Neal Mohan and New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani. The other prominent names in the list are Pope Leo XIV, Zoe Saldana, Kate Hudson, Wagner Moura, US President Donald Trump and Xi Jinping among others.

The list was made public on Wednesday but Khanna found out about it on March 23, the birthday of his late sister, Radhika Khanna.

"I felt that my sister is still fighting for me from up there. For them to pick up what they call us here, a curry boy and put it in the highest respected list in the world, this is a big deal," said Khanna, one of the best-known Indian chefs in the world.

Curry has often been used to deride South Asians and their cuisine in the West but this could well be in the past.

"They use the word curry in derogatory terms, but I use it with pride. I feel that it's something which our grandmothers fed us and our body and brain functions on that. And today, most of the Indians are running the entire world," the 54-year-old said.

"I have so many relatives here. All the kids would make fun of them or say this is smelling of curry. And now a curry boy gets to be on the stage where just a few selected people on the planet have walked," the Amritsar born chef said.

Before Bungalow, Khanna ran Junoon in New York.

In his profile for Time, chef Eric

Ripert describes Khanna, who features in the Innovators category, as a man of "extraordinary heart whose generosity extends far beyond the kitchen, reaching communities across the world with compassion, dignity, and a deep sense of responsibility."

"He carries his culture with immense pride, sharing the richness of Indian traditions while making them accessible and meaningful to a global audience. With Bungalow, he has created more than a restaurant-it is a living expression of storytelling. Each dish reflects memory, heritage, and the collective voice of his team, giving space to narratives that deserve to be heard," Ripert writes.

Khanna, who has authored several cook books and also made a Hindi film "The Last Colour" with Neena Gupta, said furthering Indian cuisine is a responsibility he has always taken seriously.

"You know, years ago I was talking to one of the biggest chefs of the world and asked him why Indian food is not moving forward? I received the Michelin star eight times, been on every list, but I didn't feel the cuisine was moving forward.

"And he said that because most of the celebrity chefs from a country who have the power to change the cuisine, are seen everywhere, but not in their restaurants. That really stuck with me." Khanna said he decided to do just the opposite and dedicated most of his waking hours to run his restaurant.

"It's easy to make all those statements, but to stay there and to be able to represent that every day. Running a restaurant is not running a YouTube channel. It's very innovative. Everybody's a critic nowadays. Everybody's tasting your food. I feel that

a lot of the world has changed, but the essence of cooking remains the same. The guest is going to decide how much integrity a dish has," he said.

Bungalow serves up dishes like Spice Roasted Pineapple, Yogurt Kebab, Kiss of Kashmir, Chicken Amritsari and Rose Kulfi Feluda among others.

Khanna, who grew up in Amritsar and completed his schooling there, is also happy with the new crop of chefs coming from India.

"When we were growing up, it was only 'you have to be in the kitchen and make money'. But now there's so many different sources of income. It's also helping to evolve Indian food and spread Indian food. I feel that this has been such an important moment for Indian cuisine. When you're getting the volume back from India." Khanna hopes to be back in India on Diwali with his mother.

"When I get such big honors, I get very scared. So, I think it's important for my mom to be with me. You know, it took almost four generations to get me on this stage. So many people were involved in our family, outside our family to put me on this platform and recognition, which is going to be one of the tremendous forces for Indian cuisines going forward," he said.

In an Instagram post, Khanna said being named among Time's Most Influential People of 2026, was a moment for "Indian cuisine, for our culture, for every story that began in a humble kitchen".

"Who would have imagined that a boy from the narrow lanes of Amritsar-who struggled to run with other kids, who knew that rolling breads at Golden Temple would lead to the biggest platform in the World, who chose cooking as an act of rebellion, who once sold chole bhature as a small dream-



"Curry boy" Vikas Khanna is part of the Time 100 list of the most influential people in the world, and the celebrity chef can't be happier that the term, once a pejorative, is now a badge of honor.

File photo

would one day find his name among the world's most influential voices.

"This is not just my journey of 41 years of consistency. This belongs to every mother, every teacher, every sister, every hand that believed, and every plate that carried a story forward," the chef, who moved to New York at the age of 29 and rose to culinary stardom, said.

Up next for Khanna is another film "Imaginary Rain", about a New York chef, starring Shabana Azmi and Prateik Smita Patil with music by A R Rahman.

"I just want no hyphenation in my creativity. This movie is about Indian cooking in New York City. I have known Shabana ji since 2005. And she used to come to my small restaurant in New York, and she will eat all the meals there. I've had a very long journey with Shabana Azmi. We still have pictures where she looks the same and I'm looking so young. She learned how to cook for the movie."

California Assembly adopts resolution recognizing Vaisakhi; US lawmakers extend greetings

RESOLUTION RECEIVED OVERWHELMING SUPPORT IN THE 80-MEMBER HOUSE, HIGHLIGHTS VAISAKHI AS AN IMPORTANT OCCASION FOR SIKH AMERICANS

APRIL 15, 2026
SACRAMENTO (TIP)

The California Assembly has adopted a resolution recognizing Vaisakhi as one of the most significant days for Sikh Americans and encouraging people of the state to take part in its celebrations.

The resolution, moved by California Assembly member Jasmeet Kaur Bains, received support from 76 of the 80 members of the House and was adopted on Monday, on the eve of Vaisakhi.

"Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, that the Assembly recognizes this year's Vaisakhi celebration on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, and encourages Californians to take part in this joyous day of celebration," the resolution stated.

It further said that the Assembly observes Vaisakhi as one of the most significant days for Sikh Americans and Sikh history and, in observance of Vaisakhi, expresses its deepest respect for all who observe and celebrate Vaisakhi with South Asian Americans and the Indian diaspora worldwide.

California Governor Gavin Newsom extended greetings on X, saying, "To Sikh communities throughout California celebrating Vaisakhi, Jen and I send our best wishes for a joyful new year and abundant



A Vaisakhi Nagar Kirtan float

spring harvest. Vaisakhi diyan lakh lakh vadhayan, California," in a post on X.

"Happy Vaisakhi! Today Sikh communities worldwide celebrate the 1699 founding of the Khalsa - a vibrant tradition of equality, selfless service, and courage. Wishing everyone celebrating a day filled with joy and chardi kala," Senator Chuck Schumer said in a post on X.

"Sikhs have been an integral part of America's fabric for more than 125 years and have contributed to our own community in ways that have had impacts across the country. Today, I wish our Sikh American neighbors and all those who celebrate a very Happy #Vaisakhi," Lizzie Fletcher, Congresswoman from Texas, said.

"Wishing all who celebrate a very joyful #Vaisakhi as you mark a season of renewal, abundance, and faith. May this day honor the enduring strength of community and the values of service, resilience, and unity that bring us together," Congressman Brad Sherman from California said.

"To Sikh Americans in MD-08 and all those celebrating around the world: happy Vaisakhi. May you rejoice during this harvest festival with family and friends," Jamie Raskin, Congressman from Maryland, said.

"Armenians worldwide wish Happy #Baisakhi / #Vaisakhi to our Sikh friends and all who celebrate. May the spirit of the Khalsa - courage, justice, equality, and service - continue to inspire us as we stand together in defense of human rights and dignity for all," Armenian National Committee of America said in a post on X.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Diversity and Unity Witnessed at the Eid Celebrations Hosted by IAMNA in association with the Consulate General of India



Binaya Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York, is seen speaking, with a backdrop featuring Delhi's Jama Masjid alongside the Statue of Liberty and the New York City skyline-symbolizing the rich cultural connection and unity between India and the United States. -Photo IAMNA

**APRIL 11, 2026
LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. (TIP)**

The Indian American Muslims of North America (IAMNA), in association with the Consulate General of India in New York, hosted a vibrant Eid Celebration on Friday, April 10, evening at Five Star Banquet Hall, bringing together diplomats, elected officials, interfaith leaders and more than 200 guests from diverse faiths and backgrounds.

The event reflected the spirit of Eid - a celebration of gratitude, compassion, unity and hope - while showcasing the diversity and strength of the community.

Addressing the gathering, Consul General of India in New York Binaya Srikanta Pradhan commended IAMNA for its continued partnership with the Consulate in organizing Eid celebrations and noted the significantly larger turnout this year.

"I can see in this gathering people from different walks of life," Pradhan said, emphasizing the inclusive nature of the event.

He further highlighted that Eid represents universal values of charity, forgiveness and harmony that resonate across cultures and faiths. Emphasizing India's pluralistic ethos, he noted that India is home to one of the world's largest Muslim populations, with a rich history of Islam dating back to early trade interactions along the Malabar Coast.

He underscored India's tradition of coexistence and diversity, where different languages, traditions and faiths thrive together under a shared commitment to mutual respect. Drawing parallels with the United States, he described the gathering as a reflection of "unity in diversity," where people from different backgrounds come together in a spirit of brotherhood.

Pradhan also highlighted initiatives by the Consulate to better serve the community, including new satellite centers in Edison, New Jersey; Columbus, Ohio; and Boston, along with expanded service availability.

Her Excellency Amna Almheiri, Consul General of the United Arab Emirates, attended as Guest of Honor and delivered heartfelt remarks reflecting both regional context and the spirit of Eid.

"Wow, this was truly a pleasant surprise. Thank you very much for inviting me today," she said. "We have gone



Top row (L-R): Binaya Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York; Amna Almheiri, Consul General of the United Arab Emirates; Ilayas Quraishi, Chairman, Indian American Muslims of North America (IAMNA); Ahmed Shakir, Vice Chairman, IAMNA; Imam Ahmed Waheed Sheikh, Imam.

Bottom row (L-R): John C. Liu, New York State Senator; Landon C. Dais, Member of the New York State Assembly; Raj Goyal, Candidate for New York City Comptroller; Rita Joseph, New York City Council Member; Kashif Hussain, Deputy Public Advocate, New York City. -Photo: IAMNA

through some difficult times back in the UAE and the region, but things are now improving. This makes this Eid celebration even more meaningful - a true celebration of peace, unity and hope, not just here, but also back in our region."

She thanked the organizers and wished everyone a blessed Eid. The event was attended by several distinguished elected officials, including John C. Liu, New York State Senator; Landon C. Dais, Assemblyman; Rita Joseph, Councilwoman of New York City; and Neeta Jain, who presented a Congressional Certificate of Merit on behalf of Gregory W. Meeks.

Also in attendance was Raj Goyal, who is running for New York City Comptroller.

From the Office of the New York City Public Advocate, Deputy Public Advocate Kashif Hussain presented an official proclamation recognizing IAMNA's contributions to the community. A distinguished group of community leaders was also present, including Dr. Sudhir Parikh,



Audience members and dignitaries attended the Eid Celebration hosted by the Indian American Muslims of North America (IAMNA) in association with the Consulate General of India, New York.

Photo: IAMNA

recipient of the Padma Shri award; Ankur Vaidya, President of the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA); Srujal Parikh, Executive Committee Member of FIA; Ravi Bhooplapur, Chairman of St. Xavier Medical College; Mohinder Singh Gilzian, President of INOC; Professor Indrajit Saluja, Editor, The Indian Panorama; Ravi Batra, Attorney; Vikas Dhall, Entrepreneur; Jay Singh, Editor, Hum Hindustani; Neeta Jain, Democratic Leader; Harpreet Singh Toor, Community Leader; Rajender Dichpally, Community Leader; Inderpal Dhall, Faith Leader; and A.G. Farooqui, Educationist, among others.

During the program, Imam Sheikh Ahmed Waheed delivered remarks on the significance of Ramadan and Eid, highlighting the importance of spiritual reflection, self-discipline, charity and compassion. He emphasized that Ramadan is not only a period of fasting but also a time for personal growth, strengthening faith and fostering empathy for those in need, with Eid serving as a celebration of these values.

IAMNA also honored two women entrepreneurs - Palvesha Yasin Latiwala and Asra Rashid - for their outstanding community service and contributions, recognizing their efforts in empowering and uplifting the community.

Speaking on behalf of IAMNA, Chairman and media personality Ilayas Quraishi expressed gratitude to the Consulate General of India, Her Excellency Amna Almheiri, elected officials and community leaders for their presence and continued support.

IAMNA leadership includes Vice Chairman Ahmed Shakir and Event Co-Chair Mohammed Farooqui, along with Co-Chairs Mukbul Mansuri, Faisal Munir and Faheemuddin Mohammed, who played key roles in organizing the event.

Quraishi described the gathering as a reflection of the "true colors of India," where people of different faiths and backgrounds come together as one. He highlighted the event as a powerful example of unity in diversity.

"This gathering is not just about celebrating Eid, but about celebrating our shared values and collective identity," Quraishi said. "It demonstrates how our community continues to contribute positively as proud Indian-Americans and as active participants in the broader American society."

The evening featured a rich and engaging program including Quran recitation by Umar Farooqui with translation by Zoha Fatima Ahmed, live Qawwali by Rhythm Tolee, stand-up comedy by Mohammed Darbar, remarks by community leaders, and a dinner reception.

The event concluded with a renewed commitment to fostering unity, strengthening community ties and promoting harmony across diverse communities.

(Based on a Press Release issued by IAMNA)



Prominent community leaders, including Binaya Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York, and Padma Shri recipient Dr. Sudhir Parikh, along with IAMNA members and other distinguished guests, can be seen at the Eid Celebration, reflecting the spirit of unity and community engagement. -Photo: IAMNA

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On war, peace, the president and the pope

IT'S A SHAME THE TRUMP VS. POPE LEO MESS MAKES SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF "JUST WAR" THEORY IMPOSSIBLE

BY GEORGE WEIGEL



"THE POPE'S UNIQUE JOB IS TO CONSTANTLY CALL THE LEADERS OF NATIONS TO REASON THEIR WAY TO VIABLE SOLUTIONS FOR WHAT OFTEN SEEM INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS. TO DO SO, ANY POPE, AND THE VATICAN DIPLOMATIC APPARATUS, MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE LIMITS TO DIALOGUE, NOT LEAST WITH TOTALITARIAN SYSTEMS, AND THAT THE PROPORTIONATE AND DISCRIMINATE USE OF ARMED FORCE CAN, ACCORDING TO JUST-WAR THINKING, SET THE CONDITIONS FOR ACHIEVING A STABLE PEACE BUILT ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF SECURITY, FREEDOM AND JUSTICE. LEO - WHOSE THEOLOGICAL LODESTAR IS SAINT AUGUSTINE, CHRISTIANITY'S FIRST JUST-WAR THINKER - SHOULD BE IN A DISTINCTIVE POSITION TO FOSTER THAT CONVERSATION BETWEEN PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND ETHICISTS."



President Trump and Pope Leo

Blasphe^my" - the definition of which, according to my beloved Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, includes "claiming the attributes of deity" - is not a term typically deployed these days to describe the actions of political leaders. Consider, however, President Donald Trump's Truth Social posts on Sunday night.

In the first, with typically Trumpian rodomontade, the president of the United States smeared the 267th bishop of Rome as "weak," falsely accused the pope of indifference to narco-terrorism and a nuclear-armed Iran, and tried to set Leo against his brother Louis.

Bad enough, to be sure, and certainly unworthy of a president, even by today's debased standards. But this latest eruption of rhetorical lava from Mount Trump was quickly followed by another Truth Social post (subsequently deleted): an illustration in which the president was portrayed as a Christlike figure dressed in biblical-era robes, healing a sick man while light shone from his (presumably pierced) left hand.

And if that is not blasphemy, it is at the very least blasphemy-adjacent.

In an impromptu news conference on his flight to Africa on Monday morning, Leo responded like an adult to the inevitable questions about all this, insisting that he was "not a politician" but the messenger of the Gospel, adding: "I do not think the message of the Gospel should be abused as some are doing." Surely the pope could be forgiven if he had Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth (and perhaps others in the administration) in mind here.

Hegseth, after all, had recently compared the extraordinary rescue of a downed American aviator to the events of Good Friday, the entombment

of Jesus on Holy Saturday and Christ's resurrection on Easter. And Pastor Paula White-Cain, senior adviser of the White House Faith Office, has more than once described the president in messianic terms.

But from my own interaction with Leo, I am convinced that when he deplores violence in today's world, he isn't thinking solely about Donald J. Trump. He is also thinking about Vladimir Putin's barbaric war on Ukraine; about those who wage bloody assaults on Christians in the African countries the pope will visit this week; and about the persecutors of journalists, to whose plight the pontiff called the world media's attention after his election last year.

Had the Vatican press office, which has yet to adjust to the breakneck pace of the 21st-century media environment, made these points immediately after the pope's Palm Sunday homily on March 29 called to account those whose "hands are full of blood" - and had the world media resisted the trap of interpreting everything as a reference to Trump (thus mirroring the president's own proclivities) - perhaps a calmer discussion of war and peace in this fractious age could have been engaged.

Such a discussion would recognize, as Leo suggested, that he is not the papal equivalent of a global umpire, with the just-war tradition of moral reasoning functioning like baseball's ABS (Automated Ball-Strike) system: The pope feeds in the data and out comes the correct call. That is not the papacy's role in world politics. Nor is it the way the just-war tradition works.

The pope's unique job is to constantly call the leaders of nations to reason their way to viable solutions for what often seem intractable problems. To do so, any pope, and the Vatican diplomatic apparatus, must

recognize that there are limits to dialogue, not least with totalitarian systems, and that the proportionate and discriminate use of armed force can, according to just-war thinking, set the conditions for achieving a stable peace built on the foundations of security, freedom and justice. Leo - whose theological lodestar is Saint Augustine, Christianity's first just-war thinker - should be in a distinctive position to foster that conversation between public officials and ethicists.

By the same token, a serious, morally grounded conversation about the pursuit of peace demands that those public officials make clear that the goals they seek by the use of armed force are just, honorable and attainable.

Putin has completely failed this test in his war on Ukraine. One hopes Trump knows that; Leo certainly does. But the White House has not done itself, or the debate over its Iran policy, any favors by its constant recalibration and changing explanations of its goals in the current war. Suppose the president had said from the outset, and then constantly repeated, that the goal of U.S. military action in Iran was "an Iran that is safe for the Iranian people and safe for the world"? Suppose the administration had then explained, as events unfolded, how that worthy goal was being advanced, or how its achievement was being impeded?

If such a statement of strategic purpose, and the moral conversation it could engender between Washington and Rome, is impossible today, it certainly should be established in the future.

(George Weigel is a distinguished senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. His books include "Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II.")

America at the Crossroads: From Admiration to Alienation

BY PROF.
INDRAJIT S
SALUJA



For decades, the United States of America stood not merely as a superpower, but as a symbol of freedom, opportunity, and promise. From the ruins of war-torn continents to the aspirations of developing nations, America inspired hope. It attracted the brightest minds, the most industrious hands, and the boldest dreamers. It was not feared; it was admired.

Today, that image stands under strain.

Recent developments in America's relations with the world—particularly with its traditional allies—suggest a troubling shift. The growing unease among nations, including long-standing NATO partners, raises a profound question: Is America, once a beacon, now becoming a force that others increasingly fear—and therefore avoid?

FEAR AS THE NEW FOUNDATION OF FOREIGN POLICY

History teaches us that respect and influence cannot be sustained through fear alone. Fear may compel compliance for a time, but it rarely breeds loyalty or trust. When nations begin to fear a superpower, they instinctively distance themselves—not merely politically, but emotionally and strategically.

Recent actions by the United States have, in the eyes of many global observers, reinforced this perception of fear. The 2026 intervention in Venezuela, widely criticized by several nations and international bodies as a violation of international law, sent shockwaves across the world.

Even more consequential has been the ongoing conflict involving Iran. The U.S.-led military actions, including airstrikes and a naval blockade, have not only escalated tensions but also drawn sharp criticism—even from close allies.

What is striking is not merely the conflict itself, but the reaction to it.

WHEN ALLIES STEP BACK

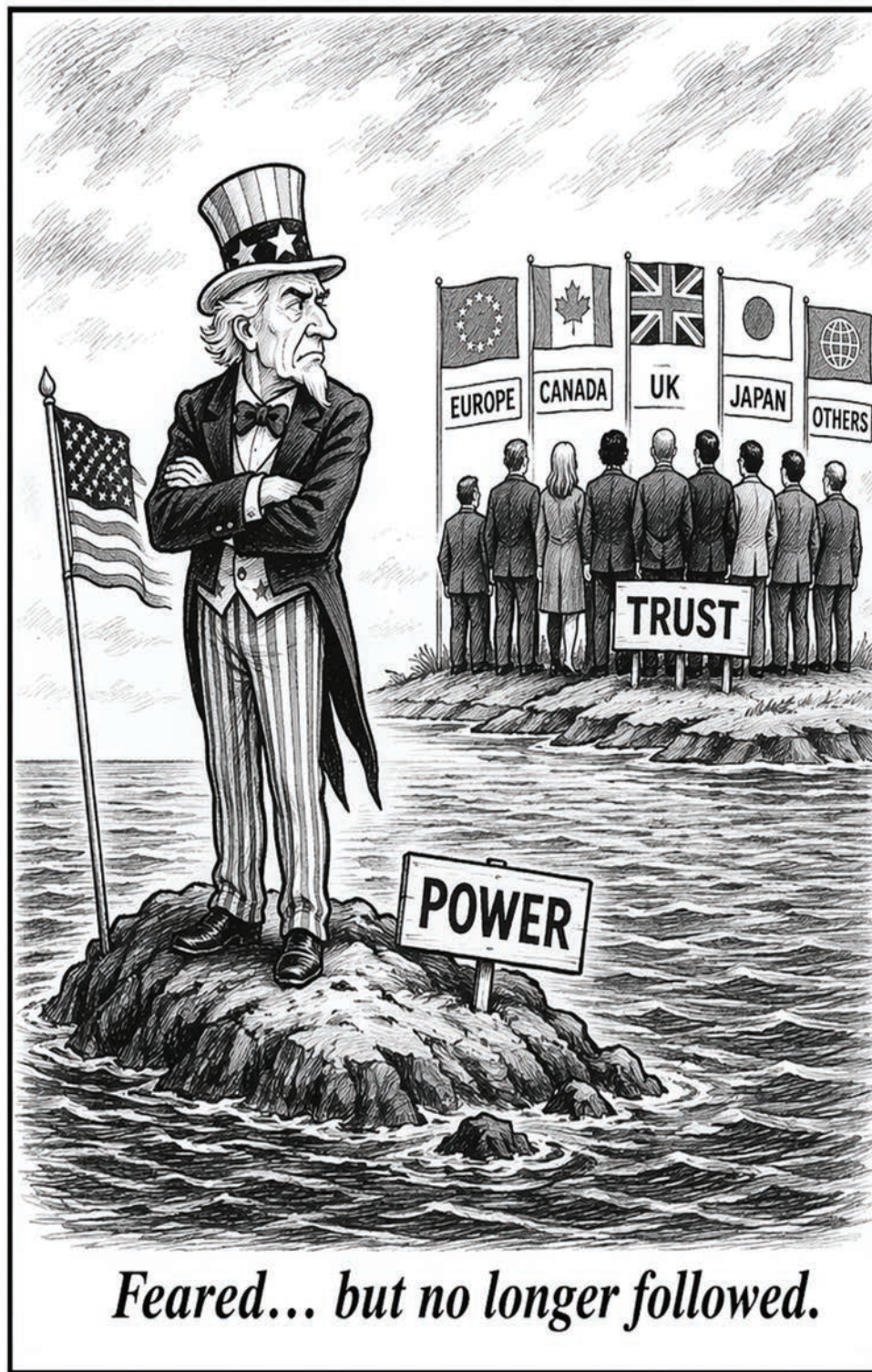
For perhaps the first time in recent memory, key NATO allies have openly declined to support major U.S. military initiatives. Countries such as Britain and France have refused to join American actions in the Strait of Hormuz, emphasizing diplomacy over confrontation.

The United Kingdom's leadership has gone further—publicly criticizing the U.S. decision to go to war with Iran as a "mistake" that destabilizes the global economy and undermines security.

This is not mere disagreement. It is a signal.

It reflects a widening gap between America and its allies—a gap rooted not in differing interests alone, but in differing philosophies of power, legality, and global responsibility.

Even the suggestion that the United States might reconsider its role in NATO has raised alarms, with leaders warning that such a move would weaken both America and the global



order it helped build.

THE EROSION OF MORAL AUTHORITY

Power, when exercised without restraint, risks losing legitimacy. And legitimacy is the true currency of leadership in the modern world.

The perception—rightly or wrongly—that America acts unilaterally, disregarding international norms, has begun to erode its moral authority. Statements suggesting that America can act independently of international law reinforce a dangerous narrative: that might, rather than right, determines global conduct.

This perception has consequences.

Across continents, nations are recalibrating their relationships. Some are cautiously distancing themselves. Others are seeking alternative alliances. Even traditional partners are hedging their bets.

The world, it appears, is adjusting to a new reality—one where reliance on America is no longer taken for granted.

FROM ADMIRATION TO ANXIETY

This transformation is particularly tragic when viewed against America's historical legacy.

For generations, the United States represented possibility. It welcomed immigrants from every corner of the world. Scientists, engineers, doctors, entrepreneurs, and thinkers flocked to its shores—not out of compulsion, but out of admiration.

They built America

From Silicon Valley to Wall Street, from NASA's explorations of space to breakthroughs in medicine, the contributions of immigrants have been immeasurable. America's greatness has never been insular; it has been global in its composition.

But admiration thrives on inspiration—not intimidation.

If fear replaces admiration, the consequences will be profound. The world's brightest minds will think twice before choosing America. Nations will hesitate before aligning themselves with it. And global public

opinion—once overwhelmingly favorable—may gradually turn skeptical, even hostile.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ALIENATION

Human behavior offers a simple but powerful insight: we avoid what we fear.

This principle applies not only to individuals but also to nations. Fear creates distance. Distance breeds mistrust. And prolonged mistrust can evolve into resentment—even hostility.

History is replete with examples of great powers that mistook fear for respect. In each case, the result was isolation.

America must not fall into that trap.

THE COST TO AMERICANS

The most significant consequence of this trajectory will not be borne by foreign nations; it will be borne by Americans themselves.

Global alienation does not merely affect diplomacy; it affects trade, innovation, education, and cultural exchange. It impacts the willingness of countries to cooperate, invest, and collaborate.

An America that is isolated is an America that is diminished.

Moreover, the rise of anti-American sentiment abroad—however unjustified it may be—poses risks to American citizens, businesses, and interests worldwide.

This is not a distant or abstract concern. It is an immediate and tangible reality.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

None of this diminishes America's strengths. The United States remains a nation of extraordinary resilience, innovation, and democratic ideals. Its institutions, its people, and its capacity for self-correction are unmatched.

But strength must be guided by wisdom.

Leadership in the 21st century cannot be sustained through coercion alone. It requires partnership, respect for international norms, and a commitment to dialogue.

The world does not expect America to be weak. It expects America to be just.

RECLAIMING THE IDEA OF AMERICA

The challenge before the United States is not merely geopolitical—it is philosophical.

Will America continue down a path that breeds fear and alienation? Or will it reclaim its historic role as a leader that inspires rather than intimidates?

The answer lies not in military might, but in moral clarity.

America became great not because it was feared, but because it was believed in.

That belief must be restored.

(Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja is the Chief Editor of The Indian Panorama, a weekly published from New York. He writes in three languages—English, Hindi, and Punjabi. He can be reached at salujindra@gmail.com)

The imperial design of US nationalism

Education serves as an innocuous tool in America's grand project of global dominance

BY KRISHNA
KUMAR



"The idea that knowledge is power is old and common, but its application to a gigantic political project is unique to America. Its project of global dominance has necessitated a model of nationalism which permits easy transfer of talent and feelings. The engineering of this transfer is essential to the imperial design of American nationalism. Education serves as an innocuous tool in this grand project. The popular metaphor that America is a melting pot does not reveal this political ambition."

An American businessman asked a surprising question soon after we had taken adjoining economy seats on a transatlantic flight. It seemed as if the question had bothered him for a long time. In the privacy of an aeroplane, he felt safe enough to ask: "Can you tell me who this guy called Shakespeare was?" I was puzzled, but I smiled. We had introduced ourselves a few minutes ago. He was running an ancillary business for a big computer company.

Over the years, I have faced many complex questions from my students, but the difficulty with this question lay elsewhere. If someone didn't know who Shakespeare was, how would you establish his importance? To say that the Bard was a renowned dramatist wouldn't necessarily make sense to a middle-aged businessman. He had completed his education and a considerable part of his professional life without worrying about his ignorance of Shakespeare. Yet, there must be a cognitive void that he was aware of. He wanted to fill that void that very night.

When I narrated this story to a friend who teaches literature, she rightly wondered why I felt so uptight about Shakespeare. Perhaps it was a sign of my post-colonial education, I conceded. Decolonization is the current buzz, and it is growing comfortably alongside an unrecognized counter-trend inspired by the super-speciality focus associated with American education.

Cultivation of literary sensibility is now the precinct of 'liberal arts' - the term American universities have exported. Our private universities have adopted it with passion, while despite a much-publicized policy shift, public universities are doggedly carrying on with the old nomenclature of arts faculty departments and degrees. And at the same time, American-style hyper-vocationalism is growing in our private universities.

America is geographically distant, but our mental geography imparts it an



Jibe: During Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to the US in March, President Trump did not hesitate to mention Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941. -Photo: AP/PTI

emotional, inspiring proximity. Generations of educated youth have been motivated to study and settle there. Successive Indian governments may have entertained doubts about US designs in South Asia, but few would doubt that the public perception in India has treated America as a symbol of opportunity and aspiration.

Until quite recently, America symbolized democratic concerns and sensibility. The sight of Indians being sent back handcuffed on military planes created a shock which was soon absorbed. Nowadays, America's denial of global concerns like climate change has been perceived as one of the many eccentricities of the Donald Trump administration.

His social media posts have similarly caused amusement more than serious surprise, and certainly not revulsion. His recent announcement of the imminent death of a civilization was no exception. Abusive words for the nation that America regards as an evil enemy seemed to cross a vague grey, rather than red, line in public discourse. Did the death of a civilization contain a nuclear threat, many wondered.

America dropped two atomic bombs during World War II, but no US President has expressed regret or vowed future avoidance. Also, there has never been a consensus that American children should learn about Hiroshima with embarrassment.

During Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to the US in March, Trump did not hesitate to mention Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941. Four years later, Japan had

surrendered when the US dropped freshly manufactured bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although history books make it a point to deny that these endgame attacks on the two Japanese cities were acts of retribution, any reference to Pearl Harbour usually invokes the nuclear conclusion of the war. Apparently, Trump did not mind awakening in his Japanese visitor's mind the terrible memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Throughout the ongoing war with Iran, he has maintained a persona of a powerful man who stays cool and jokes about inflicting a hellish experience on ordinary people.

Trump represents a country famous for many universities. They hold a fascination for our youth. I have lost many of my bright and hard-working students to Trump's nation. He is the democratically chosen leader of his country. If you believe that education should nurture certain basic values like concern for life, his description of bombs and bomber planes as beautiful sounds alarming. When he turns funny in front of journalists, many of them can be heard laughing, suggesting that he is not alone in entertaining violent thoughts. His discourse does represent a wider change in America's public mind. Perhaps it is not a change, but merely an evolution - and we are expected to ignore its meaning.

A few years ago, an opportunity to grasp the nature of American nationalism came my way quite unexpectedly. A senior friend from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) told me that his son was not going to return home. Nothing extraordinary, I thought.

He had finished his M.Phil in computer science. I knew that academic opportunities in computer science must be greater and more attractive in California than in Bengaluru.

My JNU friend took out an envelope from his briefcase. It contained the report of his son's M.Phil thesis examiner in America. I looked at the report without much hope of understanding it because the discourse of computer science is Greek to me. But the last paragraph caught my eye. It pointed out with sharp clarity the link between research and nationalism. The examiner had recorded his view that this young man must be discouraged from going home because his work was necessary for maintaining America's leadership in the field.

The idea that knowledge is power is old and common, but its application to a gigantic political project is unique to America. Its project of global dominance has necessitated a model of nationalism which permits easy transfer of talent and feelings. The engineering of this transfer is essential to the imperial design of American nationalism. Education serves as an innocuous tool in this grand project. The popular metaphor that America is a melting pot does not reveal this political ambition.

It is not the first time in history that imperialism and nationalism have come together. Several European nations exemplified this blend in the 19th century when they were consolidating their economic hold across far-flung colonies.

(Krishna Kumar is a former NCERT Director and a Hindi short story writer and columnist)



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APRIL 17, 2026
WASHINGTON, DC (TIP)

US President Donald Trump on Thursday, April 16, congratulated "seasoned" diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu on his appointment as the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, highlighting his role in strengthening India-US ties. In a post on Truth Social, Trump praised Sandhu's diplomatic experience and extended his best wishes for his new role.

"Congratulations to Taranjit Sandhu on becoming the new Lt Governor of Delhi! As a seasoned Diplomat and former Ambassador to the United States, he has always shown deep commitment to strengthening the U.S.-India relationship. Wishing him success in leading Delhi's progress, and furthering global ties!" Trump wrote. Meanwhile, Delhi LG Sandhu highlighted the importance of strengthening India-US cooperation in the 'Freedom250' celebrations marking 250 years of American independence, which were launched in the national capital on Wednesday.



A Throwback. TS Sandhu, as India's Ambassador to the US, with President Trump on the occasion of presentation of credentials

Sandhu, who attended the launch event, said the engagement provided an opportunity to deepen collaboration between the two countries, particularly in

investment and technology. "It was a pleasure to meet US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor at the launch of the Freedom250 celebrations in New Delhi.

We had a productive conversation on enhancing American investments in Delhi and expanding India-US technology collaboration.

The enduring partnership between India and United States remains a key pillar of global progress. I look forward to deeper cooperation that brings tangible benefits to the residents of our National Capital," Sandhu said in a post on X.

Taranjit is the grandson of the eminent Sikh leader, Teja Singh Samundri. On March 11, Sandhu took the oath of office in the presence of Delhi High Court Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was also present at the swearing-in ceremony.

Taranjit Sandhu is part of the major administrative reshuffle of Governors and Lieutenant Governors across the country.

In the reshuffle, Taranjit Singh Sandhu replaced VK Saxena, who has now been appointed as the Ladakh LG. He was also a BJP candidate in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, UK Foreign Secretary discuss Iran ceasefire and security in Strait of Hormuz



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Yvette Cooper

APRIL 17, 2026
WASHINGTON, DC (TIP)

The US Secretary of State Marco Rubio spoke to the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Yvette Cooper, to discuss the Iran ceasefire and maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, according to Al Jazeera, citing US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott.

According to the Al Jazeera news report, the US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott said the US Secretary of State spoke with the UK Foreign Secretary to review the next steps involving the ceasefire with Iran.

The two sides discussed the urgent need to restore freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, ensuring that commercial vessels can transit safely and that global energy supplies continue to flow without disruption.

The ceasefire agreed between Washington and Tehran is currently set to expire on April 22.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump said it remains unclear whether the ceasefire with Iran will be extended, even as he expressed optimism about ongoing negotiations and indicated that the next round of talks could take place over the weekend.

Responding to a question on extending the ceasefire, President Trump said, "We're

doing very well. I can tell you, maybe it'll happen before that. I'm not sure it needs to be extended. Just so you know, Iran wants to make a deal, and we're dealing very nicely with them. We've got to have no nuclear weapons. If we do, that's a big factor, and they're willing to do things today that they weren't willing to do two months ago."

He added that the US is currently focused on concluding a deal with Iran, suggesting that progress in talks could make an extension unnecessary.

Meanwhile, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron are set to host a virtual meeting of world leaders to discuss efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and secure vital shipping routes, CNN reported.

Leaders from around 40 countries are expected to participate in the summit, focusing on supporting the fragile ceasefire involving Iran and ensuring safe passage through the key maritime corridor, as reported by CNN.

According to a statement from the British Prime Minister's Office, discussions will include plans to establish an international mission aimed at reopening the strait. The proposed initiative would be strictly defensive in nature and involve a combined military effort to be deployed once conditions permit, as per CNN.

The summit will also deliberate on supporting the work of the International Maritime Organisation to enhance the safety of vessels and crew navigating the region, CNN reported.

According to CNN, Starmer is scheduled to arrive in Paris on Friday to co-host the meeting with Macron. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz is also expected to attend, according to a German government official.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

ICE head Todd Lyons plans to leave agency this spring

APRIL 17, 2026
WASHINGTON, DC (TIP)

Todd Lyons, the acting head of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, is planning to leave the federal government later this spring, after leading the agency at the forefront of President Trump's deportation crackdown for over a year, two U.S. officials familiar with his plan told CBS News.

Lyons, a two-decade ICE veteran, told colleagues that he's planning to depart the agency in June to spend more time with family, including his sons, in Massachusetts, the officials said, requesting anonymity to discuss a move that has not been publicly announced. Lyons is expected to join the private sector after leaving ICE.

The expected departure will create a leadership void at the helm of an agency that has become a flashpoint over its central and highly visible role in Mr. Trump's nationwide operation to deport millions of immigrants living in the U.S. illegally.

It's not immediately clear who would replace Lyons. For nearly a decade, ICE has had a dozen acting directors, lacking a Senate-confirmed head since early 2017, at the end of the Obama administration. Lyons was named acting ICE director in March 2025.

Finding a successor for Lyons will also be one of the first major decisions for Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin, who was confirmed by the Senate last month after Mr. Trump ousted Kristi Noem amid concerns about her leadership style and growing backlash to aggressive immigration enforcement operations in cities like Minneapolis.

In a statement to CBS News Thursday, Mullin confirmed Lyons' departure, saying May 31 is set to be his last official day. He wished Lyons "luck on his next opportunity in the private sector."

"Director Lyons has been a great leader



Acting head of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Todd Lyons plans to leave the federal government

of ICE and key player in helping the Trump administration remove murderers, rapists, pedophiles, terrorists, and gang members from American communities," Mullin said. "He jumpstarted an agency that had not been allowed to do its job for four years. Thanks to his leadership, American communities are safer."

In a separate statement, Stephen Miller, White House deputy chief of staff, described Lyons as "a phenomenal patriot and dedicated leader who has been at the center of President Trump's historic efforts to secure our homeland and reverse the Democrats' sinister border invasion." White House border czar Tom Homan said Lyons has "served selflessly."

"I commend him for a distinguished law enforcement career and the countless contributions he has made to protect our country and advance its interests," Homan said in a statement.

An Air Force veteran who was deployed overseas, Lyons joined ICE in 2007 as an agent in Dallas. He eventually rose to the No. 2 spot in ICE's Dallas field office, before becoming the field office director of the agency's Boston region, which covers all of New England.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news



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Indian Embassy in Romania Celebrates the 77th Foundation Day of ICCR



Special remarks by Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra



Audience listening to the Ambassador.

**APRIL 9, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The Embassy of India, Bucharest, celebrated the 77th Foundation Day of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) on 9th April 2026 at the Embassy's premises. The event was attended by over 70 participants, including members of the Indian community, friends of India and Romanian friends.

Ambassador of India, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, delivered special remarks on the occasion of ICCR Foundation Day, highlighting the establishment of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in 1950 and its enduring role as a key pillar of India's cultural diplomacy. He underscored ICCR's contribution in fostering mutual understanding, strengthening people-to-people ties, and building lasting cultural and academic partnerships across the world.

The Ambassador noted that through its wide-ranging initiatives, including scholarship programmes, academic exchanges, cultural festivals, and promotion of Indian arts, languages, and traditions, ICCR has played a vital role in connecting India with global communities and nurturing enduring friendships. He also emphasized the continued relevance of ICCR's vision in promoting dialogue, inclusivity, and shared cultural appreciation in today's interconnected world.

As part of the celebrations, a short video presentation showcasing ICCR's key activities, initiatives, and achievements was screened for the



Remarks by Chief Guest H.E. Mr. Vasile Carare, Mayor of Suceava and Mayor of Mili??u?i (Romania), who visited India under ICCR's Distinguished Visitors Program



Display of ICCR Promotional Video to the audience during the event

audience, offering a comprehensive overview of its impactful work over the decades.

The event was graced by H.E. Mr. Vasile Carare, Mayor of Suceava and Mayor of Mili??u?i (Romania), who had earlier visited India under ICCR's Distinguished Visitors Programme (DVP) from January to March 2026, as the Chief Guest. In his remarks, the Mayor fondly recalled his visit to India in February 2026 and conveyed his deep appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to him throughout his stay. He spoke highly of India's rich cultural and historical

heritage, noting the memorable visits to iconic landmarks, as well as his experience of Indian cuisine and traditions.

He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of India for the excellent arrangements and extended special thanks to Ms. Nandini Singla, Director General of ICCR, for her support and facilitation. He further commended India's remarkable development trajectory and acknowledged the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

The program featured a vibrant Bhangra dance performance by Ms. Anisha Lahore, which vividly showcased the energy and richness of India's cultural heritage. The lively presentation was well received and added a festive dimension to the event.

The program also included a dedicated session on yoga and meditation conducted by Ms. Veronica Mathew, highlighting India's ancient wellness traditions. Organised as a precursor to the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026, the session aimed at promoting the benefits of yoga and meditation among members of the Indian diaspora and the Romanian community, encouraging greater awareness and participation.

An Open House session was organized on the sidelines of the event, providing members of the public an opportunity to raise consular queries, seek clarifications, and share their concerns. The interactive session was led by the Ambassador of India, along with the Second Secretary (Consular) and Attaché (Consular), who addressed a wide range of issues and offered guidance on consular services and procedures. The initiative was well received and reflected the Embassy's continued commitment to outreach, transparency, and responsive engagement with the Indian community.

The event concluded successfully, reflecting the continued importance of ICCR in strengthening cultural engagement and further deepening India-Romania relations.

(Based on a Press Release issued by the Embassy of India in Bucharest.)



Yoga & Medication Session conducted during the event

Ambassador's Engagements in Timisoara, Cluj-Napoca, and Bistrita to Strengthen India-Romania Academic and Industrial Cooperation

APRIL 10, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)

Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, accompanied by Dr. Vikas Kumar Sabata, Joint Director of International Relations at Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Bhubaneswar, has successfully concluded a dynamic series of high-level engagements across Timișoara, Cluj-Napoca, and Bistrita. These visits, spanning academic dialogues, institutional partnerships, and industrial outreach, underscore India's unwavering commitment to deepening India-Romania cooperation in higher education, technological innovation, industrial development, and vibrant community engagement. Amid growing global interconnectedness, such initiatives not only fortify bilateral ties but also position both nations as key partners in Europe's evolving educational and economic landscape.



Ambassador & Vikas Kumar Sabata met Prof. Dr. Octavian-Marius Cretu, Rector of "Victor Babes" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Timisoara

In Timisoara, a vibrant academic hub in western Romania, the Ambassador and Dr. Sabata engaged in substantive discussions with leading rectors: Prof. Univ. Dr. Marilen Gabriel Pirtea of West University; Dr. Ing. Florin Dragan of Politehnica University; and Prof. Dr. Octavian-Marius Cretu of "Victor Babes" University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

The conversations focused on amplifying bilateral academic cooperation through expanded student and faculty mobility, joint research ventures in fields like artificial intelligence, sustainable engineering, and biomedical sciences, and the establishment of twin-institution frameworks. Emphasis was placed on innovation-driven partnerships that facilitate knowledge exchange, curriculum co-development, and collaborative funding applications to international bodies such as the European Union's Erasmus+ program.

The Ambassador elaborated on India's transformative strides in education, including



Ambassador & Vikas Kumar Sabata met with Conf. Univ. Dr. Ing. Florin Dragan, Rector of Universitatea Politehnica din Timisoara,

substantial public investments in higher education infrastructure, the proliferation of digital learning platforms like SWAYAM and DIKSHA, and the landmark National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This policy envisions a flexible, multidisciplinary education system with a strong international orientation, aiming to host 50,000-100,000 international students by 2030 while sending over a million Indian students abroad.

Particularly resonant was the discussion on demographic synergies. With Romania facing a gradual decline in its youth population, its universities are primed to internationalize. Ambassador Mohapatra noted, "Romanian institutions rank among Europe's finest, offering a wealth of English-taught programs at tuition fees 40-60% lower than in North America or Western Europe. As Indian students, comprising one of the world's largest mobile cohorts, with over 1.4 million



Ambassador visited the COMELF factory in Bistrita



Ambassador met Mayor Gabriel Lazany of Bistrita

studying abroad, seek quality, affordable European exposure, this presents a win-win: Romanian academia gains diversity and vitality, while our students access world-class research, multicultural environments, and career-launching opportunities. Indians, known for their discipline and contributions, are a most welcome addition to Romania's communities." Ambassador also highlighted that Indian students pay more than USD 70Bn as tuition fee annually.

Shifting to Cluj-Napoca, Romania's "Silicon Valley," Dr. Sabata conducted forward-looking meetings with prominent vice rectors: Mr. Marian Taulescu for International Affairs at the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (USAMV); Prof. Cristian Sacarea and Prof. Mihaela Gligor of Babes-Bolyai University; and Prof. Adrian Groza of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca at the AI Research Institute.

Cluj-Napoca's ascent as a tech powerhouse is evident in its ecosystem of over a thousand IT firms, including major Indian players like Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro, which employ thousands and align academic curricula with industry demands in software development, cybersecurity, and data analytics. Dr. Sabata highlighted potential joint programs, such as KIIT-Cluj dual-degree initiatives in AI and agritech, to equip graduates for global markets.

The city's safe, student-friendly vibe, boasting low crime rates, modern infrastructure, and a thriving cultural scene, makes it increasingly attractive for Indian students. "Cluj's blend of academic excellence and economic dynamism creates a fertile ground for people-to-people connections," Dr. Sabata observed. These ties not only enhance student mobility but also catalyze industry-academia bridges, propelling India-Romania relations into a new era of shared prosperity.

In Bistrita, the Ambassador met Hon'ble Mayor Mr. Gabriel Lazany to chart avenues for localized economic collaboration, including business matchmaking, investment promotion, and sector-specific tie-ups in manufacturing and renewables. A key outcome was the Ambassador's invitation for a Mayor-led delegation to India, targeting trade expos and investor roundtables.

At COMELF factory, renowned for electrical transformers and automation solutions, the Ambassador received insights into cutting-edge production and discussed supply chain resilience, technology transfers, and joint ventures under India's "Make in India" and Romania's reindustrialization drives. Interactions with over 200 Indian expatriate workers highlighted their pivotal role in Romania's growth, with the Ambassador announcing August 2026 Independence Day festivities at the site to celebrate cultural unity.

Further engagements with local industrialists and Rotary Club of Bistrita members spotlighted India's 8%+ GDP growth trajectory and incentives like production-linked incentives (PLI) schemes, inviting investments in manufacturing, green energy, and innovation hubs.

These multifaceted visits exemplify the robust India-Romania strategic partnership, rooted in mutual respect and aligned visions for sustainable development.



Ambassador met over 200 Indian workers at the COMELF factory in Bistrita



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Stalin burns copy of delimitation bill, leads black flag protest against Centre

APRIL 17, 2026

CHENNAI (TIP): Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Thursday, April 16, intensified his protest against the Centre's proposed delimitation move by burning a copy of the bill and hoisting a black flag, formally launching a statewide agitation.

The government will convene a special three-day session of Parliament beginning Thursday, a sitting expected to be stormy as it moves to introduce three major bills that could reshape India's electoral architecture and representation system.

Wearing black attire, Stalin raised the black flag as a mark of protest against The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposes a delimitation exercise to alter the size and composition of state legislative assemblies and the Lok Sabha. He also burned a copy of what he described as a "black law."

In a post on X, Stalin called for widespread resistance across Tamil Nadu. "May the resistance spread across Tamil Nadu! May the arrogance of the fascist BJP collapse," he said. Drawing parallels with past anti-Hindi agitations, he added that earlier resistance from Tamil Nadu had forced Delhi to yield and asserted that a similar movement would challenge the current proposal. He claimed the bill would "turn Tamils into refugees in their own land" and said the agitation would spread across the "Dravidian land" to subdue the BJP's "arrogance."

APRIL 17, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a sharp attack, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday, April 16, alleged that the government had earlier weakened democracy by exerting pressure on institutions like the Election Commission and the judiciary, and has now launched an "open attack" through the Constitution amendment bill.

Taking part in a debate in the Lok Sabha on three bills introduced for amendments in the women's quota law and setting up a delimitation commission, Priyanka Gandhi asked why can't the government give 33 per cent reservation to women on the current 543 seats of the Lok Sabha.

She said the bill talks of increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats to up to 850 -- to be done by a delimitation commission on the basis of the 2011 Census data.

"This seems fine on the surface but the real meaning comes to the fore when one carefully reads it. It smells of politics," the Congress leader said.

She said that on reading the fine print, it shows that the three members of the

LS expansion will be fair, says govt; Oppn wants it in writing

APRIL 17, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government on Thursday, April 16, attempted to convince the Opposition that the proposal to increase the Lok Sabha's strength and fast-track 33% reservation for women would involve a proportional 50% rise in each state's seats, thereby not hurting southern states apprehensive of an erosion in their relative standing in Parliament.

On the first day of the discussion on a constitution amendment bill and two delimitation bills in the Lower House, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home minister Amit Shah and Union law minister Arjun Ram Meghwal told the Opposition that the proportion of each state's seat-share will not be disturbed, Shah even read out a table to show that southern states will not be disadvantaged if the strength of the Lok Sabha is increased from 543 to 816.

But the Opposition remained unconvinced, pointing out that the government's assurances were verbal and not mentioned in the text of the bills. They also raised questions about the Centre's intent on the caste census, the timing of the special sitting -- in the middle of the election campaign in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal later this month -- and asked why women's reservation couldn't be implemented with the current strength of the Lok Sabha.

"A completely false narrative is being spun that these three bills will reduce the strength of the southern states in the Parliament. Such fears are unfounded," Shah said, adding that the



House's strength would go up from 543 to 816 and all states would see their seats rise in the same proportion.

"If we consider the entire narrative about the South, currently, 129 MPs from these states sit in the House out of 543 seats, which is approximately 23.76%. In the new House, 195 MPs will represent these states, and their share will be 23.97%," the minister added.

Modi said that the process will not discriminate against anyone. "Whatever delimitation happened in the past under previous governments, whatever ratios have been followed since then, there will be no change in those ratios, and any increase will also be in the same proportion. If the word 'guarantee' is needed, I use the word guarantee. If you want the word 'promise,' I use the word promise. If there is a good word in Tamil, I am ready to use that too, because when the intent is clear, then we do not need to play with words," he added.

Meghwal called the government's proposal a simple formula that will ensure no states are deprived. "Seats of

all states will be increased by 50%. Total Lok Sabha seats would be 815. 272 seats reserved for women," he added.

But the Opposition refused to take the government at its word. "The Prime Minister can't be trusted. As long as the caste enumeration doesn't happen, all sections of the society will not get proper representation. This government wants to move ahead with the 2011 census because it doesn't have an OBC population count," Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said.

The 131st Constitution Amendment Bill -- which raises the ceiling of seats in the Lok Sabha to 850 and implements 33% reservation for women in time for the 2029 polls -- requires a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting to pass in each House. The delimitation bill and the Union Territories bill -- the first mandates delimitation on the basis of the latest available census, effectively the 2011 one, and the second implements the changes in UTs -- requires a simple majority to pass. There is no mention of a fixed proportion or a freeze in the relative strength of the states in any of the three bills.

The Opposition has the numbers to thwart the government's move in the Lok Sabha but the key lies with large non-Congress parties such as the Samajwadi Party, the Trinamool Congress and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. In his intervention, Shah read out numbers to make his case that no state will lose out on representation. *Source: HT*

If Constitution amendment bill is passed, democracy will be finished in India: Priyanka

delimitation commission will decide the fate of the states and their representation in Parliament. "The government began finishing off democracy by putting pressure on institutions, such as the Election Commission, the judiciary, the media etc., but now, an open attack on democracy is being launched," Priyanka Gandhi said.

If this Constitution amendment bill is passed in Parliament, democracy will be finished in India, she added.

The Congress MP also narrated a background to the issue of women's reservation in legislative bodies.

"This issue is close to the heart of every woman. There is a background to this issue. The prime minister said this issue had been blocked for 30 years. This was started by a person called Nehru. Not the Nehru they avoid so much, but Motilal Nehru, who, as the president of a



committee, prepared a list of 19 rights which were then passed as a resolution at the Karachi session of the Congress and formed the basis of giving women equal rights in Indian politics," she said.

She said it was Rajiv Gandhi who, as the prime minister, brought a bill for women's reservation in panchayats and nagarpalikas and finally, the bill for it

was passed during the P V Narasimha Rao government of the Congress.

"Under the UPA, this was passed in the Rajya Sabha but a consensus could not be reached in the Lok Sabha. In 2018, Rahul Gandhi wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling for women's reservation," Priyanka Gandhi said.

Taking a swipe at Modi, she said it seems from the prime minister's address that the BJP is a champion of women's reservation. "Any woman would tell you that women easily recognise those who try to mislead them," she said. "In 2023, when this law was passed, the Congress supported it and today also, the Congress is strongly in support of women's reservation. But the truth is that the debate is not on women's reservation. The bill that the government has brought has changed the direction of the debate," Priyanka Gandhi said.

Harivansh re-elected unopposed as Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman for third term

APRIL 17, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Harivansh was on Friday, April 17, elected unopposed as the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, securing a third consecutive term in the post. The position had fallen vacant after his previous term ended on April 9. Union Minister and Leader of the House J P Nadda moved the motion for his election, which was accepted without contest. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Harivansh on his re-election, acknowledging his experience and contribution to the functioning of the Upper House. Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge also extended his congratulations. The journalist-turned politician's re-election is notable as it marks the first time a nominated member has been chosen for the post of Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.



US won't extend oil waiver; India faces energy squeeze

APRIL 17, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The US has confirmed it will not renew the 30-day sanctions waiver that had allowed countries, including India, to import limited quantities of Russian and Iranian oil, signalling a return to stricter enforcement and raising fresh concerns over energy supplies and costs.

Announcing the decision, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the temporary licence — granted last month to ease global supply disruptions — had expired and would not be extended.

The waiver, issued on March 5, had permitted Indian refiners to purchase Russian crude already loaded on vessels and stranded at sea amid escalating geopolitical tensions. Designed as a short-term measure, it was aimed at stabilising global oil markets hit by the West Asia crisis and disruptions in key shipping routes.

With its expiry earlier this month, Washington has now drawn a firm line, making it clear that no further exemptions will be granted for purchases of Russian or Iranian oil.

The move is expected to have direct implications for India, one of the largest buyers of discounted Russian crude since western sanctions were imposed on Moscow. Industry observers say the end of the waiver could affect supply chains, tighten availability of cheaper oil and potentially push up import costs.

The decision also reflects a broader shift in the US policy towards intensifying economic pressure on both Russia and Iran, even as global energy markets remain volatile due to the ongoing conflict and supply uncertainties.

During the waiver period, India had leveraged the temporary relief to secure cargoes already in transit, helping cushion domestic refiners against price spikes. However, with the window now closed, refiners may be forced to diversify sourcing or absorb higher costs in an already strained market.



What you need to know

- US not to renew waiver allowing India to buy Russian, Iranian oil
- India's parliament is debating a landmark bill to reserve one-third of legislative seats for women
- The women's quota is linked to a separate, contentious bill to redraw voting boundaries based on population
- Iran war triggers fertilizer crisis for India's farmers
- India's aviation boom hits turbulence amid Iran war

While New Delhi has not officially reacted to the US decision, the end of the waiver is likely to recalibrate India's oil procurement strategy in the coming weeks, as it balances cost considerations with compliance risks in an increasingly complex sanctions environment.

Source: TNS

ED conducts fresh searches at premises linked to Punjab Industries minister Sanjeev Arora

APRIL 17, 2026

LUDHIANA (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday, April 17, conducted a series of raids at premises associated with Sanjeev Arora, Punjab's Industries Minister, as part of an ongoing investigation, officials said.

Sources said that officers of the Enforcement Directorate are carrying out searches at 13 locations in Gurgaon, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, and Jalandhar under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The coordinated raids, which began around 6:30 a.m., are targeting the residence and official premises of Sanjeev Arora, along with properties linked to his business associates and family members, including his daughter. The ED teams were provided security by personnel from a central paramilitary force.

Arora, an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Ludhiana West, is understood to be travelling abroad as part of official work.



Arora was travelling to Europe as part of the Punjab Government's "Invest Punjab" initiative, aimed at attracting foreign investment. He left for Amsterdam late on Thursday evening. Other senior state officials, along with Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, are also expected to travel abroad shortly in connection with the same programme.

Arora is the promoter of company M/s Hampton Sky Realty Ltd (formerly M/s Ritesh Properties and Industries Ltd) which is into large scale real estate and infra projects in Punjab. The

company is under scanner for alleged multiple irregularities such as illegal change of land use in the state, booking fraudulent and inflated sales to boost share prices, insider trading in the stock market, and routing illegal betting money from the UAE to India, among others. At present, his son, Kavya Arora, is the Managing Director of the company, and his premises are also being searched.

Responding to the ED raids, Arora stated that he would fully cooperate with the investigation. In a post on X, he said, "An action by the Enforcement Directorate took place at my premises. As a responsible citizen, I will fully cooperate with the agencies, and I am confident that the truth will prevail." In a related development earlier this week, the ED conducted searches under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) at premises linked to Ashok Kumar Mittal, a Rajya Sabha member from the AAP, as well as his educational institutions in Punjab and Haryana.

Who is Nida Khan, the 'mastermind on the run' at centre of TCS-linked BPO controversy in Nashik

MUMBAI (TIP), APRIL 17, 2026: Nida Khan, a 26-year-old woman, has emerged as a central figure in a controversial case involving allegations of sexual harassment and attempted religious conversion at a business process outsourcing (BPO) office linked to Tata Consultancy Services in Nashik, Maharashtra. The case has drawn significant public attention due to the seriousness of the accusations and the involvement of multiple employees.

According to police, Nida Khan is among eight individuals accused in the case and has been described as the alleged "mastermind" behind certain aspects of the incident, particularly those related to handling complaints within the workplace. Police officials have recovered approximately 78 'suspicious' call records, emails and chats exchanged between the accused. The police have found evidence of potential financial transactions too, reports ANI. Nida, currently on the run, claims she is pregnant and wants court relief.

Investigators claim that she functioned in a human resources capacity and was part of the Internal Complaints Committee formed under workplace sexual harassment laws. In that role, she is alleged to have discouraged victims from pursuing formal complaints and failed to escalate serious allegations to higher authorities.

The case first came to light after a 23-year-old employee filed a First Information Report (FIR) in Nashik. In her complaint, she accused a colleague of sexual harassment, alleging that he entered into a relationship with her under the false promise of marriage while concealing the fact that he was already married.

India in history this Week

APRIL 24 TO APRIL 30

24 APRIL



1973 Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar, the country's greatest cricketer who was considered among the best batsmen in the world in the history of cricket, was born on this day.

1815 The Gorkha Regiment, considered the first and bravest battalion of the Indian Army, has completed 200 years today.

1815 The foundation stone of Gorkha Regime was laid in 1815 in Himachal.

1972 The famous Indian painter Gemini Roy died on this day in 1972. He was also awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1955.



25 APRIL



1968 Hindustani classical music singer Bade Ghulam Ali Khan died.

1982 Doordarshan aired a colorful picture for the first time in 1982.

1933 On this day, the terrorists who hijacked the Air Indian plane were killed.

2000 On this day, the mastermind of Kandahar Hijack, Bilal alias Lulu Mian, was arrested from West

Bengal.

2007 The new campus of the Virala Institute of Technology and Sciences opened in 2007 in Panama (Bahrain).



2010 In 2010, the Indian Navy began the process of procuring new Light Utility Helicopters (LUHs) in place of the old Chetak helicopters.

1969 India's famous football player IM Vijayan was born.



26 APRIL



1920 The great mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujam passed away.

1975 Sikkim became the 22nd state of India.

1847 The Bombay Gadget newspaper was first published in 1841 on silk cloth.

1929 The first non-stop flight from England to India was completed in 1929.

1980 Situated in 1980, the Center for Positional

Astronomy was established in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

1990 In 1990, VRP Menon set a world record by performing disco dance for 463 hours in a row.

1993 A 1993 Boeing-737 plane crash in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, killed about 60 people.

2006 India and Uzbekistan signed 6 treaties in 2006.

2008 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh dedicated the 390 MW Dul Hasti Hydel Power Project in Jammu and Kashmir to the country in 2008.

2010 The Bihar government decided in 2010 to brand Bihar's famous Chiniya banana as 'Ganga Banana'.

1864 Pandit Gurudutt Vidyarthi, a disciple of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and one of the five prominent leaders of the Arya Samaj, was born.

27 APRIL

1526 The Mughal ruler Babur defeated the Sultan of Delhi and became the new emperor.

1748 The Mughal ruler Muhammad Shah died in Delhi.

1878 The University of Calcutta gave the first approval for eligibility for women in the field of university education.

1960 Establishment of National Defense College in New Delhi.

1912 The great actress Zohra Sehgal was born.

28 APRIL

1916 BG Tilak founded the Indian Home Rule League in 1916.

1932 The development of yellow fever vaccine for humans was announced in 1932.

2003 Employee Safety and Health Day was observed around the world in 2003.

2008 The Indian Space Research Organization created a new history in 2008 with PSLV-C9.

1791 Hari Singh Nalwa, the Chief of Army Staff of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was born.

29 APRIL

1848 Birth of well-known painter Raja Ravi Varma.

1939 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose resigned from the Congress.

1639 The foundation of the Red Fort was laid in Delhi.

1997 The ban on chemical weapons has been in force since 1997.

1547 Bhamashah, a friend, colleague and trusted advisor of Maharana Pratap of Mewar was born on this day in 1547.

1919 Birth of Indian tabla player Alla Rakha in 1919.

30 APRIL

1908 Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki threw a bomb to kill the Kingsford magistrate in Muzaffarpur, but two were killed by innocent bombs.

1863 The Indian naval of the East India Company was sent to the British Navy.

1991 The volcano was active in Andaman.

2006 The Indian subcontinent hosted the 2011 Cricket World Cup in 2006.

2008 The driverless aircraft "Lakshya" was successfully tested in 2008 from Chandipur beach in Balasore district of Odisha.

2010 Dev Anand, an evergreen actor of Hindi films, was honored with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2010 and Pranco "Phalke Icon" in Mumbai.

1870 The birth of Dadasaheb Phalke, the famous film producer-director and screenwriter of India.

INDIE MEME FILM FEST OF AUSTIN, TEXAS RETURNS FOR ELEVENTH YEAR

BY MABEL PAIS

The annual INDIE MEME FILM FESTIVAL (<https://indiememe.org>) of Austin, TX will take place for its eleventh edition, April 22-26, 2026. The acclaimed Austin-based festival will celebrate bold and innovative South Asian cinema from around the world.

This year's edition will feature a diverse slate of narrative features, documentaries, and short films highlighting voices from South Asia and Iran. Themes explored through the highly curated selections include explorations of identity, migration, family, politics, and social change. This year's lineup includes 27 films, (6 narrative features, 4 documentaries, and 17 short films), representing 14 countries, with all screenings taking place at AFS Cinema (6259 Middle Fiskville Road).

TICKETS

For festival passes, tickets, and the full schedule, visit: <https://indiememe.org>

THE 2026 INDIE MEME FILM FESTIVAL LINEUP



Shape of Momo. -Credit: www.indiememe.org

GALA SELECTIONS

LAUNCH PRESENTATION

Vimukt (In Search of the Sky)

Director: Jitank Singh Gurjar; India; 90m

OPENING NIGHT GALA PRESENTATION

Shape of Momo

Director: Tribeny Rai; India; 114m

SATURDAY CENTERPIECE PRESENTATION

Divine Comedy

Director: Ali Asgari; Iran/Italy/Germany/France/Turkey; 98m

CLOSING NIGHT PRESENTATION

Give It A Shot
Director: Vaishali Sinha; Canada/India/United States; 89m

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURES

Fucktoys
Director: Annapurna Sriram; USA; 106m

Schirkoa: In Lies We Trust
Director: Ishan Shukla; India/France/Germany; 103m

Victoria
Director: Sivaranjini J; India; 84m

Director: Sivaranjini J; India; 84m

DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

An Unquiet Mind
Director: Rachel Immaraj; USA; 76m

The Cycle of Love
Director: Orlando von Einsidel; UK; 98m

Letters From Wolf Street
Director: Arjun Talwar; 97m

SHORT FILMS

NARRATIVE SHORTS

There are sixteen shorts in this category.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT

This category presents one short.

PLAY: MOVIES TV MAYHEM, SHEDS LENS ON ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

BY MABEL PAIS

MOVIES TV MAYHEM, a comedic new play written by acclaimed production designer Dean Taucher and directed by award winning theater artist Richard Caliban, will illuminate the stage in its world premiere production. The performances take place, April 23-May 9, at Theatre Row (www.theatrerow.org -

410 W 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036 - 212 714 2442).

The cast features dynamic performances from Jason Donovan Hall, Grant Neale, and the versatile Oneika Phillips, promising an unforgettable theatrical experience for both industry insiders and theater enthusiasts.

This Off-Broadway play premiere, **Movies TV Mayhem**, offers a razor-sharp, darkly comedic lens on the entertainment industry, exposing the frenzied world behind the cameras where ambition collides with absurdity. The play takes place at the taping of a podcast about the film business. It follows a trio of embattled professionals as they navigate egos, shifting alliances, and moral compromises in pursuit of their next big hit. With biting satire and wit, Taucher's script lampoons the power plays, high-stakes deals, and larger-than-life personalities that define the business, inviting audiences to laugh at the chaos and contemplate the cost of fame.

Stylishly staged and fast-paced, the play's humor and pathos resonate with anyone who's ever dreamed of making it in movies or television — or simply watched from the sidelines. **Movies TV**



Left to Right - Grant Neale, Oneika Phillips, and Jason Donovan Hall

Credit: www.pranamarketing.com

Mayhem is both an affectionate roast and an incisive critique, making it a must-see for Broadway fans and Hollywood hopefuls alike.

KEY CREDITS

Playwright Dean Taucher

Learn more at <https://deantaucher.com>.

Director Richard Caliban

Access more at <https://linkedin.com/in/richard-caliban-73557719b>

Jason Donovan Hall

Learn more at <https://jasondonovanhall.com>.

Grant Neale

Learn more at <https://grantneale.com>.

Oneika Phillips

Learn more at <https://instagram.com/dragonpassionfruit>

Edward T. Morris: Scenic Designer

Joey Moro: Projection Designer

Joe Doran: Lighting Designer

Richard Caliban: Sound Designer

Casting by Stephanie Klapper, CSA

Performance Schedule and Ticket Information

Movies TV Mayhem runs from April 23 to May 9, 2026, at Theatre Row, (410 W 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036 - 212 714 2442). Performances are scheduled Tuesday through Saturday at 7:30 PM, with matinees on Sundays at 2:00 PM.

Tickets are available at www.theatrerow.org or by calling the Theatre Row box office at 212.714.2442 x 45

Ticket Link: <https://bfany.org/theatrerow/shows/movies-tv-mayhem>

Follow the production on social media @MoviesTVMayhem for exclusive content and updates.

See the premiere of **Movies TV Mayhem** — a riotous, revealing look at the madness behind the magic of entertainment.

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Education, Business, Spirituality, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.

THIS EARTH DAY VISION MAKER FILM FEST THROUGH INDIGENOUS VOICES EMPHASIZES THEME: EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED

BY MABEL PAIS

Vision Maker Media (VMM - <https://visionmakermedia.org>) via its 2026 Vision Maker Film Festival, Vision Maker Film Festival (<https://visionmakermedia.org>) continues its year-long celebration of the theme “Everything is Connected.” This year marks 50 years of VMM programs.

Earth Day is more than a celebration of our planet — it is a call to listen, to learn, and to act. Across generations, Indigenous communities have stood on the frontlines of environmental protection, defending land, water, and air not only for themselves, but for all of humanity. These following powerful stories illuminate resilience, justice, and the sacred responsibility to protect Mother Earth.

The festival features newly released documentaries, narrative films, and shorts produced and funded by Vision Maker Media. Designed as a flexible, dual-format experience, the festival offers in-person screenings at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center and online screenings available on the Vision Maker Media website (visionmakermedia.org).

The online festival in April offers films illustrating different types of connections, centered on the experiences of Indigenous women. The offerings include Kanenon: we - Original Seeds



Indigenous Community.

- Credit: www.visionmakermedia.org

(<https://visionmakermedia.org/film-library/kanenon-we-original-seeds>), which follows three women reclaiming their ancient roles as seed keepers, returning heirloom seeds to Tribes for use by future generations. Redbird follows four generations of Cherokee women navigating grief after losing a family member.

Audiences can stream these films for free throughout April on VMM’s website at visionmakermedia.org/education/.

Children, families, and educators can explore Native heritage through VMM’s iNative Shorts for Kids on its YouTube channel (<https://youtube.com/@iNativeShortsforKids>). April’s episodes examine the impact of the Indian Relocation Act

using clips from the films Urban Rez (<https://visionmakermedia.org/film-library/urban-rez>) and Looking Toward Home (<https://visionmakermedia.org/film-library/looking-toward-home>).

The episodes explore the unique experiences and challenges of urban natives as they navigate the complex duality of living in a large, multicultural society while working to maintain the beliefs, traditions, and identities of their Native Nations.

iNative Shorts for Kids
Explore the series at <https://youtube.com/@iNativeShortsforKids>.

New videos premiere on the iNative Shorts for Kids YouTube channel on the

1st and 3rd Mondays of every month. You can subscribe to the channel so as not to miss an episode!

This channel is designed for students ages 6-12 and features animated guidance from Frankie the Hawk, who introduces viewers to Native languages, histories, and communities with built-in activities for interactive learning.

Vision Maker Media (VMM)

VMM is the premier source of media by and about Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Since 1976, VMM has been dedicated to amplifying Indigenous voices through public broadcasting and public media, supporting producers to develop, produce, and distribute impactful programs, and investing in training programs that increase the number of next generation Native media makers. VMM’s mission is “empowering and engaging Native people to share stories,” guided by its vision of “a world changed and healed by understanding Native stories and the public conversations they generate.”

Children, families, and educators can explore Native heritage through VMM’s iNative Shorts for Kids on its YouTube channel (<https://youtube.com/@iNativeShortsforKids>). April’s episodes examine the impact of the Indian Relocation Act using clips from the films Urban Rez (<https://youtube.com/@iNativeShortsforKids>) and Looking Toward Home (<https://visionmakermedia.org/film-library/looking-toward-home>).

ONE EARTH FILM FEST’S MILESTONE EDITION OPENING FEATURES ETHOLOGIST-ENVIRONMENTALIST JANE GOODALL

BY MABEL PAIS

Drawing on decades of work by the world’s most famous living ethologist and environmentalist, “Jane Goodall: Reasons for Hope,” is an uplifting journey around the globe to highlight good news stories that will inspire people to make a difference in the world around them.

Featured stories such as the Northern Bald Ibis’ migration over the Alps, the re-introduction of the American Bison by the Blackfoot Nation, the worldwide recognized Sudbury Regreening Story and inspiring youth-led initiatives involved in Jane Goodall’s Roots & Shoots align with historic footage of Jane’s beginnings as a chimpanzee researcher.

Throughout, the film reinforces Jane’s four pillars of hope that signal tremendous hope for the future: the amazing human intellect, the resilience of nature, the power and dedication of young people, and the indomitable human spirit.

AWARDS:

2024 Canadian Screen Awards Winner: Sustainable Production Award
2023 Canadian Screen Music Awards



Jane Goodall. -Credit: www.oneearthfilmfest.org

Winner: Best Score in a Short Film

EXPECT TO ENJOY:

Arrive at 6PM to enjoy a welcome toast, in celebratory smart casual or semi-formal attire

Honor the life and contributions of our hero, the late Dr. Jane Goodall (April 3,

1934 - October 1, 2025) by watching the acclaimed film, “Jane Goodall: Reasons for Hope,” which celebrates her legacy in the global conservation movement, youth environmentalism, and the practice of cultivating hope.

Watch the film trailer; and learn more about One Earth Film Fest’s 15th milestone

event @ https://oneearthfilmfest.org/2026-film-az/2026/3/11/15th-season-opening-screening-jane-goodall-reasons-for-hope-amp-post-film-opening-reception?mc_cid=9a5fe8e65e&mc_eid=cd541f929b.

ACTIVITIES

Participate in an inspiring post-film discussion with local conservation and climate justice leaders

Enjoy a reception with plant-based heavy hors d’oeuvres, sweet treats, and savory sips (non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages available)

Mix & mingle amongst like-minded creatives, environmentalists, advocates and activists

TICKETS

For tickets to the festival, visit <https://oneearthfilmfest.org>.

A limited number of scholarship tickets are available, for those experiencing hardship. Reach out to joshua@oneearthcollective.org for more info, with the subject line: “Scholarship Ticket Inquiry.”

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Education, Business, Spirituality, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.

NEW JERSEY'S NORTH TO SHORE SUMMER FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR FOURTH YEAR

BY MABEL PAIS

The North to Shore Festival of New Jersey will return for a fourth year in June 2026, marking the start of the summer season in New Jersey with two full weeks of music and comedy performances in the state's most vibrant cities.

The Garden State's annual largest arts and music festival is produced by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) of Newark in collaboration with a cohort of production partners, sponsors and community organizations.

During June 13-28, North to Shore will light up Newark and Asbury Park with performances featuring a dynamic lineup of internationally acclaimed musical performers, the biggest names in comedy, and rising local artists who help define New Jersey's vibrant creative landscape. The performances will take place at venues including Prudential Arena, NJPAC's Prudential Hall, Victoria Theater and Chambers Plaza, Stone Pony Summer Stage, Wonder Bar and more spaces in Asbury Park's boardwalk district.

Launched in 2023, the festival is a unique combination of performances by artists beloved both internationally and in their hometowns. In 2025, during its third year, the festival welcomed more than 160,000 arts-lovers to performances and events in Newark, Asbury Park and Atlantic City. Its social media outreach captured an audience of more than 1.1 billion, and more than 180 radio, television and online features spread the word of festival offerings.

Gov. Mikie Sherrill said, "By investing directly in local artists and small businesses, we are ensuring this festival's legacy isn't just a two-week celebration with global headliners, but a lasting driver for opportunity and growth in every corner of our state."

"North to Shore" has always been about celebrating both the artists who perform on our biggest stages and the creative voices shaping New Jersey's communities year-round," said David Rodriguez, Executive Vice President and Executive Producer, NJPAC. "By partnering with trusted local organizations, we are expanding access to resources and ensuring the festival continues to reflect the authentic cultural identity and artistic excellence found in each host city."

Newark

Janelle Monáe, The Black Crowes, Alison Krauss & Union Station, Joe Bonamassa, Iliza Shlesinger, and Jesse & Joy are among the international superstars who will perform at the festival in Newark.

"This festival reflects the spirit, diversity, and talent that define our city. We are proud to partner with NJPAC and our cultural organizations to ensure residents and visitors alike can experience the extraordinary artistic energy that thrives here in Newark," said Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka. "North to Shore has an established track record of bringing communities together to celebrate the cultural excellence that makes our state unique," said John Schreiber, President and CEO of NJPAC.

Asbury Park

Yellowcard, Kurt Vile, Black Uhuru, David Cross, The Bouncing Souls, Happy Mondays, and more will perform in Asbury Park. Additional performances will be presented throughout the shore region, including ParkStage at East Freehold Park Showgrounds featuring Sublime, The Head and The Heart, and Dark Star Orchestra.

"By bringing together internationally recognized performers and local talent, the festival drives



Janelle Monáe.

accessible to both Atlantic City residents and visitors.

POETRY FOR ATLANTIC CITY TEENS

The FREE "Dodge Poetry" series will offer writing workshops for Atlantic City teens at Stockton University's Noyes Arts Garage, at 2200 Fairmount Avenue, once a month on Monday afternoons. Young people are invited to join teens from across Atlantic City to showcase their words and ideas in verse, and then (if they choose) speak them aloud at the open mic that ends every session. Snacks and notebooks will be provided. Workshops were scheduled for March 16, 2026, April 13, 2026, will continue at 4:30 PM on May 18, 2026, and to celebrate the work of the teen poets, a "Youth Poetry Showcase"



The Black Crowes.

-Credit for both: Courtesy, www.njpac.org.

tourism, supports small businesses, and spotlights the creative spirit that has made Asbury Park an iconic destination for music and the arts," Asbury Park Mayor John Moor.

Atlantic City

The festival launched a full year of community arts programming in Atlantic City in May 2025. Dozens of North to Shore Festival concerts, parties and workshops — including a Dias de los Muertos celebration, the pop-up art gallery ARTeriors and the third annual Bash at Back Sov, a celebration of punk music and skateboarding — have welcomed Atlantic City residents and visitors alike every month since.

This spring, dozens of young artists from across Central and Southern New Jersey will be highlighted by the festival's ongoing "Garden State Live!" showcase concerts at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City. "AC Jamming!," a concert and open mic series at Gin Rickey's Live Music Bar at the Tropicana Casino Hotel, will bring both veteran and new performers center stage.

And city teens will have a platform to share their words and experiences at free monthly Dodge Poetry Workshops held at Stockton University's Noyes Arts Garage; the series' finale will be a Youth Showcase at which the city's young poets can read for friends, family and the community.

All the festival's Community Arts events are free or reasonably priced, to ensure events are easily

will be held at 1 PM on Sunday, June 14, 2026, where friends and family can hear the young writers share their work.

Tickets & Updates

For tickets for events, visit www.NorthtoShore.com. Additional lineup announcements and event details will be released throughout the spring.

For the latest festival updates, follow North to Shore on Instagram, X, Facebook, and TikTok.

NJPAC is producing this multi-city celebration in collaboration with this year's festival sponsors Prudential Financial, NJEDA, NJM Insurance Group, Outfront Media Group, United Airlines, Mosaic - from NJ.com, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, and AirBnB. Producing Partners for this year's "North to Shore" include Madison Marquette; Newark International Film Festival; SJ Presents; and Live Nation.

A portion of all ticket sales will directly benefit "Growing Healthy Pantries," a statewide collaborative that addresses food insecurity in partnership with New Jersey's five primary food banks, supporting more than 1,000 local pantries across all 21 counties.

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Education, Business, Spirituality, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.



Varun Dhawan's return to romance with Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai

After his patriotic role in *Border 2*, actor Varun Dhawan returns to romantic-comedy, a genre he's most associated with, in his new film titled *Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai*. The teaser, unveiled on Tuesday, introduces a "double trouble love story" featuring Pooja Hegde and Mrunal Thakur alongside Dhawan. The project also marks Dhawan's reunion with his father and director, David Dhawan.

The teaser opens with AI-generated toddlers talking about their parents, hinting at a love triangle involving two heroines and one hero. It is accompanied by a revamped version of *Ishq Sonai Hai*, originally from David Dhawan's 1999 film *Biwi No. 1*, now serving as the title and the title track for the film.

Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai showcases a vibrant, feel-good world filled with high energy. The film signals Bollywood's return to romantic comedy, a genre that has been overshadowed recently by action-heavy stories.

Saiyaara couple Ahaan Panday-Aneet Padda, and Mohit Suri reunite for another love story

Actors Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda are reuniting with their *Saiyaara* director Mohit Suri for another intense YRF love story, to be produced by Akshaye Widhani.

The two actors broke out in a big way with the romantic drama about the love story between a rising musician and a lyricist with early-onset Alzheimer's. The film was a runaway success at the box office, earning over Rs 338 crore in India and more than Rs 500 crore globally.

In a statement, the production house said the untitled film will be a cinematic experience that blends heartfelt storytelling with unforgettable melodies.

The film was also the biggest hit of Suri's career. He is known for intense musical dramas such as *Awarapan*, *Malang*, *Murder 2*, *Ek Villain*, and *Aashiqui 2*.

"It has always been love stories for me. Overwhelming, unbound, and impossible to ignore. Love is meant to be felt intensely, and that is why I naturally gravitate towards it as a storyteller. This film explores that unabashedly. So, coming back with the same team from *Saiyaara* feels incredibly special. Maybe it was always written in the stars. Reuniting feels like coming back home, but with a renewed creative hunger. This time, I feel like a newcomer - excited and anxious about this story. I hope my music will once again touch people, as I have always strived for through my films," Suri said.

Widhani, CEO of Yash Raj Films, said their collaboration with Suri is built on a shared creative pulse. "With Mohit, it is never just about making a film - it is about chasing a feeling, a piece of music, a moment that lingers long after the screen fades to black. *Saiyaara* was one such moment that we will cherish forever. As we come together again, we are searching for something even more honest, more vulnerable, and more enduring with our second collaboration. We are thrilled to have Ahaan and Aneet in our film, as the most-loved Gen Z pair reunites for a Mohit Suri romance," he said.

The film is set to go on floors later this year and is eyeing a worldwide theatrical release in 2027.



Ranbir only Indian actor in TIME's list of world's 100 most influential people



Time magazine has unveiled its annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

The TIME 100, as it is called, has for years been a good benchmark of any popular figure's global popularity and impact. This year, few Indians have made the cut, including Bollywood star Ranbir Kapoor, the only name from the world's largest film industry. He is joined in the list by celebrity chef Vikas Khanna.

TIME released its list of the 100 Most Influential People of 2026, a compilation that includes global pioneers, leaders, and titans, as well as artists, innovators, and icons.

TIME's profile of Ranbir Kapoor was written by his fellow Bollywood star, Ayushmann Khurrana. "There are actors who chase legacy and there are actors who become one through their craft. Ranbir Kapoor is the latter," Ayushmann wrote. In his write-up, Ayushmann emphasised that Ranbir has moved beyond the chatter about box-office and weekend collections in Bollywood.

"In an industry as prolific and passionate as Indian cinema, we often measure greatness in decibels-box-office numbers, fan frenzy, opening weekends. But every once in a while, an actor shifts something quieter yet far more enduring: our emotional

vocabulary as an audience. Ranbir has been doing that film after film. In a world where performances are often amplified, Ranbir internalizes. He shows our culture through quiet restraint. He represents the India that is finally learning how to listen to itself and leaves a mark through simple authenticity," the profile said.

It added that actors like him become important cultural bridges. "Ranbir isn't just a movie star-he's a storyteller talking to a global audience and telling them stories of a fabled, mythical country where epics like *The Ramayana* have inspired other civilizations and cultures."

Celebrity chef Vikas Khanna also made the cut among visionaries in fashion, visual, literary, and culinary arts, alongside names like Ralph Lauren and Victoria Beckham.

James Beard Award-winning chef and co-owner of *Le Bernardin* Eric Ripert wrote in the TIME profile for Vikas Khanna, "His generosity extends far beyond the kitchen, reaching communities across the world with compassion, dignity, and a deep sense of responsibility. What makes Vikas so unique is his ability to connect with people from every walk of life, using food as a universal language to build bridges and foster understanding."



Tom Cruise transforms into old, balding man with beer belly in Alejandro Inarritu's Digger

Over his three-decade career, Tom Cruise has tried his hand at a variety of roles, from a renegade aviator in *Top Gun* to a serial killer in *Collateral*, and of course, a spy in the *Mission Impossible* series. But his charm and looks have accompanied him into each role. However, his next, *Digger*, is set to change that. The film's first glimpse was showcased at the ongoing CinemaCon where viewers saw, for the first time, the superstar's transition into a non-heartthrob.

CinemaCon is an annual convention of theatre owners in Las Vegas. Warner Bros had their presentation on Tuesday, bringing out their big guns, headlined by Tom Cruise. As he took the stage for *Digger*, the 63-year-old star said it took four decades of acting for him to get to a place where he could play the eccentric oil tycoon at the centre of *Digger*. The actor introduced the first images from the movie on Tuesday at CinemaCon.

They showed the 63-year-old transformed into the character Digger Rockwell, an older man with thinning gray hair, a beer belly, a Southern accent and a fondness for cats. The actor got a big reception from the audience in a rare standing ovation, both for the new look and for the veteran's star status as a devoted and vocal advocate of the big screen experience.

In the film, Rockwell inadvertently unleashes an ecological disaster that carries the world to the brink of nuclear war before scrambling to save the planet.

"It took 40 years to be able to put on the boots of Digger Rockwell and play the many, many layers of this character. The movie is wild, it's funny, and I can't wait for you all to see it," Reuters reported Tom Cruise as saying.

Inarritu called Cruise's performance "a high-wire act." According to AP, the filmmaker told the audience, "We know that he's fearless — the stunts, the planes, the jumps — but I have to say, embodying this character, this is another kind of fearless. This role could possibly be the most challenging."

American Pie's Shannon Elizabeth joins OnlyFan, says Hollywood 'controlled' her

Shannon Elizabeth, who shot to fame as a Hollywood sex symbol after starring in the adult comedy *American Pie* two decades ago, is joining adult content creation platform OnlyFans. The actor has said that she is giving the controversial platform a shot to take charge of her career's narrative herself, while also taking a jibe at the Hollywood power structure.

In a statement to *Variety*, Shannon's manager Andy Bachman celebrated this step and said, "Shannon has always been someone who genuinely enjoys connecting with and giving back to her fans, and this allows her to do that in a more direct, meaningful way than ever before. It's a powerful model, and right now, there's nothing more effective at facilitating that connection than OnlyFans."

OnlyFans is the leading adult content-creation platform in the world, where creators can create accounts and channels and charge users for access through paid subscriptions. The platform began for all kinds of creators but, over the years, has come to be associated largely with sex work and pornography, despite its own attempts to move away from that genre.

In an interview with *People*, Shannon, who was one of Hollywood's biggest sex symbols in the 2000s, explained the move, "I've spent my entire career working in Hollywood, where other people controlled the



narrative and the outcome of my career. This new chapter is about changing that, showing off a more sexy side no one has seen, and being closer to my fans."

The actor added that she now wants

to connect with her fans directly. "I'm choosing OnlyFans because it allows me to connect directly with my audience, create on my own terms, and just be free. I really do think this is the future," she added.

Australia police probe Katy Perry over sexual assault allegations



US pop star Katy Perry is under investigation in Australia over allegations of sexual assault made by actor Ruby Rose, police and media said Wednesday. Rose alleged in a series of widely reported but now-deleted posts on social media that the singer had assaulted her in a nightclub in Melbourne almost two decades ago. On Tuesday, Rose -- best known for her role in TV sitcom "Orange is the New Black" -- said she had finalised reports to police and could therefore no longer talk publicly about the case.

In a statement to AFP, Victoria state police declined to name Perry but said they were "investigating a historical sexual assault that occurred in Melbourne in 2010". "As the investigation remains ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage," a spokesperson added. A representative for Perry denied the claims in a statement to entertainment industry magazine *Variety*.

"The allegations being circulated on social media by Ruby Rose about Katy Perry are not only categorically false, they are dangerous reckless lies," they said. "Ms. Rose has a well-documented history of making serious public allegations on social media against various individuals, claims that have repeatedly been denied by those named." Perry -- singer of mega hits like "Hot n Cold," "Roar" and "I Kissed a Girl" -- has drawn headlines recently for her relationship with former Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau.

Shadow fleet, zombie IDs: How Iranian ships are dodging Trump's Hormuz blockade

APRIL 17, 2026

TEHRAN (TIP): The American maritime blockade of Iranian ports in and around the Strait of Hormuz was meant to cut off oil and gas exports from Iran, and challenge Tehran's control of the world's most critical shipping lane. But, within just a day of the US blockade being enforced by over 10,000 American troops, Marines and airmen, holes are already visible in Trump's Hormuz closure efforts. That is because of the tricks Iran-linked ships are employing.

While US President Donald Trump would have wanted the US blockade to restrict the movement of Iranian ships through the Strait, at least eight ships, including three Iran-linked tankers, have been crossing the waterway since the closure came into effect, news agency Reuters reported on Wednesday, citing shipping data.

So, how are the Iran-linked ships dodging the American naval blockade? First a bit about the US blockade and why Trump imposed it.

HOW 10,000 US TROOPERS, JETS, WARSHIPS ARE IMPOSING BLOCKADE AT STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Trump imposed the naval blockade on the Strait of Hormuz after US-Iran peace talks in Islamabad collapsed without a deal over the weekend of April 11-12. American Vice President JD Vance said the US was taking on Iran's "economic terrorism", adding that the Washington DC knew how to deal with it. The blockade over Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz was a way to pressure Tehran by halting its oil exports and removing its leverage over the vital shipping lane.

Roughly 25% of global oil trade, and 90% of India's LPG imports, pass through the narrow strategic chokepoint in the Persian Gulf.

Trump announced the blockade on



Sunday (April 12). The US Navy began its enforcement the following day, on Monday (April 13).

The United States Central Command (CENTCOM), on Tuesday evening, claimed the US blockade was being executed by "more than 10,000 sailors, Marines, and airmen, along with over a dozen warships and dozens of aircraft".

"During the first 24 hours, no ships made it past the US blockade and six merchant vessels complied with directions from US forces to turn around to re-enter an Iranian port in the Gulf of Oman," added the CENTCOM handle on X.

However, Iran-linked shipping vessels are employing several methods to evade being tracked in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

HOW IRAN SHIPS ARE DODGING TRUMP'S HORMUZ BLOCKADE

According to maritime intelligence

experts, ships in and around the Strait of Hormuz "seemed to be adopting tactics to avoid detection," reported The New York Times.

A Comoros-flagged tanker, Elpis, which was under US sanctions, sailed from Iran's Bushehr port and crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Monday without interception by US forces, reported news agency AFP.

A Madagascar-flagged tanker, Murlkishan, which was previously involved in transporting Russian and Iranian oil, sailed through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran-linked ships are manipulating maritime tracking systems, disguising their identities, and exploiting gaps in enforcement of maritime shipping rules.

Most large vessels are required to carry Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders that broadcast their identity, location, and route. However,

ships linked to Iran are switching off these transponders and are going dark. This makes them temporarily invisible.

Others engage in spoofing, where the ships deliberately transmit false data, like faking their coordinates and destinations. Some are impersonating another vessel altogether.

"Now, we are starting to see vessels going dark or using zombie or random identification," Ami Daniel, the CEO of maritime intelligence data provider Windward, told The New York Times. He added that there has been an increase in these deceptive practices after the blockade came into force.

Some ships are altering or fabricating their identification numbers, the unique nine-digit code that functions as a ship's digital fingerprint. Borrowing from the Russian evasion playbook, ships are experimenting with "stateless" or manipulated IDs.

"Shadow fleet tankers have been experimenting with stateless ID numbers... What the Russians have been doing is altering the numbers," John CK Daly, a scholar of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute in Washington, told the newspaper.

Ships are also using false flags and complex ownership structures of the ships. For example, a ship owned in one country, leased in another, and flagged in a third, is being used to be tracked.

Meanwhile, Iran and its wartime mouthpieces — the X handles of its embassies in world capitals — are waging an information war on the internet, by using confusion as a tactic.

So, while the US has deployed heavily in blocking the Strait of Hormuz, Iran-linked ships are going dark. Some are changing their identities. Others have borrowed from the playbook of the Russians, who have long manipulated their IDs to slip through.

Source: India Today

Billions for war, none for healing, education, says Pope

APRIL 17, 2026

VATICAN CITY (TIP): Pope Leo blasted leaders who spend billions on wars and said the world was "being ravaged by a handful of tyrants", in unusually forceful remarks in Cameroon on Thursday, April 16, days after US President Donald Trump attacked him on social media.

Leo, the first US pope, also decried leaders who used religious language to justify wars and urged a "decisive change of course" in a meeting in the biggest city in Cameroon's anglophone regions, where a simmering conflict going back nearly a decade has left thousands dead.

"The masters of war pretend not to know that it takes only a moment to destroy, yet often a lifetime is not enough to



rebuild," the pontiff said.

"They turn a blind eye to the fact that billions of dollars are spent on killing and devastation, yet the resources needed for healing, education and restoration are nowhere to be found."

Trump's attacks on Leo, first launched on the eve of the pope's ambitious four-country tour of Africa and repeated late Tuesday, have caused dismay in Africa, where more than a fifth of the world's Catholics live.

Leo, who kept a relatively low profile for most of his first year as leader of the 1.4-billion-member Church, has emerged as an outspoken critic of the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, spiritual leader of 85 million Anglicans worldwide, said on Thursday that she stood with the pope in his "courageous call for a kingdom of peace".

Speaking in the anglophone city of Bamenda, the pontiff also sharply

criticised leaders who invoked religious themes to justify wars.

"Woe to those who manipulate religion and the very name of God for their own military, economic and political gain, dragging that which is sacred into darkness and filth," he said.

"It is a world turned upside down, an exploitation of God's creation that must be denounced and rejected by every honest conscience."

The pope made similar remarks last month, saying God rejected prayers from leaders with "hands full of blood", in comments widely interpreted as aimed at US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who has invoked Christian language to justify the Iran war.

US confirms costliest air loss in Iran war: A drone twice the price of F-35 jet

APRIL 17, 2026

WASHINGTON (TIP): The United States has lost one of its most advanced and expensive surveillance drones, the MQ-4C Triton, in the Persian Gulf, amid the war in Iran. The drone costs around \$200-240 million, which is approximately twice the price of two Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter jets, upgraded versions of which cost nearly \$100 million.

The MQ-4C drone was reportedly missing after sending out an emergency signal "code 7700 alert" during an operation near the Strait of Hormuz on April 9. The United States Naval Command confirmed the loss of one MQ-4C in its mishap summary.

According to the mishap summary released by the US Navy, the high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) unmanned surveillance aircraft crashed in the Persian Gulf. Under the classification system used by the United States Department of War, any incident involving damage exceeding \$2.5 million is termed a Class A mishap. The reconnaissance aircraft involved in the latest incident to be worth around \$240-250 million, according to US-based CBS News. On April 9, news reports had suggested that the MQ-4C drone was shot down by the Iranian air defences, but now, the US Navy Command has said that the drone crashed.

Ceasefire violations reported in Lebanon as Israeli artillery shelling, aerial surveillance continue

APRIL 17, 2026

BEIRUT (TIP): Fresh shelling was reported in southern Lebanon shortly after the ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah came into effect, raising concerns over the fragile truce, Al Jazeera reported.

According to Al Jazeera, citing Lebanon's National News Agency (NNA), Israeli artillery continued targeting the towns of Khiam and Dibbine, with reports of machinegun fire during sweeping operations in the area. In the western Bekaa Valley, reconnaissance aircraft activity was also observed over the Rashaya region and the western slopes of Jabal al-Sheikh.

Amid the developments, the Israeli military issued a warning to residents in southern Lebanon, urging them not to move south of the Litani River as forces remain deployed, CNN reported.

Military spokesperson Avichay Adraee said Israeli troops continue to maintain positions in the region, as reported by CNN.

"For your safety and the safety of your family members - until further notice - you are requested not to move to the south of the Litani River," Adraee said, as per CNN.



He added that the deployment remains in place "in the face of Hezbollah's ongoing terrorist activities."

Meanwhile, Antonio Guterres welcomed the ceasefire agreement, expressing hope that it could lead to long-term peace in the region.

"I welcome the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel & Lebanon, and commend the role of the US in facilitating it. I hope this will pave the way for negotiations towards a long-term solution to the conflict & contribute to ongoing efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive peace in the region. I urge everyone to fully respect the

ceasefire and to comply with international law at all times," he wrote on X.

Regional reactions have also been largely supportive. Jordan welcomed the ceasefire and praised the role of Lebanese leadership, including President Joseph Aoun, in the negotiations, Al Jazeera reported.

Jordan's Ministry of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs reiterated its "firm support" for Lebanon's sovereignty and stressed the need for arms to remain under state control, as reported by Al Jazeera.

The United Arab Emirates also backed the agreement, highlighting the importance of diplomacy in reducing tensions, Al Jazeera reported.

In a statement, the UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it hoped the ceasefire would mark "a positive step towards fostering a supportive environment for regional stability" and emphasised the need for continued international coordination to prevent further escalation, as per Al Jazeera.

The developments underscore the fragile nature of the ceasefire, even as global and regional stakeholders push for sustained peace efforts in West Asia.

Major flight disruption coming? Europe has just 6 weeks of ATF left amid summer travel rush

APRIL 17, 2026

LONDON (TIP): Europe is staring at an aviation crisis, with jet fuel supplies rapidly shrinking. If the US, Israel, and Iran war doesn't end, and the tankers don't pass smoothly through the Middle East, Europe might soon be short of fuel to operate flights. The International Energy Agency (IEA) chief warned on Thursday that Europe has jet fuel for just six weeks, as the aviation sector prepares for its summer travel rush.

In an interview with the US-based news agency Associated Press (AP) on Thursday, the IEA's Executive Director, Fatih Birol, issued a fresh warning saying, "The Strait of Hormuz blockade will result in the largest energy crisis we have ever faced."

European airlines have warned of jet fuel shortages within weeks as a result of the Iran war, disrupting travel ahead of summer. According to news agency Reuters, Europe is more dependent on jet fuel imports, with some 75% from the Middle East, than on any other transport fuel.

According to a report in the New York

Times, a European airline, Ryanair, said this week that its suppliers could guarantee it enough jet fuel only through most of May. The airline said fuel could be in short supply if ships laden with energy did not soon begin passing through the Strait of Hormuz. "If the Iran war finishes soon, then supply will not be disrupted," the airline said.

The Strait of Hormuz was blocked by Iran after the US and Israel attacked it in February. After the peace talks failed in Pakistan on Sunday, the US has imposed its own blockade to cut off Iran's exports through the Hormuz.

EUROPE'S MEASURES TO TACKLE LOOMING FUEL CRISIS

Europe remains the largest consumer of jet fuel transported via the Strait of Hormuz. According to Australia-based financial services firm Macquarie Group, shipments through the strategic waterway make up around 41% of Europe's jet fuel imports.

The European Union (EU) is drafting plans to tackle a looming jet fuel supply crunch and maximise refinery output,

officials told Reuters.

A draft proposal seen by Reuters said, "From next month, the European Commission will introduce EU-wide mapping of refining capacity for oil products and introduce measures to ensure that existing refining capacity is fully utilised and maintained.

The EU is also working on measures targeting jet fuel supply, but those are still in development, officials familiar with the proposals said. The Commission declined to comment on the draft plans, which are due to be published on April 22. Jet fuel supplies are highly unequal across Europe. Spain has eight refineries and is a net exporter of jet fuel, while imports cover more than 60% of British demand. European airlines have asked the EU to improve monitoring of jet fuel supplies and consider joint purchasing of kerosene.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS IN EUROPE TO BE AFFECTED

Summer is the peak and most profitable season for airlines in Europe. The demand for jet fuel will surely rise

in the weeks ahead.

"As European markets approach the peak demand season, the loss of Middle East imports presents a severe logistical challenge," the IEA said in a report, according to The New York Times.

Imports from Africa and the US are unlikely to fully make up for the crunch, while fuel handling consortia that feed into airports do not always keep long-term stocks, analysts said to Reuters, and many airports do not keep large stocks on hand. Some airports have warned of shortages within three weeks if the Strait of Hormuz remains closed to fuel shipments.

According to Reuters, the IEA said this month that many European refiners are already operating at maximum capacity for jet fuel production.

For now, Europe's aviation sector remains on edge—caught between dwindling reserves and an uncertain geopolitical landscape. If the Iran war doesn't end in the next few weeks, then it will spiral into widespread disruption of the aviation sector in Europe.

Bangladesh: Court grants bail to Hindu monk Chinmoy Das in one case

APRIL 17, 2026

DHAKA (TIP): A Bangladesh court has granted bail to Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das in one case, while he remains in custody. The order was issued on Thursday by Judicial Magistrate Shakhawat Hossain in Chattogram after a hearing. However, he is still facing six other cases, including one related to the murder of a lawyer.

"The case in which he was granted bail was filed by former minister Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin, father of State Minister for Hill Tracts and Land Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin. The case involved allegations of land grabbing, intimidation, and assault in the Mekhal area of Hathazari in Chattogram", Chinmoy's lawyer Apurba Kumar Bhattacharjee told ANI, over the phone. "Six people, including Chinmoy Krishna Das, were accused in the case filed in 2023", he added.

On November 26, 2024, during clashes surrounding his bail in a sedition case over alleged desecration of the national flag, lawyer Saiful Islam was beaten and hacked to death. Following the incident, his father, Jamal Uddin, filed a murder case naming 31 accused.

Afghan villagers turn to gold-panning to sustain livelihoods

KABUL (TIP): In the rugged Hindu Kush mountains of eastern Afghanistan, hundreds of men scour the rocky Kunar riverbed for precious gold dust, creating a livelihood amid limited economic options.

Against the backdrop of towering peaks, some still snow-capped in April, workers labour near the Pakistan border, seeking valuable flecks that could change their fortunes in a country plagued by low wages.

Near Kharwalu village in Kunar province – with its mud-brick homes and terraced wheat fields – men excavate dry sections of the riverbed before washing their rocky hauls with river water.

Delawar, 45, joined these gold prospectors after leaving his construction job seven hours from his Kabul home.

"There are not many job opportunities in the country, and in this way, we have created work for ourselves," said the father of eight who uses only one name.

"The gold nuggets we find are usually smaller than a grain of wheat," he added. In nearby Ghaziabad, hundreds chip away at the mountainside with picks, carrying heavy sacks down steep slopes to empty onto sieves for gold filtration.

Pak Army chief reaches Tehran; US-Iran fresh talks likely within days

APRIL 17, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): US President Donald Trump on April 15 claimed the conflict with Iran was "very close to over", even as Pakistan intensified back-channel diplomacy with a high-level delegation, led by Army chief Asim Munir, reaching Tehran to push for a renewed ceasefire framework.

In remarks to Fox Business, Trump asserted that Iran had been "hit very hard" and warned that US forces could "take out every one of their bridges and power plants in one hour" if negotiations failed. "I think they want to make a deal very badly," he said, signalling that a second round of talks could resume within days.

The diplomatic momentum comes amid efforts to extend the fragile US-Iran truce, set to expire on April 22, with Islamabad emerging as a key mediator. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei confirmed that message exchanges between Tehran and Washington were continuing through Pakistan, with "multiple messages" already conveyed since the last round of talks.

Baghaei said a Pakistani delegation



was expected in Tehran to "discuss the views of both sides", indicating a move towards structured negotiations. "We entered talks to end the war, secure Iran's rights and obtain war reparations," he said, reiterating that Tehran's nuclear programme remains "purely peaceful" while leaving room for discussions on enrichment levels within a broader agreement.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian struck a cautious note, saying Tehran was open to "constructive engagement" but would not yield to pressure. "Any attempt to impose will or force the country into submission is doomed to fail," he said.

Trump, meanwhile, doubled down on

his military posture, claiming the US intervention had prevented Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

In a post on Truth Social, he also suggested improving coordination with China, stating that Beijing had agreed not to supply weapons to Tehran and backing efforts to keep the Strait of Hormuz open.

"China is very happy that I am permanently opening the Strait of Hormuz. I am doing it for them, also - And the World. This situation will never happen again. They have agreed not to send weapons to Iran. President Xi will give me a big, fat, hug when I get there in a few weeks," Trump wrote.

The developments come against the backdrop of a US-enforced blockade on Iranian ports, which has heightened regional tensions but also accelerated diplomatic efforts to avert further escalation.

With Pakistan now at the centre of mediation and both sides signalling conditional openness, the coming days are likely to prove critical in determining whether the conflict moves towards de-escalation or renewed confrontation.

Nepal forms high-powered commission to probe politicians' assets

APRIL 17, 2026

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's government, elected last month on an anti-corruption platform, has formed a commission to investigate the assets of politicians and officials, an official said Thursday.

Prime Minister Balendra Shah, a 35-year-old rapper-turned-politician, won a landslide election victory on a platform of youth-driven political change in the first elections since deadly 2025 anti-corruption protests ousted the government.

Led by a former Supreme Court judge, the five-member commission will examine assets of top figures who have held public office since 2006.

Dipa Dahal, press and investigation advisor to the prime minister, said the commission was ordered by cabinet. "The cabinet meeting made this decision," Dahal told AFP. "We are following up to confirm its timelines and other details."

Plans to form the commission were listed in the government's 100-point reform agenda issued after Shah took office.

Earlier this month Nepal issued an arrest warrant for former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife in a money laundering investigation, the latest high-profile figure targeted under the new government.

Deuba, who is abroad, has rejected the allegations.

Investigations are also ongoing into former prime minister KP Sharma Oli and ex-home minister Ramesh Lekhak over their alleged roles in the deadly crackdown on the anti-corruption protests in September 2025.

The two men were arrested last month, but they have denied all accusations and were released after a court order.

The youth-led uprising began in Kathmandu and was triggered by a brief social media ban.

It spread countrywide the following day, fueled by longstanding frustration over corruption and economic



hardship. Nepal currently ranks 109th out of 180 countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

China envoy cautions Nepal home minister against govt participation in oath-taking of Tibet leader in exile

The Chinese ambassador to Nepal, Zhang Maoming, has 'warned' newly elected Nepal Home Minister Sudan Gurung against government participation in the upcoming Tibetan leadership programme in the country, Kathmandu Post reported. According to officials quoted in a Kathmandu Post report, the ambassador's most pointed warning concerns the upcoming swearing-in ceremony of Penpa Tsering, the head of the Central Tibetan Administration who is set to begin a second five-year term on 27 May in Dharamshala, India. Tsering secured more than 60 percent of the vote in February. The Chinese ambassador has cautioned against any official participation by the Nepal government.

"They might invite the government of Nepal to the oath-taking ceremony, so I would like to draw your attention to this matter," the ambassador said, according to one of the officials quoted anonymously in the report.

Glow with confidence: Beauty and benefits of face waxing



In the evolving world of skincare and beauty, women are constantly seeking methods that offer not just aesthetic appeal but also long-term benefits. Among the many facial hair removal techniques available today, face waxing has emerged as a popular and effective choice. Often associated with salon routines and self-care rituals, face waxing goes beyond mere hair removal—it contributes to smoother skin, refined texture, and enhanced confidence.

Face waxing involves the application of warm or cold wax to remove unwanted facial hair from areas such as the upper lip, eyebrows, sideburns, chin, and forehead. Unlike shaving or depilatory creams, waxing pulls hair out from the root, offering a deeper and longer-lasting solution.

Long-Lasting Results Of Facial Waxing

If you want to slow down the growth of hair strands on the face, there is no better method than facial waxing. It pulls the locks from the roots, making it difficult for hair to grow quickly.

Thus, once you have a face waxing session, you can forget about the appearance of facial hair for at least 15-20 days. For some women, their faces remain free

from hair for more than a month or even two after waxing.

Low Risks For Ingrown Hair After Face Waxing

The dermal layer on our faces is sensitive, and therefore, we try to avoid any risks of bumps and ingrown hair. These are common disadvantages of the razor. However, with facial waxing, women do not have to worry about ingrown hairs.

If you have first tested the face wax on a smaller area and used it to get rid of hair on your face, it would hardly cause any reaction or irritation. Moreover, it will also help you get rid of blackheads and whiteheads.

Flawless Skin Texture After Facial Wax

When you pull the hair on the face using wax, you also remove the layer of dead skin that resides on the top. It helps you remove any flaky texture or chapped skin. Thus, facial waxing helps women achieve a flawless glow with minimal effort.

Face waxing leaves your skin feeling smooth and supple. If you hydrate the dermal layer after the process, you will soon achieve a radiant face. The hair removal process also helps with pigmentation and diminishes blemishes.

Slow Regrowth After Face Waxing

When a woman opts for facial waxing, she would notice that hair strands start to become fine after each session. The growth becomes less dense than before. Thus, it offers you comfort and makes every succeeding session less painful than the previous one.

For some regions or follicles, the hair stops growing after repetitive sessions of waxing. It is not true for every patch of hair and every woman. However, many have experienced smooth skin after facial waxing and reported a halt in hair growth.

Precise Removal Of Hair After Facial Waxing

No matter how close you glide the razor on your face, you will not achieve precise results like face waxing. Because wax pulls the hair out from the roots, the level of precision is quite high compared to shaving. Hence, a lot of women choose to go with waxing than shaving. Though using a razor is less painful than removing hair with wax, it is the perfection that makes women choose the latter option.

FOOD CORNER

Smoked Chicken Chaat

INGREDIENTS

3 pieces chicken breasts, 5 pinches salt, 5 tablespoon olive oil pomace, 1 medium onion, 1/2 small capsicum (green pepper), 1/4 teaspoon red chilli powder, 300 gm paneer, 2 tablespoon chopped coriander leaves, 1/4 teaspoon thymol seeds, 6 pieces mushroom, 2 slices pineapple, 2 tablespoon garlic, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1/4 teaspoon black salt, 1 teaspoon cumin powder, 4 chilli flakes as required, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon chaat masala.

Method

Wash chicken. Pat dry. Cut into 1/2 strips and then into squares. Rub 1/2 tsp salt, pepper and red chilli flakes on it. Place a small steel bowl or a katori in a kadhai with a lid. Put the chicken around the empty steel katori. Place the coal pieces on the naked flame for 5-7 minutes, till they turn grey and red hot at the edges. Pour some olive oil on the coal and cover immediately to trap the smoke. Leave covered for 10 minutes for the chicken to acquire a smoky flavour. You can smoke the paneer also in the same way.

Marinate onion, capsicums and mushrooms in lemon juice, salt, pepper, chaat masala, cumin powder and crushed garlic. Do not marinate pineapple.

To serve, heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a pan. Add thymol seeds and wait for it to crackle. Add the marinated vegetables and pan fry without stirring much to get that charred, blackened look. Add pineapple and cook for 2-3 minutes. While the veggies are being cooked, heat 2 tbsp olive oil in another pan. Add grated garlic and stir. And then mix in smoked chicken. Cook on medium heat, stirring continuously otherwise the chicken will stick to the pan. Fry for 3-4 minutes without stirring much till chicken turns whitish and light golden from all sides. Remove chicken from heat when cooked. Mix chicken, veggies, pineapple and coriander. Serve in a platter along with some roasted almonds (optional) along with the toppings of your choice.



Mistakes that damage your hair and natural fixes that work

The Hidden Damage: Haircare Mistakes You Should Avoid

Overwashing Your Hair

Washing hair too frequently strips away its natural oils, leaving it dry and brittle. While clean hair feels refreshing, overwashing can disrupt scalp's balance.

Natural Fix:

Switch to washing 2-3 times a week. Use mild, sulfate-free shampoos and occasionally try herbal rinses made from ingredients like reetha (soapnut), shikakai, or green tea to cleanse gently without drying.

Using Excessive Heat Styling Tools

Frequent use of straighteners, curling irons, and dryers weakens the hair shaft,

causing split ends and breakage over time.

Natural Fix:

Embrace air-drying whenever possible. Before heat styling, apply natural heat protectants like aloe vera gel or a few drops of argan or coconut oil.

Brushing Wet Hair Aggressively

Wet hair is at its weakest and most prone to breakage. Vigorous brushing can cause unnecessary hair fall and damage.

Natural Fix:

Use a wide-toothed comb and gently detangle from the ends upward. Applying a light natural serum like coconut milk or aloe vera can help reduce friction.

Ignoring Scalp Health

Healthy hair begins at the scalp.

Product buildup, dandruff, or poor circulation can hinder hair growth and lead to hair fall.

Natural Fix:

Massage your scalp regularly with warm oils such as coconut, almond, or castor oil. Add a few drops of essential oils like rosemary or tea tree to improve circulation and reduce dandruff naturally.

Tight Hairstyles and Constant Styling

Tight ponytails, buns, or braids can pull on hair roots, leading to a condition called traction alopecia.

Natural Fix:

Opt for loose hairstyles and give your hair regular breaks. Use soft fabric hair ties instead of elastic bands to minimize stress on strands.

Foods that can improve blood sugar balance, insulin sensitivity

In today's fast-paced lifestyle, blood sugar imbalances have become increasingly common—not only among those with Type 2 Diabetes but also in individuals experiencing fatigue, cravings, and fluctuating energy levels. While medication and medical guidance are essential in managing such conditions, nutrition plays a powerful complementary role. Among the many natural remedies gaining attention, two simple kitchen staples—Chia seeds and Apple cider vinegar—have emerged as effective "superfoods" for improving blood sugar balance and enhancing insulin sensitivity. Rooted in both traditional wisdom and modern research, these ingredients offer a gentle yet impactful way to support metabolic health.

Understanding Blood Sugar and Insulin Sensitivity

Before exploring these superfoods, it's important to understand the basics. Blood sugar levels rise after eating, especially foods rich in carbohydrates. The hormone insulin helps transport glucose from the bloodstream into cells for energy. However, when the body becomes less responsive to insulin—a condition known as Insulin resistance—glucose begins to accumulate in the blood. Over time, this can lead to chronic health issues, including Type 2 diabetes. Improving insulin sensitivity means helping the body use insulin more effectively, thereby maintaining stable blood sugar levels.

Chia seeds: Tiny Seeds with Powerful Benefits

Chia seeds may be small, but they are packed with fiber, omega-3 fatty acids, protein, and antioxidants. Their high soluble fiber content allows them to absorb water and form a gel-like consistency when soaked. How Chia Seeds Help Balance Blood Sugar:

- **Slow Digestion and Glucose Release:** The gel-forming fiber in chia seeds slows down the digestion of carbohydrates, preventing sudden spikes in blood sugar levels after meals.
- **Improved Insulin Sensitivity:** Regular consumption of chia seeds has been linked to improved insulin function, making it easier for the body to regulate glucose.
- **Reduced Cravings and Better Satiety:** By



promoting a feeling of fullness, chia seeds help reduce overeating and sugar cravings, indirectly supporting better glycemic control.

Apple cider vinegar: A Traditional Elixir for Modern Health

What Makes Apple Cider Vinegar Effective?

Apple cider vinegar (ACV), especially the raw and unfiltered variety, contains acetic acid, which plays a crucial role in regulating blood sugar levels. How Apple Cider Vinegar Supports Blood Sugar Control:

- **Reduces Post-Meal Blood Sugar Spikes:** Consuming ACV before or with meals has been shown to lower blood sugar levels by slowing carbohydrate digestion.
- **Enhances Insulin Sensitivity:** Acetic acid improves the body's response to insulin, particularly after high-carbohydrate meals.
- **Supports Gut Health:** A healthy gut contributes to better metabolic function, and ACV's natural probiotics (in raw forms) may aid digestion and nutrient absorption.

Combining Both for Better Results

Using chia seeds and apple cider vinegar together can amplify their benefits. For instance, a morning routine of soaked chia seeds followed by diluted ACV before meals may help maintain stable blood sugar throughout the day.

Bread can cause weight gain without extra calories

Bread and other carbohydrate staples may be doing more than just filling plates—they could be quietly reshaping metabolism. In a surprising twist, researchers found that mice strongly preferred carbs like bread, rice, and wheat, abandoning their regular diet entirely. Even without eating more calories, they gained weight and body fat, not because they overate, but because their bodies burned less energy.

Bread has long been a dietary cornerstone, sustaining societies for generations. It is deeply woven into everyday life. But with obesity rates continuing to climb, researchers are beginning to question whether this reliance on staple carbohydrates still makes sense in modern diets.

Obesity increases the risk of many lifestyle-related diseases, making prevention a major public health priority. Traditionally, research has focused on high fat consumption as the main driver of weight gain. This is why many animal studies rely on high fat diets.

However, carbohydrates such as bread, rice, and noodles are consumed daily around the world, yet their role in obesity and metabolism has not been explored as thoroughly. While many people believe that "bread makes you gain weight" or that "carbohydrates should be limited," it has been unclear whether the issue lies in

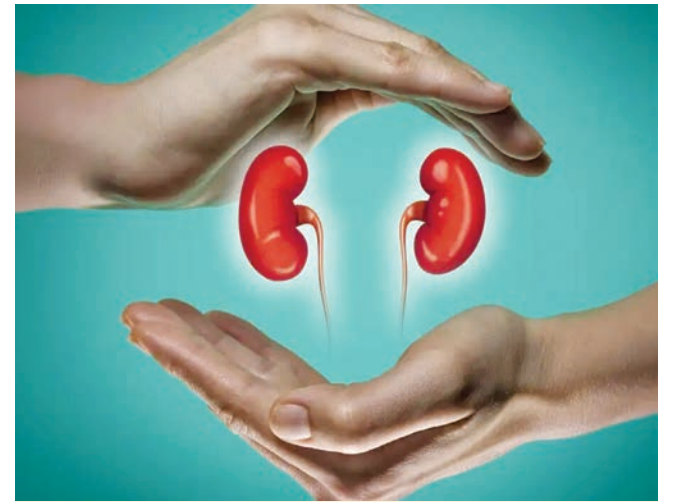
the foods themselves or in how people choose and consume them.

To better understand these questions, a research team led by Professor Shigenobu Matsumura at Osaka Metropolitan University's Graduate School of Human Life and Ecology studied how carbohydrates influence eating behavior and metabolism in mice.

The researchers examined whether mice preferred foods like wheat, bread, and rice over standard chow, and how these choices affected body weight and energy use. The animals were divided into several feeding groups, including Chow, Chow + Bread, Chow + Wheat flour, Chow + Rice flour, High-fat diet (HFD) + Chow, and HFD + Wheat flour. The team tracked changes in body weight, energy expenditure, blood metabolites, and liver gene expression.

The findings showed that mice strongly favored carbohydrate-rich foods and stopped eating their standard chow altogether. Even though their total calorie intake did not increase significantly, both body weight and fat mass went up.

Mice that consumed rice flour gained weight in a similar way to those that ate wheat flour. In contrast, mice given a High-fat diet (HFD) + Wheat flour gained less weight than those on a High-fat diet (HFD) + Chow.



Habits to keep your kidneys healthy

Below are 5 effective practices that should be embedded into your lifestyle, and have more power to fortify the kidneys than merely hydrating.

Adopt a Low-Salt, Nutrient-Rich Diet

Too much salt can result in high blood pressure, which is a burden on the kidneys that they do not need. Eating fresh, less processed foods can also help keep the electrolyte balance in check. Diet high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains: The more plants the better diet plays a major role too.

Maintain an Active Lifestyle

A good flow and blood pressure is supported by regular physical activity. Physical activity aids the body in glucose management and reduces kidney damage risks. Thirty minutes a day of walking lowers the long-term risk of kidney protection.

Control Blood Sugar and Blood Pressure

Untreated diabetes and high blood pressure are top risk factors for kidney disease. Regular checking of the numbers helps to avoid destruction of delicate kidney architecture. It is healthy lifestyle and medical advisement that keep these parameters in line.

Prioritize Quality Sleep

Poor sleep messes with hormones that govern kidney function. Regular sleep helps the body to repair and keep filter actions functioning. Getting 7–8 hours of uninterrupted sleep is conducive to long term kidney health.

Control Overconsumption of Analgesics

Long-term intake of NSAIDs and certain medications can stress the kidneys. It slows down the toxicity and possible damage if taken for long periods, with physician consultation. Opting for safer modes or lifestyle-based management of pain can safeguard the kidney.

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AI market is ours: OpenAI memo leak slams Anthropic, says Microsoft is more limiting than Amazon

OpenAI's new revenue chief Denise Dresser sent an internal memo to the company's staff. In the memo, Dresser addressed the challenges the AI startup faced in the industry, particularly when it comes to competing against Anthropic. Dresser also claimed that Microsoft, who was an early investor in OpenAI, limited the company's reach in the enterprise market.

As per a report from The Verge, Dresser recognised the need for OpenAI to be a multi-product brand that can ensure that users don't switch to rival companies including Anthropic.

Denise claimed that OpenAI would emerge victorious against Anthropic in the long run. She insisted that the Dario Amodei-led firm was built on fear around AI. The OpenAI chief explained, "Their story is built on fear, restriction, and the idea that a small group of elites should control AI." On the other hand, she reckoned that OpenAI's "positive message" would "win over time."

Denise Dresser accepted that Anthropic's focus on Claude Code gave the company an early edge. Though she believed that the AI startup had made a big mistake in not purchasing enough compute. Dresser added, "Their strategic misstep to not acquire enough compute is showing up in the product."

Anthropic recently reported an annual run-rate (ARR) of \$30 billion, higher than OpenAI's ARR of \$25 billion.



However, Dresser reckoned that Anthropic's figure may be inflated. She wrote, "They use accounting treatment that makes revenue look bigger than it is, including grossing up rev share with Amazon and Google. Our analysis shows that this overstates their run rate by roughly \$8 billion (at the current \$30 stated)."

Microsoft has been a key investor and strategic partner for OpenAI. The Redmond giant has been the main cloud provider for OpenAI's API. Though, OpenAI has been diversifying cloud providers, including CoreWeave, Google, and Oracle, as Microsoft increasingly treats OpenAI as a competitor.

However, according to Denise Dresser, this also prevented the AI startup from reaching clients on other platforms, including Amazon's Bedrock. She

explained, "Our Microsoft partnership has been foundational to our success. But it has also limited our ability to meet enterprises where they are – for many that's Bedrock."

OpenAI could garner significant enterprise market share if it can provide access to its models via Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Bedrock. The Sam Altman-led firm is trying to get more market share among enterprises as it attempts to compete with Anthropic. The company had recently told employees that it was no longer going to entertain sidequests, and instead was doubling down on tools like Codex.

OpenAI and Anthropic are both preparing for initial public offerings this year. OpenAI is currently valued at \$852 billion while Anthropic has a \$350 billion market cap.

Biggest 3D map of the universe ready, 47 million galaxies mapped

In a stunning milestone for science, astronomers have just finished the biggest 3D map of the universe ever created.

The cherry on top is the fact that they wrapped up the long, intricate process a full year early.

The project, called DESI, offers an unprecedented look at how galaxies and stars are spread across space and time, promising fresh clues about one of cosmology's biggest puzzles. The mystery behind the force is called dark energy.

It sits on the Nicholas U Mayall 4-metre telescope at Kitt Peak National Observatory in Arizona, US. DESI is a super-smart camera with 5,000 tiny fiberoptic eyes that lock onto distant objects every 20 minutes.

Starting in May 2021, it spent five years collecting light from galaxies, the glowing hearts of faraway galaxies called quasars, and stars.

The result of the long, tedious endeavour is now a map of more than 47 million galaxies and quasars, which beat the original goal of 34 million. Also mapped were around 20 million stars.

The map covers 14,000 square degrees of sky, roughly one-third of the entire celestial dome. By studying how their light has stretched over billions of years, the map traces cosmic history back 11 billion years.

Most people know the universe is expanding after the Big Bang.

But about 25 years ago, scientists discovered something surprising. They discovered that this expansion is speeding up and the driver of the acceleration is dark energy, an invisible force that makes up roughly 70 percent of the universe.

DESI's map can now help scientists and researchers understand dark energy better by letting them measure how galaxies clustered together at different times.

Early data from the first three years already hinted that dark energy might not be constant, that it could be changing as the universe ages.

The full five-year dataset, which contains six times more objects than all earlier surveys combined, will test that idea more precisely and help predict the universe's ultimate fate.

Despite achieving this remarkable feat, the instrument is not planning to stop. DESI plans to keep observing through 2028, expanding the map by another 20 percent and filling in tricky areas near the Milky Way.

Scientists expect the first big results on dark energy in 2027, with more discoveries rolling out soon after.

"This moment feels like sitting on the edge of my seat," said NSF NOIRLab astronomer Stephanie Juneau.

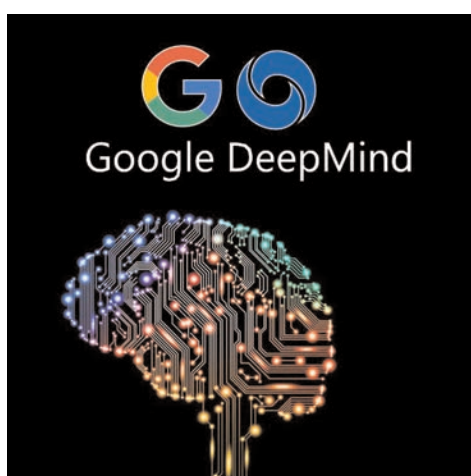
Google DeepMind hires a philosopher, he will work on machine consciousness

Google DeepMind has hired a philosopher to prepare for a stage when AI potentially gets conscious. The philosopher, Henry Shevlin, announced on X that he will be working with the company on not just artificial general intelligence (AGI) – a stage where AI thinks like humans – but also on the future of relationships between humans and AI.

Shevlin is not the first philosopher to be hired by an AI firm to understand machine consciousness. Earlier this year, Anthropic hired Amanda Askell to help teach Claude ethics and morals.

Shevlin stated that he will be "focusing on machine consciousness, human-AI relationships, and AGI readiness." He will join Google DeepMind next month.

Shevlin's appointment marks an effort by DeepMind to address complex philosophical questions surrounding AI development. His work will focus on understanding and preparing for the



implications of machine consciousness as AI systems advance.

As AI models continue to advance, there have been fears that machines may put their own interests ahead of humans, something that Hollywood has often showcased, with films like The Matrix. Do note that many have started

to be affected by such fears.

Recently, a 20-year-old man allegedly attacked Sam Altman's residence in San Francisco. Police reports claimed that the suspect feared the extinction of humanity due to AI.

Having philosophers train AI on what is right and what is wrong, could ensure that machines have a similar view of the world as to humans, something that Anthropic has started doing with Amanda Askell.

Who is Google DeepMind's new philosopher?

Shevlin is a part-time researcher and teacher at the University of Cambridge. He has stated that he will continue his role at the university along with his new position at Google DeepMind.

Henry completed his PhD from the City University of New York. He also has a BPhil and BA from the University of Oxford.

Tariffs Comeback? Trump eyes July reset using Section 301 trade tool

APRIL 17, 2026

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs could soon be restored, likely by July, to levels seen prior to the US Supreme Court's ruling, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said. "We had a setback at the Supreme Court in terms of tariff policy, but we will be implementing or conducting Section 301 studies, so the tariffs could be back in place at the previous level by the beginning of July," Bessent said, according to a Wall Street Journal report.

Bessent said that since Section 301 tariff authority has already been tested in courts, business leaders can begin planning and making decisions around capital expenditure. According to reports, Trump is seeking to revamp his tariff strategy through alternative legal pathways after a US court in February ruled that his use of emergency powers to impose tariffs was unconstitutional.

What is Section 301?

Following the court's decision to strike down Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs, the administration introduced a temporary blanket tariff of 10% for a period of 150 days. This levy is set to expire on July 24. In the weeks since, the Trump administration has initiated probes into 16 major economies, including India and China, under Section 301.

Section 301 of the US Trade Act of 1974 allows the US to impose retaliatory tariffs if it determines that the trade policies of other countries unfairly harm American industry. In effect, Section 301 is Washington's primary legal tool for responding to what it considers unfair trade practices. According to reports, public comments for the current investigation will be accepted until April 15, with a hearing expected around May 5.

Iran war impact on US economy

Speaking about the ongoing conflict with Iran and the impact of elevated crude oil prices on the US economy, Bessent said it was difficult to estimate when the economic consequences of the war would "catch up" with the US



WHAT IT MEANS

- US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Trump's reciprocal tariffs could return by early July through Section 301 investigations after the Supreme Court setback.
- The Trump administration has launched Section 301 probes into 16 economies, including India and China, examining alleged unfair trade practices.
- A temporary 10% blanket tariff remains in place until July 24 as Washington explores alternative legal routes to revive higher duties.

economy, reiterating that it remains in "strong shape."

"I do think that growth could easily exceed three, three-and-a-half this year," he said. Bessent added that core inflation, which excludes food and volatile fuel prices, continues to decline. "I think the Fed has been wrong on inflation, and core inflation is coming down," he said. "I understand if they want to wait until the data is clearer, but that will mean that interest rates should come down a lot more."

China's economy grows 5% in first quarter, surprising economists to the upside

APRIL 17, 2026

BEIJING (TIP): China's economy accelerated in the first quarter of this year, expanding 5% from a year earlier as it largely shrugged off impacts from the Iran war so far, according to data released Thursday, April 17.

The January-March data released by the government, covering a period during which the Iran war began, was better than what economists expected and was up from the 4.5% growth seen in the October-December quarter.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, China's economy grew 1.3% in the first three months from the final quarter of last year, the fastest pace in a year.

Economists expect China, the world's second largest economy, to be able to weather short-term impacts from the Iran war, now in its seventh week. The war is pushing energy prices higher, worsening inflation and impacting global economic growth. But longer term, areas including global demand for Chinese exports could



take a hit. The International Monetary Fund this week trimmed its economic growth estimates for China to a 4.4% expansion for 2026 as it lowered its global growth forecasts over Iran war shocks. Chinese leaders last month set an economic growth target of 4.5% to 5% for this year, the slowest since 1991.

"China can likely weather short term disruptions, but a protracted war and

higher for longer energy prices would likely start to bite into growth by the second half of the year," said Lynn Song, chief economist for Greater China at Dutch bank ING.

Also on Thursday, government data showed industrial output in China rose 5.7% in March year-on-year, better than market expectations, as global demand for Chinese exports of electronic equipments, autos, semiconductors and robotics remained strong.

Retail sales were up 1.7% from a year earlier, worse-than-estimates and slower than the 2.8% growth in January and February, reflecting sluggish domestic demand for consumer goods.

A years-long real estate sector slump in China has dragged consumer and investor confidence, but the country managed to achieve its targeted "around 5%" growth last year, powered by robust exports that drove its trade surplus to a record nearly \$1.2 trillion despite U.S. President Donald Trump's higher tariffs.

India will remain fastest-growing major economy in 2026 and 2027, predicts IMF

APRIL 16, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday, marginally increased India's growth projections for 2026 and 2027, to 6.5% in both years, even as it downgraded its global growth projection to 3.1% in 2026, down from the 3.3% it predicted in January.

IMF's latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) report comes against the background of the war in West Asia, which has roiled global markets and supply chains. The US and Iran are currently in the middle of an uncertain ceasefire, but the first round of talks after the ceasefire was announced, which were held last weekend, did not result in a peace deal.

India too has been affected by the war, with supplies of gas especially, being hit, but IMF's update reiterates that the country will remain the fastest-growing major economy in the world in both 2026 and 2027. IMF's update, however, clarified that the current global environment is hostile from the growth perspective.

The April 2026 edition of the report, titled "Global Economy in the Shadow of War", also revised IMF's estimate of India's growth in 2025 to 7.6%, a full percentage point higher than what it projected in October last year. This is in keeping with India's official GDP growth rate of 7.6% in 2025-26. IMF's calendar year projections/ estimates represent India's fiscal years in way so that 2025 in IMF data captures 2025-26 for India's fiscal year. Meanwhile, India's growth in both the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years is expected to be 6.5%, which will still leave the country well ahead of other major economies. IMF's 2026 growth forecast for India is slightly lower than RBI's growth forecast of 6.9% for 2026-27.

"In India, growth for 2025 is revised upward by 1.0 percentage point relative to October, to 7.6%, reflecting the better-than-expected outturn in the second and third quarters of the fiscal year and sustained strong momentum in the fourth quarter. For 2026, growth is revised upward moderately by 0.3 percentage point (0.1 percentage point relative to January) to 6.5%, led by positive contributions from the carry-over of the strong 2025 outturn and the decline in additional US tariffs on Indian goods from 50% to 10%, which outweigh the adverse impact of the Middle East conflict. Growth is projected to stay at 6.5% in 2027," said the report.

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - APRIL 20, 2026 TO APRIL 26, 2026

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

ARIES



Ganesha says that this week will prove to be fruitful for the people of Aries. This week luck will be with you at every step.

If you have been working on an action plan for a long time, then this week you will get good results in it. Students who are preparing for the exam competition can get some good news at the beginning of the week. During this time, you will be seen to concentrate your full attention on your career and business. For which you will also get to see good results. Employed people will also get better opportunities and additional means of income. However, while taking a big step in the direction of employment, do not forget to take the advice of your well-wishers. In the second half of the week, the journey done in connection with business will prove to be pleasant and profitable. The wish of buying and selling land and buildings can be fulfilled. During this time, it is possible to meet a dear person. There will be better tuning with the love partner. If you are still single, then your attraction towards the opposite sex will increase. Married life will remain happy. Health will be normal and there will be opportunities to spend time happily with the family.

TAURUS



Ganesha says that this week will be full of ups and downs for the people of Taurus. At the beginning of the week,

employed people may suddenly get unwanted responsibilities or additional workload may come. During this, the cooperation of family members will be less. Due to this, the mind will remain a little disturbed. There can be differences between siblings about something. Students may get distracted from their studies. During this time, be it at home or the workplace, do not give weight to small things. Working women may find it difficult to strike a balance between work and home. There may be tough competition with the competitors in the business. During this, invest money in any scheme or speculative lottery, etc. wisely. There will also be chances of traveling to a religious place in the second half of the week. However, take great care of both your health and your belongings during the journey. Love relations will be normal. There will be full support from the father in difficult times related to life.

GEMINI



Ganesha says that this week will bring opportunities for progress in life for the

people of Gemini. At the beginning of the week itself, you will get excellent opportunities to advance your career. There will also be a chance to associate with a good friend or an influential person with a benefit plan, but you will be a little confused about making the right decision in this regard. Renovation or decoration of the house may result in high out-of-pocket expenditure. From an economic point of view, you may be short of money at this time. Employed people will get the support of both seniors and juniors in the workplace, however, be aware of your opponents, otherwise, they can create hurdles in your work. Drive the vehicle with caution otherwise, there is a possibility of injury. This week will prove to be lucky for you in terms of a love relationship. If you were thinking of proposing to someone, then doing so will make a difference. On the other hand, the closeness and mutual trust of people who are already in a love relationship with their love partner will increase. Married life will remain happy. Will get to spend moments of laughter and happiness with the family. Be careful about your health. An old disease can emerge once again.

CANCER



Ganesha says that the people of Cancer will have to avoid doing distant losses in favor of nearby gains this week.

At the beginning of the week, move ahead with care regarding career business. Do not be negligent in any work in the workplace, otherwise, you may have to become a victim of the boss's anger. The money stuck in the market will be a major cause of concern for them. Control your speech and anger while solving any family-related issue, otherwise, you may have to face trouble. Try not to turn differences with family members into differences of opinion. In the second half of the week, interest in social work will arise and there will be an association with it. During this time, you will be more conscious about your health, but to keep it right, you will have to correct your routine along with your food and drink. Sweetness will remain in married life, but the ill health of your spouse can become a major cause of your worry.

LEO



Ganesha says that this week the people of the Leo zodiac will have to worry about their benefit as well as the interest of

others, otherwise your relationships built over the years may get spoiled. Avoid neglecting old relationships while building new relationships with someone. You have to take full care of the fact that even a stopped clock tells the correct time once a day. If any of your matter is going on in the court, then try to solve it outside, otherwise, it may drag on for a long time. Avoid relying excessively on others in business, otherwise, you may have to face financial loss. People doing business in partnership should especially keep this in mind. This week, before investing

money in any scheme or stock market, do take the advice of an expert or a well-wisher. Long or short-distance travel is possible at the end of the week. Take special care of your luggage and health during the journey. Lack of desired fruits and an exhausting journey can affect both your body and mind. Take a step forward in your love affair and avoid interfering excessively in the life of your love partner, otherwise, you may face problems. You will feel very relaxed if your life partner stands by your side in any challenging time in life.

VIRGO



Ganesha says that the natives of Virgo will be seen to be lucky this week. This week, the efforts made in the direction of livelihood will be successful and you will get the desired profit in business. If you are a working person, then you can get praise from the boss for your hard work this week. However, you have to avoid glorifying your plans in front of everyone, otherwise, your opponents may try to create hurdles in it. Students engaged in the preparation of examination competitions will get full results according to their hard work. They may get some good news by the end of the week, due to which there will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family. Jobs will become an additional source of income for the people. There will be a chance to join the scheme of profit through an influential person associated with the powerful government. In the second half of the week, there will be a trip to a tourist destination with the family. Any big achievement related to the child side will be a big reason for your respect. The dream of buying land or a vehicle can be fulfilled. However, do take the advice of your well-wishers while doing so. Love relations will intensify and mutual trust will increase. You will get opportunities to spend quality time with your love partner. Health will be normal.

LIBRA



Ganesha says that this week will prove to be very auspicious for the people of the Libra zodiac. When the planned work is completed on time, you will get to see tremendous confidence and enthusiasm within you. The search for livelihood will end. Those who are already working somewhere, can get important responsibility, appreciation, or appointment or transfer to the desired place. If you have been thinking of buying and selling any land, building a vehicle, etc. for a long time, then your wish can be fulfilled this week. If any matter related to land-building or ancestral property is going on in the court, then it will be resolved outside the court by mutual agreement. Due to this your mind will get a lot of relief. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the house by buying something new related to comfort. This week will prove to be especially auspicious for those working on commission. Students engaged in

preparing for examination competitions will get results according to their hard work. Any achievement of the child side will be the reason for your happiness and respect. In the second half of the week, there will be a chance to get involved in religious-social activities. Love relationships, mutual trust, and closeness will increase. Married life will remain happy. Health will be normal.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says that the people of the Scorpio zodiac should avoid taking any big decision this week in anger or by

getting carried away by emotions, otherwise, they may have to repent later. At the beginning of the week, the job profession may have to face the workload and stress in the workplace. During this time, your opponents may try to obstruct your work or distract you from your goal. In such a situation, it would be better to focus on your work instead of giving importance to small things. While solving any problem in the family, take the help of dialogue instead of dispute. Do not make such a promise to anyone, which will be difficult for you to fulfill later. In the second half of the week, take special care of your health and drive carefully. During this time, you can become a victim of seasonal diseases, injuries, etc. An old disease can emerge once again. In such a situation, keep your health and routine right. There can be some ups and downs in business. However, this situation will not last for long, and soon you will see work getting back on track. To keep the love relationship strong, do not ignore the feelings of the love partner. Married life will remain happy.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says that the people of Sagittarius will get the full support of luck this week. From the beginning of the week,

the planned tasks will be seen to be completed rapidly. There will be full support from friends and family members. Any big achievement related to life will become a big reason for your and your family's happiness. Seniors will praise you for your work in the field. You may get some important responsibility. During this time, the journey undertaken in connection with career and business will prove to be successful. Employed people will get new opportunities to progress and additional sources of income. Travels made for business or any special work will prove to be successful and profitable. However, in the midst of all this, you will be able to take out less time for yourself and will find yourself tired of body and mind. During this time, the mind will also be a little worried due to the re-emergence of some old disease. The health of a dear person in the house will also become a major cause of your concern. In the second half of the week, with the help of an influential person, you will be able to find a solution to a big

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : APRIL 20 TO APRIL 26 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

APRIL 20

Ganesha says you enjoy reading to expand your knowledge, but you need to learn to control your desire when you are shy, cocky, or moody. Children can provide immense happiness and success in their chosen careers. Going on a distant journey or pilgrimage may be high on your agenda. Asset sales, rental income, dividends, and interest payments all result in a financial gain to the seller. Long-term investments and speculative ventures are also beneficial at this time.

APRIL 21

Ganesha says today you should work on controlling your reckless and stubborn behavior at times. Entrepreneurs can diversify their businesses and pursue new, lucrative opportunities. If you are in the real estate business, you can do incredibly well, but you can expect some partner rivalry. You may be happy to hear some exciting news from your children later today. Make the most of your new romance, which may be new to you. Meditation and yoga should be practiced for both spiritual and physical benefits.

APRIL 22

Ganesha says starting new businesses is encouraged in times to come. Earlier sluggish projects can gain momentum. If there is any difference, it can be resolved, due to which will make you feel relieved. Due to your competitive nature, you may always try to outperform others and be liked by your classmates. Friends can be cooperative but unpleasant. A love affair with colleagues is likely to develop, but it may be very fleeting.

APRIL 23

Ganesha says that at this time you can have a lot of energy, and if you use it well, then you can achieve great achievements. At the end of the year, there is a possibility of a long journey to attend an important event. It is not advisable to rely on friends and family, as they may not be friendly. Financially, this appears to be an excellent time to buy equity and real estate, but all purchases should be made with the long term in mind.

APRIL 24

Ganesha says the financial condition of

many people may improve today, and some may inherit family property. Progress in business and financial gain can increase your confidence. Both academically and athletically, students can do incredibly well. People with high blood pressure or piles should be careful about their health. Legal issues running in your mind can be resolved to your satisfaction. For some, there are chances of promotion and increment.

APRIL 25

Ganesha says to be aware of your tendency to be impulsive and hasty. To improve your productivity, take the initiative to adapt the workplace environment to your needs. You can target meetings with well-known delegates from around the world. You can be able to start saving for the future now. You can appreciate your partner being around. You have deep faith in God, and you may visit many holy places soon. Your attention can be drawn toward interior design and construction.

APRIL 26

Ganesha says people may look at you



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

with respect and reverence. You have the patience to handle any situation. You can become a famous person who attracts everyone's attention due to your originality and well-planned work. Your short temper and eccentric nature can keep you away from social gatherings. Due to your powerful nature, you may have to lose your credibility. You can take matrimonial vows soon. Be patient, as it may take some more time to resolve your legal challenges.

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problem. Better tuning will be seen with the love partner, and it will become your strength. Married life will remain happy.

CAPRICORN



Capricorn

Ganesha says that the people of Capricorn will need to move forward with great patience and very careful steps this week. If you are associated with any business and are thinking of taking your business forward, then invest money for it very carefully and take the advice of any of your well-wishers while deciding in this regard. At the beginning of the week, traveling for a career or business can prove to be tiring and futile. During the journey, you should take great care of both your health and your belongings. Take special care in money transactions. This week you should drive the vehicle very carefully, otherwise, there is a possibility of injury. If you are thinking of changing the job, then you should consider all the aspects while deciding this matter. Let it happen that you harm a distant place for a nearby benefit. Disputes related to ancestral property may deepen in the second half of the week. If you find yourself in a state of confusion in this matter, then instead of taking any major decision, postpone it further or take the advice of a close friend. Some misunderstandings can arise in a love relationship. Due to not being able to meet the love partner, the mind can remain upset.

AQUARIUS



Aquarius

Ganesha says that the people of Aquarius will have to avoid putting too much trust in others with excessive enthusiasm this week. Both these things can become a big reason for spoiling your work. The beginning of the week will prove to be auspicious for those people who do work related to foreign countries and then want to establish their career or business by going abroad. Those working in property or construction will get the desired success and profit. Employed people will become an additional source of income. Due to the arrival of a dear member in the house, there will be an atmosphere of happiness in the house. In the second half of the week, you will need to be more alert in the workplace. Your opponents can distract you from your goal or obstruct your work. This week cannot be called very good from the point of view of health, because this week you can be a victim of injury or seasonal illness,

etc., which will work to fade the glow of your happiness a little. If you are thinking of proposing your love in front of someone, then you should wait for the right time to do so, otherwise, your relationship may get spoiled and if you are already in a love relationship, then you will have to wait for your love. To strengthen the relationship, avoid ignoring the feelings of the love partner. Married life will remain happy.



Pisces

PISCES

Ganesha says that this week will prove to be successful for the people of Pisces. At the beginning of the week, there will be success and profit in the works related to power governance. For those who want a transfer or a higher position at a particular place, their wait may end this week. People engaged in the preparation of examination competitions will get good news. For the people of Pisces, this week will also prove to be very favorable from an economic point of view. Travels made

in connection with business will prove to be successful and profitable. The respect and dominance of people associated with politics will increase in their party and society. People will not only respect your decision but will also follow it. In the second half of the week, working women may find it difficult to balance between home and work, although this situation will be short-lived. Love relations will be intense. There will be opportunities to spend moments of laughter and happiness with the love partner. At the end of the week, a long or short-distance travel program can be made with the family. During this, pay special attention to your health and diet, otherwise, you may have stomach problems.

Author Bio : Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Sikh History This Week

APRIL 24 TO APRIL 30

24th April

1923 SGPC declares its dissociation with the Babbar Akalis.

1955 Akali Dal decided to launch a peaceful agitation for Punjabi Suba.



1980 Gurbachan Singh, Chief of fake Nirankaris, murdered.

25th April

1635 Battle of Kartarpur between Mughals and Sikhs led by Guru Hargobind Ji.



1809 Amritsar agreement between Ranjit Singh and British Government. An agreement was reached between the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and British Government in Amritsar. This represent the very first agreement among the Sikhs and the British government. As a result the Phulkia Riyasat was placed under the control of the British.

26th April

1969 Lachhman Singh Gill died of heart attack. He could not bear the insult of his arrest by Gurnam Singh's government which in actuality was an act of revenge



1984 15 GurSikhs Killed at Gurudwara Bibi Kahan Kaur, Moga.

The Border Security Forces (BSF) of India killed 15 GurSikhs and injured 25 others at Gurudwara Bibi Kahan Kaur, Moga. Water, power and the electrical supply to 20

Sikh shrines including three at Moga were cut. 300 Sikhs were detained in these Gurdwaras.

1998 Justice Kuldeep Singh, in his capacity as the

Founder-President of the World Sikh Council, announced a 3-member People's Commission to enquire into disappearances in Punjab during the militancy days. Former Supreme Court Judge Justice K. Reddy, would head the commission while the other two members of the commission are former Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court Justice D.S. Tevalia, and former Judge of the Mumbai High Court Justice H. Suresh. The victims of the police atrocities could present their cases with documentary proof to the commission.



27th April

Prakash Utsav, Second Patshah, Guru Angad Dev Ji.



(1504-1552): The mantle of the First Master fell on Angad, the second Sikh Guru, in 1539, and he graced the exalted position till 1552.

Born at Mattae de Saran, a Punjab village, on Sunday, Vaisakh Vadi 1 sunmat 1561 (March 31, 1504) to father Pheru Mal and mother Dya Kaur, Guru Angad was originally known as Lehna. In sunmat 1576, Guru Sahib married Khivi, daughter of Devi Chand. This marriage resulted in two daughters Bibi Amro and Anokhi and two sons Dassu and Dattu Ji. Lehna's parents were orthodox Hindus and worshippers of the goddess Durga. The most momentous and exulting moment in Lehna's life came around 1531 when he met Guru Nanak at Kartarpur. So powerful and profound was the Guru's divine spell on him that he wound up domestic affairs and devoted himself entirely to the service of the Guru and of fellow-men in whom the Lord constantly dwells. Because of his patient and unpretentious service, he endeared himself to the Guru who lovingly called him Angad (i.e., of my own limb) and elevated him to the Guruship on Hadh 17th sunmat 1596. However, Guru Angad actually assumed Guruship on Asu 23rd sunmat 1596 and started his work.

29th April

1590 The digging of Taran Taran sarowar was initiated.

1635 Battle of Phagwara between Mughals and Sikhs led by Guru Hargobind Ji.

Battle of Phagwara took place between the Mughals and Sikhs led by Guru Hargobind Ji. Because of the suddenness of the on slaught, the Sikhs couldn't arrange prompt defensive measures and a result suffered some loss of manpower.

GURU HARGOBIND JI'S BATTLE AT PHAGWARA: After the battle of Kartarpur, Guru Hargind promptly

shifted to Kiratpur amidst the Punjab hills as a place remote from Lahore. Kiratpur was considered better from the point of view of safety. The Sikhs were attacked by a royal detachment, commanded by Ahmad Khan, son of Abdula Khan, when they were in vicinity of Phagwara. The onslaught was so sudden that the Sikhs could not arrange prompt defensive measures and suffered some loss of manpower. Those who figured in this battle on the side of the imperialists included Fateh Khan and Ahmad Khan, who were slain while fighting. Zafat Kahn, Jamal Khan and Fateh Khan were among those who fought against teh Sikhs to the last. Tradition holds that Tegh Bahadur showed such great feats with sword that Guru Hargobind is said to have remarked that Tegh Mal seemed a more appropriate name than Tiag Mal.

1849 Maharani Jind Kaur escapes from the maximum security of Chunar fort and reaches Kathmandhu in Nepal.

1986 Panthic Committee announced the "Declaration of Independence" from Akal Takht Sahib.

When the killings of Sikhs became a daily routine in Punjab, the Panthic Committee of Damdami Taksal (Chowk Mehta) announced the 'Declaration of Independence' and the formation of Kahlistan Government. The declaraion was made from Akal Takht Sahib. After the declaration of the new Government, the "Cabinet" left Darbar Sahib for some unknown destination.

30th April

1689 Bhangani battle between Guru Gobind Singh and the Hill Rajas.

Battle of Bhangani took place between Sri Guru Gobind Singh and and Hindu Rajas, Bhim Chand Kahluri, Fateh Shah Gadhwalia, Hari Chand Handuria, etc. Guru's forces came out victorious. This was Guru Gobind Singh first battle in which Bibi Biro's sons Sangho Shah and Jeetmal accepted shahdat. Raja Hari Chand and several rajputs were killed by Guru Gobind Singh. A detailed description of this battle is provided in the 8th Chapter of BachitarNatak. Also in this battle, Pir Budhu Shah's sons and 700 of his followers fought along side Guru's forces.

1837 Jamroadh battle where Hari Singh Nalwas accepted Shahadat.

Jamrodh battle took place. Akbar Khan, knowing the absence of Sikh troops, attacked Jamrod. Sikh troops were sent away from Jamrod and Peshawar for ceremonial duties. Hari Singh Nalwa sought immediate assistance from Lahore, but his request was not deliberately placed before Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Dhian Singh to make Hari Singh Nalwa's position difficult. This battle saw heavy casualties on both sides. Sikhs repulsed the Afghans on but their leader Hari Singh Nalwa was seriously wounded and died on this day. Maharaja Ranjit Singh cried bitter tears, as loss of Hari Singh was too great. The Dogras became supreme as none other sardar could check-mate them. Maharaja Ranjit Singh never fully annexed the frontier but ruled them through Muslim chiefs.

1877 A mysterious aroma circumambulated the Holy Guru Granth Sahib in Harimandir Sahib, Golden Temple, Amritsar.

1921 S G P C registered with British government as a Sikh body in Lahore.

1986 Surjit S. Barnala ordered an attack, Black Thunder, on Sri Darbar Sahib.



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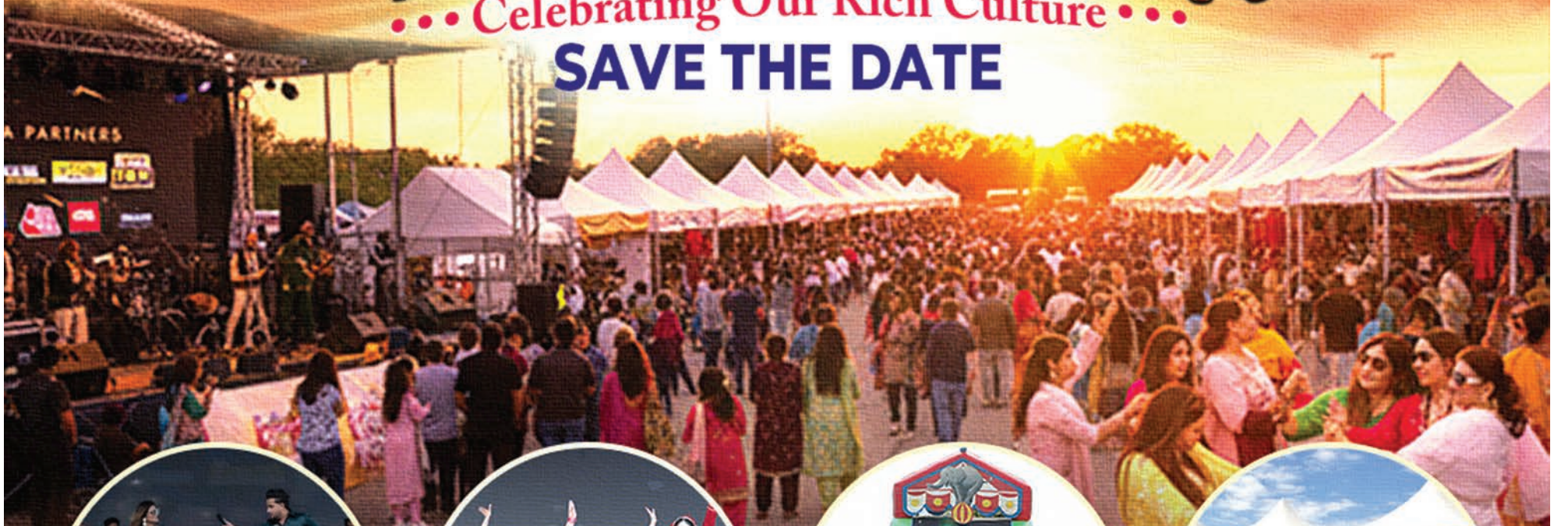
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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Trump claims Iran agreed to give...

"They've agreed to give us back the nuclear dust that's way underground because of the attack we made with the B2 bombers. We have a lot of agreement with Iran, and I think something's going to happen very positively," the US President added.

The remarks come amid diplomatic engagements between Tehran and Washington in order to achieve a complete halt to the hostilities in West Asia, as the fragile ceasefire continues between the two sides.

Meanwhile, Trump said it remains unclear whether the ceasefire with Iran will be extended, even as he expressed optimism about ongoing negotiations and indicated that the next round of talks could take place over the weekend.

Responding to a question on extending the ceasefire, President Trump said, "We're doing very well. I can tell you, maybe it'll happen before that. I'm not sure it needs to be extended. Just so you know, Iran wants to make a deal, and we're dealing very nicely with them. We've got to have no nuclear weapons. If we do, that's a big factor, and they're willing to do things today that they weren't willing to do two months ago."

He added that the US is currently focused on concluding a deal with Iran, suggesting that progress in talks could make an extension unnecessary.

"We're focused so much right now on Iran, seeing if we can get that completed, and I think we're going to be in very good shape. And I think if you look, the stock market is good, the oil prices are coming down, and it's looking very good that we're going to make a deal with Iran. And it's going to be a good deal, it's going to be a deal with no nuclear weapon," Trump said.

On the timeline for further negotiations, the US President indicated that the next in-person round may happen soon.

"Probably maybe over the weekend," the US President added. (Source: ANI)

UN chief welcomes Israel-Lebanon...

I hope this will pave the way for negotiations towards a long-term solution to the conflict & contribute to ongoing efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive...

- António Guterres (@antonioguterres) April 16, 2026

The remarks by the Secretary General come alongside ongoing diplomatic efforts led by the United States to stabilize the Israel-Lebanon border after a 10-day ceasefire was announced following intensive negotiations involving Washington, Tel Aviv, and Beirut.

US President Donald Trump described the developments as a potential breakthrough, saying discussions between the Israeli and Lebanese leadership could mark a historic shift.

"It's very exciting. With Lebanon, it's very exciting. I think we're going to have a deal. We're going to have a meeting first time in 44 years and Lebanon will be meeting with Israel and they're probably going to do it at the White House," he said, referring to talks involving Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun.

He added that the ceasefire arrangement would also involve Hezbollah. "They're going to be having a ceasefire and that'll include Hezbollah..." Trump said.

On the timeline for negotiations, the US President indicated that engagement could move quickly. "Over the next week or two," he said.

Trump also expressed optimism about broader alignment among parties involved in the conflict.

"I think we will have an agreement between Lebanon, and they're going to take care of Hezbollah," he said.

However, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday said Israeli forces would continue holding positions in southern Lebanon during the ceasefire period, insisting that security considerations require a continued military presence.

"We will remain in a 10-kilometre security zone, which will allow us to prevent infiltration into communities and anti-tank missile fire," Netanyahu said, adding, "That is where we will remain. We are not leaving."

Netanyahu also reiterated that Israel's objectives include the "disarmament of Hezbollah" and a "sustainable peace agreement - from a position of strength."

Meanwhile, reports from Lebanon suggested continued hostilities despite the ceasefire. According to Lebanon's National News Agency (NNA), Israeli artillery struck

areas in southern Lebanon shortly after the truce took effect, including the towns of Khiam and Dibbine, alongside machinegun fire and aerial surveillance activity.

The Israeli military said it remains on high alert along the border even as the ceasefire is in place.

Despite the tensions, celebrations were reported in parts of Beirut, with fireworks and gunfire marking the start of the ceasefire. (Source: ANI)

Sundar Pichai, Ranbir Kapoor, Vikas...

Emphasizing that honorees on the list are "changing culture in unprecedented ways," TIME said "that evolution is inspired by the knowledge that influence comes in many forms, as captured in the 2026 TIME100: a character imagined by novelist Tayari Jones; a meal prepared by chef Vikas Khanna; a moment captured by photographer Lynsey Addario, whose work has been featured in TIME since the Afghanistan war."

"We are inspired by the heroics of Olympians on this year's list, including Alysia Liu, Hilary Knight, and Chloe Kim-as we are by the genius of doctors like Kiran Musunuru and Rebecca Ahrens-Nicklas. Influence, as we often say, has no age requirement. The list includes both 96-year-old Huerta and 35-year-old Balendra Shah, elected Nepal's Prime Minister following the country's Gen Z protests," it added.

On Pichai, the TIME magazine profile said, "Few leaders have brought artificial intelligence to more people" than him. "Since becoming CEO of Google in 2015, he has overseen the translation and implementation of Google's research breakthroughs into products used by billions."

It added that even though Google is 27 years old, Pichai's leadership has "emphasized startup-like nimbleness, launching innovative AI products" such as Google AI Studio, Notebook LM, Gemini CLI and Antigravity.

"As a result, Google remains an AI deep-tech powerhouse, and its AI systems are reshaping how information is created and consumed worldwide. In an era when AI is redefining knowledge, work, and power, Pichai's influence lies not only in what Google builds, but in how widely it is used," the profile, written by founder of DeepLearning.AI and the co-founder of Google Brain Andrew Ng, said.

The TIME profile for Khanna describes him as a "man of extraordinary heart. His generosity extends far beyond the kitchen, reaching communities across the world with compassion, dignity, and a deep sense of responsibility. What makes Vikas so unique is his ability to connect with people from every walk of life, using food as a universal language to build bridges and foster understanding," James Beard Award-winning chef and co-owner of Le-Bernardin, Eric Ripert, wrote in the TIME profile for Khanna.

Khanna carries his culture with "immense pride", sharing the richness of Indian traditions while making them accessible and meaningful to a global audience. "With Bungalow, he has created more than a restaurant-it is a living expression of storytelling. Each dish reflects memory, heritage, and the collective voice of his team, giving space to narratives that deserve to be heard," the profile said, referring to Khanna's popular New York City restaurant. Khanna "reminds us that true influence is measured not only by success, but also by how deeply we uplift and connect with others," Ripert said.

Writing the TIME profile for Kapoor, actor Ayushmann Khurrana said, "there are actors who chase legacy and there are actors who become one through their craft. Ranbir Kapoor is the latter. In an industry as prolific and passionate as Indian cinema, we often measure greatness in decibels-box-office numbers, fan frenzy, opening weekends. But every once in a while, an actor shifts something quieter yet far more enduring: our emotional vocabulary as an audience. Ranbir has been doing that film after film. In a world where performances are often amplified, Ranbir internalizes. He shows our culture through quiet restraint. He represents the India that is finally learning how to listen to itself and leaves a mark through simple authenticity," the profile said.

It added that actors like Kapoor become important cultural bridges. "He embodies an India that is evolving not just in scale but also in sensitivity. Our cinema is influencing the world. Ranbir isn't just a movie star - he's a storyteller talking to a global audience and telling them stories of a fabled, mythical country where epics like 'The Ramayana' have inspired other civilizations and cultures."

On Mohan, TIME said he has "supercharged" the

YouTube's growth and omnipresence. "It is now the place where people are as likely to watch NFL games, podcasts, or Saturday Night Live as they are to watch locally sourced content like MrBeast and CoComelon."

TIME added that leading YouTube requires several discrete and usually mutually exclusive skills. Mohan has "enough nerdiness to earn the respect of software engineers plus sufficient charm to woo advertisers. He has negotiated deals with the biggest sports leagues in the world, yet his warmth has earned the loyalty of creators." The profile quotes American YouTuber Michelle Khare as saying "Approachability is one of Neal's superpowers."

TIME said Mamdani gave the Democratic Party a "new source of momentum", which was something it sorely lacked. "The second youngest mayor of the country's largest city has his work cut out for him," Time said adding that Mamdani's critics warn his housing agenda could affect investment, while his relationships with key constituencies-including parts of the Jewish community-and the city's financial constraints will test his ability to put ideas into action.

"So far, the feared exodus of businesses and wealthy residents hasn't materialized. He has also collaborated with Governor Kathy Hochul on a childcare plan, won federal housing funds, and even earned admiration from President Donald Trump-all signs he may be a force in Democratic politics for years to come," it said. (Agencies)

India's Ambassador to the US Vinay...

Ambassador Kwatra, in his address, presented a broad and reflective overview of India's development, emphasizing that economic growth must be inclusive. If the benefits of growth are not equitably distributed, he argued, society cannot be considered truly healthy. At the heart of progress lies governance, described as a continuous journey and a defining transformation that has reshaped the country's outlook both internally and globally.

He identified several key "journeys" driving India's evolution. The first is the governance journey, which has enabled progress across sectors. The second is the infrastructure journey, marked by major advancements in physical and digital infrastructure, including transportation and connectivity, forming the backbone of economic expansion. The third critical area is technology and innovation, described as a complex and ongoing process with a steep growth curve. While essential for long-term prosperity, the speaker noted that technological advancement varies and remains relative to needs and capacities, requiring sustained effort.

Another major transformation is the information revolution, which has democratized access to knowledge. Unlike earlier decades when information sources were limited, today's environment offers diverse and individualized streams of information, reshaping how people think and engage with the world.

Ambassador also highlighted the demographic journey, noting that India's youth-along with the global Indian diaspora-plays a crucial role in driving growth and prosperity.

Alongside these developments, India must manage multiple forms of "security" simultaneously, including defense, energy, food, healthcare, technological, and financial security. These are interconnected challenges that directly impact the well-being of citizens and the resilience of the economy.

Importantly, he stressed that India's progress does not occur in isolation. Global events-such as financial crises or fluctuations in energy prices-have significant domestic consequences. Therefore, international partnerships are essential for accessing capital, technology, and trade opportunities.

In this context, the relationship between India and United States is described as particularly significant. The U.S. remains a key partner in providing investment, technological expertise, and innovation. Ambassador underscored that the Indian American diaspora plays a vital bridging role, strengthening ties through professional and cultural contributions.

Ambassador's speech portrayed India's growth as a multi-dimensional journey shaped by governance, infrastructure, innovation, and global engagement, with the diaspora positioned at the center of this evolving partnership. There was a brief question answer session, followed by dinner at which Ambassador interacted informally with the guests.

Akshaya Tritiya: The eternal day of prosperity, dharma and divine grace

In the sacred rhythm of the Hindu lunar calendar, certain days are believed to carry a timeless spiritual potency—moments when cosmic energies align harmoniously with human intention. Akshaya Tritiya stands among the most revered of such occasions. Celebrated on the third lunar day (Tritiya) of the bright fortnight (Shukla Paksha) in the month of Vaishakha, this festival is regarded as a day when all auspicious energies are naturally present, making it ideal for spiritual practices, charity, and new beginnings.

What makes Akshaya Tritiya unique is the belief that no specific timing or astrological consultation is required to initiate important activities. Every moment of this day is considered inherently auspicious. It is a rare occasion where time itself is believed to be sanctified.

The Deeper Meaning of "Akshaya"

The Sanskrit term Akshaya translates to "imperishable," "undiminishing," or "eternal." It signifies that anything begun or offered on this day—whether material, emotional, or spiritual—will grow continuously and never lose its value. In a philosophical sense, Akshaya Tritiya encourages individuals to invest in actions that transcend the temporary nature of life. Acts of kindness, devotion, and righteousness performed on this day are believed to accumulate as eternal spiritual merit.

Mythological Origins

The significance of Akshaya Tritiya is enriched by a tapestry of legends drawn from ancient scriptures and traditions. Each story reflects a different dimension of abundance—material, spiritual, and moral.

Divine Blessings of Lord Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi

Akshaya Tritiya is primarily dedicated to Lord Vishnu, the cosmic sustainer, and Goddess Lakshmi, the divine embodiment of prosperity and abundance. Devotees believe that worshipping these deities on this day invites not only financial stability but also spiritual well-being and harmony.

It is said that the combined grace of Vishnu and Lakshmi ensures that prosperity is preserved and nurtured, rather than fleeting or unstable.

The Gift of the Akshaya Patra in the Mahabharata

One of the most powerful legends associated with Akshaya Tritiya comes from the Mahabharata. During their exile, the Pandavas faced immense hardship and uncertainty. In response to their devotion, Lord Krishna blessed them with the Akshaya Patra, a miraculous vessel that would provide an unlimited supply of food until Draupadi had taken her meal. This divine gift symbolizes that true abundance flows from faith and surrender. Even in times of scarcity, divine grace can provide sustenance beyond human comprehension.

Birth of Parashurama

Akshaya Tritiya is also celebrated as



Important information

Akshaya Tritiya 2026

Sunday, 19 April 2026

Tritiya Date Start : 19 April 2026 at 10:49 AM

Tritiya Date Ends : 20 April 2026 at 07:27 AM

Note: Char Dham Yatra of Uttarakhand will start from today. The Char Dhams are Yamanotri, Gangotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath.

Did you know : The war of Mahabharata had ended on this day and the Dwapar Yuga had also ended on this day, Birth of mother Annapurna and Kubera had got the treasure.

the birth anniversary of Parashurama, the warrior sage and sixth incarnation of Vishnu. Parashurama represents a unique synthesis of spiritual wisdom and martial strength.

His life is a reminder that righteousness must be upheld with courage and discipline. His birth on this day reinforces the idea that divine energy manifests to restore balance and justice in the world.

The Descent of the Ganga River

Another sacred belief connects Akshaya Tritiya with the descent of the holy Ganga River from the heavens to Earth. The river is revered as a symbol of purification, renewal, and liberation.

Bathing in the Ganga or other sacred rivers on this day is believed to cleanse past impurities and elevate the soul. It is not merely a physical act, but a spiritual renewal—an immersion into divine grace.

Beginning of Mahabharata by Ved Vyasa

It is widely believed that the sage Ved Vyasa began composing the Mahabharata on this auspicious day, with Lord Ganesha as the divine scribe. This association elevates Akshaya Tritiya as a day of intellectual and spiritual creation. It is considered an ideal time to begin studies, artistic pursuits, or any form of knowledge-based endeavor.

Jain Tradition and Rishabhanatha

In Jain tradition, Akshaya Tritiya marks a deeply spiritual event. After a prolonged period of fasting, Rishabhanatha, the first Tirthankara, received his first alms in the form of sugarcane juice.

This moment signifies the importance of discipline, renunciation, and the balance between asceticism and sustenance. It also marks the conclusion of a significant spiritual observance for Jain devotees.

Rituals and Observances

Akshaya Tritiya is observed with devotion and simplicity, emphasizing sincerity over grandeur.

Sacred Worship and Offerings

Devotees begin the day with ritual purification, followed by prayers to Vishnu and Lakshmi. Offerings typically include flowers, fruits, incense, and sacred leaves. Recitation of hymns and scriptures fills homes and temples with a sense of spiritual calm.

Charity: The Eternal Investment

Charity is considered the most powerful act on Akshaya Tritiya. Donations of food, clothing, water, and financial assistance to those in need are believed to yield everlasting merit.

The underlying philosophy is that

what is given selflessly returns in abundance, not necessarily in material form, but as spiritual fulfillment and inner peace.

Commencement of New Ventures

This day is widely chosen for beginning new journeys—whether it is a business, a new home, or a personal commitment. The belief is that any venture initiated on Akshaya Tritiya will grow steadily and remain protected by divine grace.

Symbolism of Gold and Prosperity

Buying gold on this day has become a popular custom, symbolizing wealth that does not diminish. However, in its deeper sense, gold represents purity, stability, and enduring value—qualities that individuals are encouraged to cultivate within themselves.

Fasting, Meditation, and Inner Reflection

Many devotees observe fasting and engage in meditation, chanting, and scriptural study. These practices are intended to purify the mind and align the individual with higher consciousness.

Pilgrimages and Sacred Bathing

Visits to temples and holy rivers form an important part of the observance. Bathing in sacred waters, especially the Ganga, is believed to bring spiritual purification and liberation from past burdens.

Philosophical and Spiritual Significance

While Akshaya Tritiya is often associated with prosperity, its deeper message transcends material wealth. It is a reminder that true abundance lies in:

- Living with integrity and righteousness
- Practicing compassion and generosity
- Cultivating inner peace and spiritual awareness

The festival teaches that actions rooted in sincerity and selflessness have an eternal impact. It shifts the focus from accumulation to meaningful contribution.

A Timeless Invitation to Abundance

Akshaya Tritiya is more than a festival—it is a spiritual gateway. It invites individuals to reflect on what truly endures in life and to invest in actions that carry lasting value.

In a world defined by change and impermanence, this sacred day stands as a beacon of continuity and hope. It reminds us that while material possessions may fade, the virtues of kindness, devotion, and truth remain eternal.

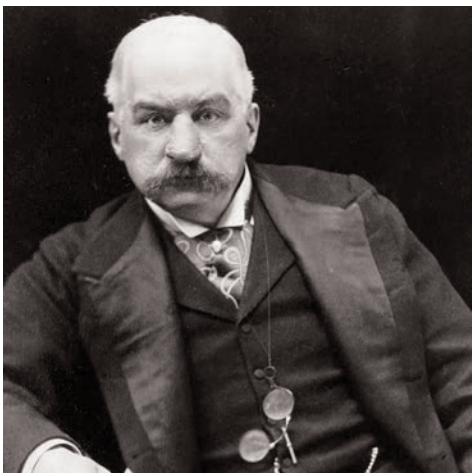
May Akshaya Tritiya inspire a life of enduring abundance—where prosperity is measured not only in wealth, but in wisdom, compassion, and spiritual fulfillment.

History This Week APR 17 - 23

APRIL 17

April 17, 1961 - A U.S.-backed attempt to overthrow Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba failed disastrously in what became known as the Bay of Pigs fiasco. About 1,400 anti-Castro exiles invaded the island's southern coast along the Bay of Pigs but were overrun by 20,000 Cuban soldiers and jailed. Trained and guided by the U.S., the exiles had expected support from U.S. military aircraft and help from anti-Castro insurgents on the island. Instead, due to a series of mishaps, they had fended for themselves with no support. The failed invasion heightened Cold War tensions between Cuba's political ally, Soviet Russia, and the fledgling administration of President John F. Kennedy. The following year, the Russians brazenly installed nuclear missiles in Cuba resulting in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

April 17, 1989 - The Polish labor union Solidarity was granted legal status after nearly a decade of struggle, paving the way for the downfall of the Polish Communist Party. In the elections that followed, Solidarity candidates won 99 out of 100 parliamentary seats and eventually forced the acceptance of a Solidarity government led by Lech Walesa.



Birthdays - American financier John Pierpont (J.P.) Morgan (1837-1913) was born in Hartford, Connecticut. He displayed extraordinary management skills, reorganizing and consolidating a number of failing companies to make them profitable. His extensive interests included banking, steel, railroads and art collecting. In 1895, he aided the failing U.S. Treasury by carrying out a private bond sale among fellow financiers to replenish the treasury.

APRIL 18

April 18, 1775 - The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere and William Dawes occurred as the two men rode out of Boston about 10 p.m. to warn patriots at Lexington and Concord of the approaching British.

April 18, 1906 - The San Francisco Earthquake struck at 5:13 a.m., followed by a massive fire from overturned wood stoves and broken gas pipes. The fire raged uncontrollably for three days resulting in the destruction of over 10,000 acres of property and 4,000 lives lost.

April 18, 1942 - The first air raid on mainland Japan during World War II occurred as General James Doolittle led a squadron of B-25 bombers taking off from the carrier Hornet to bomb Tokyo and three other cities. Damage was

minimal, but the raid boosted Allied morale following years of unchecked Japanese military advances.



April 18, 1982 - Queen Elizabeth II of England signed the Canada Constitution Act of 1982 replacing the British North America Act of 1867, providing Canada with a new set of fundamental laws and civil rights.

Birthdays - American attorney Clarence Darrow (1857-1938) was born in Kinsman, Ohio. He championed unpopular causes, and is best known for the Scopes 'monkey trial' in which he defended a teacher who taught the theory of evolution.

APRIL 19

April 19, 1775 - At dawn in Massachusetts, about 70 armed militiamen stood face to face on Lexington Green with a British advance guard unit. An unordered 'shot heard around the world' began the American Revolution. A volley of British rifle fire was followed by a charge with bayonets leaving eight Americans dead and ten wounded.

April 19, 1943 - Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto staged an armed revolt against Nazi SS troops attempting to forcibly deport them to death camps.

April 19, 1989 - Forty-seven U.S. sailors were killed by an explosion in a gun turret on the USS Iowa during gunnery exercises in the waters off Puerto Rico.

April 19, 1993 - At Waco, Texas, the compound of the Branch Davidian religious cult burned to the ground with 82 persons inside, including 17 children. The fire erupted after federal agents battered buildings in the compound with armored vehicles following a 51-day standoff.



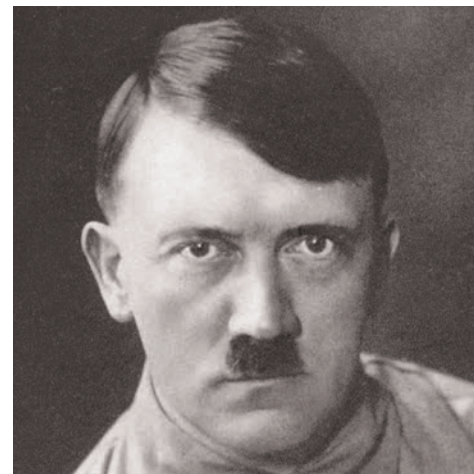
April 19, 1995 - At 9:02 a.m., a massive car-bomb explosion destroyed the entire side of a nine-story federal building in

Oklahoma City, killing 168 persons, including 19 children inside a day care center. A decorated Gulf War veteran was later convicted for the attack.

APRIL 20

April 20, 1914 - Miners in Ludlow, Colorado, were attacked by National Guardsmen paid by the mining company. The miners were seeking recognition of their United Mine Workers Union. Five men and a boy were killed by machine gun fire while 11 children and two women burned to death as the miners' tent colony was destroyed.

April 20, 1999 - The deadliest school shooting in U.S. history occurred in Littleton, Colorado, as two students armed with guns and explosives stormed into Columbine High School at lunch time then killed 12 classmates and a teacher and wounded more than 20 other persons before killing themselves.



Birthdays - Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria. As leader of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, he waged a war of expansion in Europe, precipitating the deaths of an estimated 50 million persons through military conflict and through the Holocaust in which the Nazis attempted to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe.

APRIL 21

April 21, 1836 - The Battle of San Jacinto between Texans led by Sam Houston and Mexican forces led by Santa Anna took place near present day Houston. The Texans decisively defeated the Mexican forces thereby achieving independence.



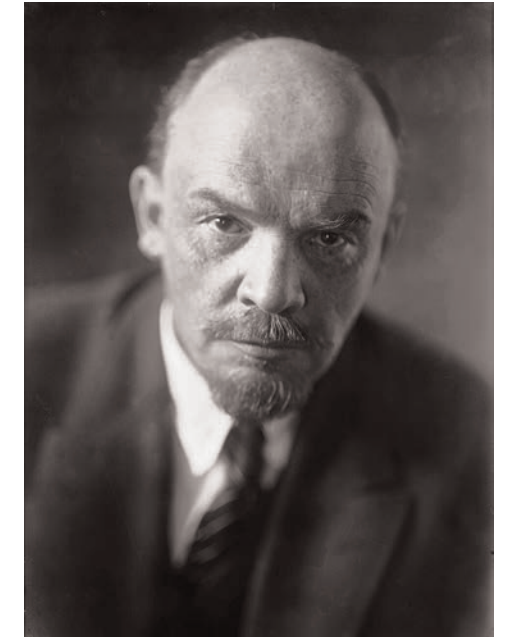
April 21, 1918 - During World War I, the Red Baron (Manfred von Richthofen) was shot down and killed during the Battle of the Somme. He was credited with 80 kills in less than two years, flying a red

Fokker triplane. British pilots recovered his body and buried him with full military honors.

APRIL 22

April 22, 1864 - "In God We Trust" was included on all newly minted U.S. coins by an Act of Congress.

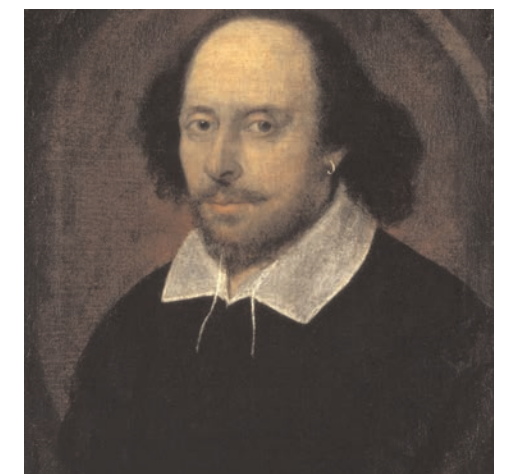
April 22, 1889 - The Oklahoma land rush began at noon with a single gunshot signaling the start of a mad dash by thousands of settlers. They were seeking to claim part of nearly two million acres made available by the federal government. The land originally belonged to Creek and Seminole Indian tribes.



Birthdays - Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) was born in Simbirsk, Russia. He led the Russian Revolution of October 1917 which toppled Czar Nicholas and paved the way for a harsh Communist regime. Following his death in 1924, his body was embalmed and placed on display in Moscow's Red Square, becoming a shrine that was visited by millions during the years of the Soviet Union.

APRIL 23

April 23rd - Established by Israel's Knesset as Holocaust Day in remembrance of the estimated six million Jews killed by Nazis.



Birthdays - William Shakespeare (1564-1616) was born at Stratford-on-Avon, England. Renowned as the most influential writer in the English language, he created 36 plays and 154 sonnets, including Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and The Merchant of Venice.

Birthdays - James Buchanan (1791-1868) the 15th U.S. President was born in Cove Gap, Pennsylvania. He was the only life-long bachelor to occupy the White House, serving just one term from 1857 to 1861.

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Beyond the beaten path: Discover India's most enchanting offbeat hill stations

In an age where travel itineraries are often dictated by social media trends and crowded tourist circuits, the true essence of exploration lies in venturing into the unknown. While popular hill stations have their undeniable charm, it is the offbeat destinations—quiet, raw, and largely untouched—that offer a deeper, more intimate connection with nature and culture.

These hidden retreats are not just places on a map; they are experiences waiting to unfold. Here, the journey itself becomes part of the adventure. Roads may be less defined, connectivity limited, and accommodation options modest—but every challenge adds to the thrill. What awaits, however, is unmatched serenity, pristine landscapes, and cultural authenticity that remain unspoiled by mass tourism.

From the misty valleys of the Northeast to the stark, high-altitude deserts of Himachal, here are some of India's most captivating offbeat hill stations that promise discovery at every turn.

Ziro Valley - A Cultural Tapestry in the Clouds

Nestled in the Lower Subansiri district, Ziro Valley is often described as one of India's most picturesque and culturally rich landscapes. Surrounded by pine-clad hills and dotted with lush rice paddies, the valley is home to the indigenous Apatani tribe—a community celebrated for its sustainable agricultural practices and deep ecological wisdom. What sets Ziro apart is its unique cultural identity. Elderly women of the tribe, adorned with traditional facial tattoos and nose plugs, reflect a heritage that has endured for centuries. Life here moves at a gentle pace, guided by tradition and harmony with nature. In September, the tranquil valley bursts into life during the Ziro Music Festival, where global and indie artists perform against the backdrop of open fields and rolling hills. With its growing cultural and ecological significance, Ziro has even been proposed for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage Sites.

Mashobra - Nature's Quiet Sanctuary

Just beyond the bustling charm of Shimla lies the serene hamlet of Mashobra. Connected via the historic Hindustan-Tibet Road, this quaint town offers a refreshing escape into nature's embrace. Mashobra is enveloped in dense forests of oak, cedar, and rhododendron, making it a haven for birdwatchers, nature lovers, and creative souls. Unlike its popular neighbor, Mashobra remains blissfully uncrowded, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in silence and scenic beauty. The region is also part of a wildlife sanctuary, adding an element of wilderness to its charm. Whether it's long forest walks, apple orchard visits, or simply soaking in mountain views, Mashobra invites you to slow down and reconnect.

Munsiyari - Where Adventure Begins

Perched at 2,298 meters in the Kumaon region, Munsiyari is a paradise for trekkers and adventure enthusiasts.



Often referred to as the "Little Kashmir" of Uttarakhand, it offers sweeping views of the majestic Panchachuli peaks.

Surrounded by thick forests of deodar, pine, and rhododendron, Munsiyari serves as a gateway to some of the most thrilling Himalayan treks, including the route to the Namik Glacier and the Milam Glacier. Beyond trekking, the region offers opportunities for birdwatching, photography, and cultural immersion in local Kumaoni traditions. Its remote location ensures that the beauty remains pristine and largely untouched.

Araku Valley - The Green Heart of the Eastern Ghats

Hidden within the Eastern Ghats, Araku Valley is a lush paradise known for its coffee plantations, tribal culture, and scenic landscapes. Often dubbed the "food bowl of South India," the valley is a delightful blend of natural beauty and agricultural richness. The journey to Araku is as mesmerizing as the destination itself—winding roads, tunnels, and mist-laden hills create a cinematic experience. The region is home to attractions like the stunning Borra Caves,

the cascading Katiki Falls, and the picturesque Dumbriguda Waterfalls.

Visitors can also explore tribal museums, taste locally grown organic coffee, and experience the vibrant culture of indigenous communities.

Dharamkot - A Bohemian Retreat in Hills

Overlooking McLeod Ganj, Dharamkot is a tranquil village that has earned a reputation as a spiritual and backpacker's haven. Far removed from the hustle of nearby towns, Dharamkot offers a slower, more mindful way of life.

The village is dotted with meditation centers such as Vipassana Meditation Centre and Tushita Meditation Centre, attracting seekers from across the world.

It also serves as the base for the popular Triund trek, known for its panoramic views of the Dhauladhar range. Quaint cafés serving global cuisines, yoga retreats, and scenic viewpoints add to its laid-back, artistic vibe.

Kaza - Into the Mystic Cold Desert

At an altitude of 3,650 meters, Kaza lies in the heart of Spiti Valley—a cold desert that mirrors the stark beauty of Tibet and Ladakh. With vast barren landscapes, dramatic mountain formations, and deep blue skies, Kaza offers an otherworldly experience.

The region is steeped in Buddhist culture, with ancient monasteries such as Key Monastery and Tangyud Monastery standing as spiritual anchors.

Despite its remoteness, Kaza has a small but lively market featuring bakeries, cafés, and shops catering to travelers and trekkers. It is a destination for those seeking solitude, adventure, and spiritual reflection.

Aru Valley - A Hidden Paradise in Kashmir

A serene extension of Pahalgam, Aru Valley is a breathtaking landscape of meadows, rivers, and snow-capped peaks. The gentle flow of the Lidder River and the sight of grazing horses create a postcard-perfect setting.

Aru is also a base for treks to the Kolahoi Glacier and other alpine regions. Nearby attractions such as Betaab Valley and Baisaran Valley further enhance its appeal.

Whether you choose to camp under the stars or explore its scenic trails, Aru Valley offers a peaceful retreat into nature.

Kibber - Life at the Edge of the Sky

At 4,205 meters, Kibber is among the highest inhabited villages in the world. Its stark terrain, characterized by rugged mountains and vast open spaces, creates a sense of awe and isolation.

The nearby Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary is home to rare Himalayan species, including the elusive snow leopard. The village's monasteries and traditional homes offer a glimpse into a lifestyle shaped by extreme conditions and deep spiritual roots.

Quinton de Kock marks return to Mumbai Indians' colours with 53-ball century

MUMBAI (TIP), APRIL 17, 2026

Quinton de Kock finally got to play a match for the Mumbai Indians in the 2026 Indian Premier (IPL) as a replacement for the injured Rohit Sharma up top and he responded by blasting his way to his third IPL century. De Kock smashed seven fours and seven sixes on his way to the milestone which he raised in 53 balls. A crucial part of past title-winning MI teams, this was De Kock's first match back with the franchise.

De Kock's innings came in a remarkable recovery effort for MI. The five-time champions lost two wickets in the powerplay and could only score 48 runs at the end of the six overs. De Kock and Naman Dhir then put up a 122-run stand for the third wicket in 68 balls, with the latter scoring 53 in 31. Dhir fell to Shashank Singh in the 14th over after which De Kock had captain Hardik Pandya at the other end when he got to his century. The pair put up 41 runs for the fourth wicket in 23 balls and De Kock went on to play right through to the end. The 33-year-old finished unbeaten on 112 off 60 balls as MI put up a total of 195/6 in 20 overs.

De Kock has won the IPL twice with MI in 2019 and 2020, forming a formidable opening partnership with Rohit in those seasons and playing a key role behind the stumps. He played for MI in 2021 as well before spending three seasons with Lucknow Super Giants and one with Kolkata Knight Riders last year. De Kock was welcomed back by MI in the auction last year but they preferred fellow South African Ryan Rickelton as Rohit's opening partner. Rohit, who was MI's highest scorer this season before this match, sustained a hamstring injury during their previous match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, which kept him out of the game against PBKS on Thursday and opened the door for De Kock.

IPL 2026

PBKS continue unbeaten run, defeat MI by 7 wickets

MUMBAI (TIP), APRIL 17, 2026

Punjab Kings have beaten Mumbai Indians by 7 wickets at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday, April 16, evening.

The Punjab batters led the charge against Mumbai's bowling line-up with two quick half-centuries from Captain Shreyas Iyer and in-form Prabhsimran Singh.

Both Iyer and Prabhsimran produced absolute carnage, smashing Mumbai's bowling all over the Wankhede with masterful stroke play. The visitors cruised to the target of 196 with 21 balls to spare.

Batting first, Mumbai Indians batters scored at a good pace throughout their innings, courtesy of a brilliant century from South African wicketkeeper-batsman Quinton de Kock. Mumbai posted 196 in their allotted 20 overs.

Batting second, Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh opened the chase for Punjab before the former fell to Allah Ghazanfar for 15 runs.

Cooper Connolly came in to replace the fallen batter and made 17 runs off 12 deliveries before the Afghan struck again.

Captain Shreyas Iyer anchored the chase alongside Prabhsimran as the duo put up a 139-run stand, with both batters bringing up their fifties.

Shreyas got out on 66, while Prabhsimran remained unbeaten on 80, with Marcus Stoinis scoring 10 to help PBKS win in just 16.3 overs.

Punjab has won all four matches this season while chasing and has never been asked to bat first.

"Ownership has to be taken," says Hardik Pandya after MI's defeat against PBKS

Mumbai Indians (MI) skipper Hardik Pandya admitted that his side needs to reassess its overall performance after a seven-wicket defeat against Punjab Kings (PBKS) in their IPL 2026 clash at the Wankhede Stadium on April 16 night.

Reflecting on the loss, Pandya said MI must analyse whether the issues lie in individual performances, team planning, or collective execution, while also acknowledging PBKS' superior display in all departments.

"To be very honest, I don't have much to say right now. I think we really need to go back to the drawing board and see where we are lacking. Is it individuals? Is it as a group? Is it as planning? We'll just figure it out and see what we can do next," Pandya said during the post-match presentation.

The MI captain also pointed to changing match conditions, including reverse swing in the first innings and dew in the second, but conceded that Punjab were the better side on the day.

"I think we need to give credit to them as well. The ball started reversing. In the second innings, the dew came, and it slightly got better, but having said that, they just outbeat us.



"They bowled better, they batted better, they fielded better," Pandya added.

He suggested that the team may need to consider tough decisions moving forward as they look to turn their campaign around.

"I think we need to see, do we need to make some difficult calls, or do we need to keep continuing and hope that we'll turn things around. These are some harsh questions which eventually we need to answer, and yeah, ownership has to be taken," he concluded.

Coming to the match, Punjab Kings continued their dominant run in IPL 2026 with a convincing seven-wicket win over Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

With this victory, PBKS climbed to the top of the table with four wins and a no-result, overtaking defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), while MI slipped to ninth place with just one win from five matches.

Batting first, MI posted 195/6, powered by Quinton de Kock's brilliant 112* off 60 balls and a crucial 122-run partnership with Naman Dhir, who scored a quick 50. Arshdeep Singh led PBKS' bowling effort with 3/22.

In response, PBKS chased the target in just 16.3 overs, reaching 198/3. Prabhsimran Singh starred with an unbeaten 80 off 39 balls, while skipper Shreyas Iyer contributed a fluent 66 off 35 balls. The duo added a match-defining stand after early setbacks. For MI, Allah Ghazanfar picked up 2/32, but the bowlers were largely ineffective as PBKS dominated the chase.

Messi sued as Miami promoter alleges \$ 7 million contract breach

FLORIDA (TIP), APRIL 17

Accused of fraud, Lionel Messi has been sued by a Miami-based event promoter for allegedly breaching the terms of a 7 million USD contract after missing an exhibition match last year. The lawsuit was filed by Vid Music Group against the Argentine Football Association (AFA) and Messi for fraud and breach of contract, according to court records. The lawsuit was filed in Miami-Dade Circuit Court last month.

According to the lawsuit, the promoter group signed a deal with the AFA last year for exclusive rights to promote and organise Argentina's international friendlies, including last October's matches against Venezuela and Puerto Rico, in exchange for ticket, sponsorship, and



broadcast revenue. According to Vid, Messi was supposed to play at least 30 minutes in each game, unless he was injured.

Messi wasn't on the pitch during Argentina's 1-0 win vs Venezuela on October 10, and he watched it from a suite at Hard Rock Stadium, the lawsuit stated. Meanwhile, the next day, he was in action during Inter Miami's 4-0 MLS win over Atlanta and also scored two goals.

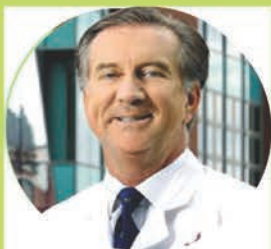
On October 14, he played in Argentina's 6-0 victory over Puerto Rico. The match was initially scheduled to be played in Chicago, but low ticket sales and arrests by Immigration and Enforcement agents led to it being shifted to Florida. The smaller venue in Florida didn't sell out, although the ticket prices were reduced to 25 USD each. The promoter company hasn't specified the damages they're seeking in the lawsuit. But they have said they lost millions because Messi didn't play in the game against Venezuela, and that low ticket sales are also to blame.



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Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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