

### Was Ajmer Dargah a Shiva temple?

ଅଜମେର ଶରିଫ ଦରଘାରେ ଶିବ ମନ୍ଦିର ଥିବା ଦାବି କରି ଅଜମେର କୋର୍ଟରେ ହୋଇଥିବା ଏକ ଆବେଦନକୁ କୋର୍ଟ ଶୁଣାଣି ପାଇଁ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବା ସହ ଉଚ୍ଚ ମାମଲାରେ ଏ ପକ୍ଷକୁ ନୋଟିସ୍ କରିଛନ୍ତି। କୋର୍ଟ ଅଜମେର ଦରଘା କମିଟି, ସଂଖ୍ୟାଲଘୁ ବ୍ୟାପାର ମହାଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ଏବଂ ଏସ୍‌ଆଇକୁ ନୋଟିସ୍ କରିଛନ୍ତି। ଉଲ୍ଲେଖଯୋଗ୍ୟ, ସେପ୍ଟେମ୍ବରରେ ଏହି ଆବେଦନ ହୋଇଥିଲା। ଦରଘାରେ ହିନ୍ଦୁ ଦେବତାଙ୍କୁ ପୂଜା ପାଇଁ ନିଷେଧ କେବାକୁ ଆବେଦନରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାୟାଯାଇଥିଲା।

ଆଇନଜୀବୀ ଯୋଗେଶ ସିରୋଜା ଏହି ଆବେଦନ ଉପରେ କୋର୍ଟ ଆସନ୍ତା ଡିସେମ୍ବର ୨୦ ତାରିଖରେ ଶୁଣାଣି କରିବେ। ଆବେଦନକାରୀ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଆମର ଦାବି ହେଉଛି ଅଜମେର ଦରଘାକୁ ସ୍ୱଳ୍ପତ ମୋଚନ ମହାଦେବ ମନ୍ଦିର ଯୋଗଣ କରାଯାଇ ଏବଂ ଦରଘାର ଯଦି କୌଣସି ପଂଜୀକରଣ ଆମ ତରଫରୁ ଏହାକୁ ବାତିଲ କରାଯାଉ। ଏସ୍‌ଆଇର ଦ୍ୱାରା ମହାଦେବ ସର୍ବେକ୍ଷଣ ସହ ହିନ୍ଦୁମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏଠାରେ ପୂଜା ପାଇଁ ଅନୁମତି ମିଳୁ ବୋଲି ଆବେଦନକାରୀ ତାଙ୍କ ଆବେଦନରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣାୟାଯାଇଛି।



A court in Ajmer on Wednesday issued notices to the Union Minority Affairs Ministry, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and the Ajmer Dargah Committee seeking their response to a petition that sought a physical survey of the renowned Dargah Sharif. In the legal petition, Hindu Sena chief Vishnu Gupta claimed that the mausoleum of 13th-century Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti was originally a Shiva temple.

### What does the evidence provided by Gupta and books on Ajmer suggest?

Moinuddin Chishti was a 13th-century Sufi saint and philosopher. Born in Sanjar (of modern-day Iran), or in Sijistan, he arrived in Delhi during the reign of the Sultan Iltutmish (d. 1236). Moinuddin moved from Delhi to Ajmer shortly thereafter, at which point he became increasingly influenced by the writings of the famous Sunni Hanbali scholar and mystic 'Abdallāh Anṣārī (d. 1088), whose famous work on the lives of the early Islamic saints, the Ṭabāqāt al-ṣūfiyya, may have played a role in shaping Moinuddin's worldview. It was during his time in Ajmer that Moinuddin acquired the reputation of being a charismatic and compassionate spiritual preacher and teacher; and biographical accounts of his life written after his death report that he received the gifts of many "spiritual marvels (karāmāt), such as miraculous travel, clairvoyance, and visions of angels" in these years of his life.

- ❖ In his petition, Gupta also demanded that the Ajmer Dargah be declared the 'Sankat Mochan Mahadev Temple' and called for "Hindu worship to be reinstated" at the site. To back his claim and demand, Gupta and his lawyer, Yogesh Siroja, referred to a book by Har Bilas Sarda (1867–1955), an Ajmer-based judge-turned-politician.
- ❖ Gupta alleges that Sarda, in a 1910 publication, "wrote about the presence of a Hindu temple beneath the dargah".
- ❖ In this context, it's worth taking a look at the book by Har Bilas Sarda that Gupta is referring to and what observations the author made in it. Of equal significance are other books that delve into the history of Ajmer and its renowned dargah, also referred to as Ajmer Dargah.

### WHAT HAR BILAS SARDA'S BOOK SAYS ABOUT AJMER DARGAH

The 1910 book cited by Vishnu Gupta is Har Bilas Sarda's 'Ajmer: Historical And Descriptive', which was published by the Scottish Mission Industries Company Limited in 1911.

- ❖ In his book, which serves as an encyclopaedia on Ajmer, Sarda talks about an underground cellar and a "tradition" connected to "Mahadeva" at the Ajmer Dargah.
- ❖ "As already stated, the remains of the Khwaja lie in an underground cellar, covered with a few bricks, several feet below this tomb.
- ❖ The tomb is in white marble inlaid with pieces of coloured stone, and it is said that near the place corresponding to the heart is fixed a rubylike stone of the size of an eight-anna silver piece," wrote Sarda in Ajmer: Historical And Descriptive.
- ❖ "Tradition says that inside the cellar is the image of Mahadeva in a temple, on which sandal used to be placed every day by a Brahman family and still maintained by the Dargah as gharhyali (bell striker)," he wrote. Sarda, however, doesn't shed more light on the "destruction" of the shrine.

### SHRINE OF MAHADEVA, LINGAM HIDDEN BY LEAVES AND RUBBISH, SAYS 1841 BOOK

British historian PM Currie delves into the history of Ajmer Dargah in his 1989 book, The shrine and cult of Mu'in al-din Chisti of Ajmer.

- ❖ Currie cites RH Irvine's work, 'Some Account of the General and Medical Topography of Ajmeer (1841)', and notes in the footnotes about an "ancient sacred shrine of Mahadeva" that existed during the time of Sufi Saint of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.
- ❖ "At one place there was an ancient shrine sacred to Mahadeva, the lingam of which was hidden by the leaves and rubbish. To this wood the Khwaja had retired to contemplate for forty days; and every day he hung up his small mussuq of water on a branch of a tree overhanging the lingam.
- ❖ The water constantly dropped on this. At length Mahadeva became highly pleased, both at the sanctity and unexpected libation of the saint, and spoke out of the stone commending his virtue.
- ❖ From this tradition (related by one of the most learned khadums) the Hindus equally venerate the Khwaja with the Mahomedans," noted Currie in his 1989 book, citing RH Irvine's work.
- ❖ Then, Currie, gave another version. "The present writer [Irvine] heard a further variation on the same theme; this time the lingam was located beneath the grave of Muunaldin," Currie, the civil servants scholar, wrote in his 1841 document. This document hasn't been cited by the petitioners seeking a physical survey of the dargah.

### Indian Navy Successfully Test fires K-4 Missile from INS Arighaat

In a significant development for India's second-strike nuclear capability, the Indian Navy has successfully tested a nuclear-capable K-4 missile from its nuclear-powered submarine INS Arighaat. The successful user trial test will strengthen the country's nuclear triad.

- ❖ The INS Arighaat submarine can carry four K-4 missiles. INS Arihant can carry only one K-4 missile.



The Indian Navy commissioned its second nuclear-powered submarine, INS Arighat, on 29 August 2024. The first nuclear-powered submarine, INS Arihant, was inducted in November 2017.

#### About the K-4 Missile

K-4 is a nuclear-capable submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

- ❖ The missile is in the user trial phase before its final induction on INS Arihant/INS Arighaat.
- ❖ It is the second SLBM to be developed by the DRDO.
- ❖ The first SLBM of India, Sagarika or K-15, has already been inducted into INS Arihant. It has a range of 750 km.
- ❖ The range of the K-4 SLBM is 3500 Km.

#### Significance of the K-4 Missile

- ❖ SLBM are crucial for India's second strike capability and nuclear triad.
- ❖ The nuclear triad refers to the ability of the country to launch nuclear weapons from Land (Army), Air (Air Force) or Sea (Navy).
- ❖ The second strike refers to the ability of a country to launch a nuclear weapon on an enemy's strategic assets after being first hit by the enemy's nuclear weapon.
- ❖ A nuclear-powered submarine is crucial for any country to achieve second-strike capability. It can remain underwater longer than a diesel/electric submarine and is hard to detect.

- ❖ Also K-15 was basically for targeting the assets in Pakistan.
- ❖ India views China as a main security threat. The successful test of the K-4 missile will increase India's capability to hit many areas of China.

### India's Nuclear Submarine Programme

India launched a project in the 1970s to build a nuclear-powered submarine indigenously.

- ❖ INS Arihant was the first nuclear-powered submarine to be successfully developed and inducted into the Indian Navy.
- ❖ India plans to build six nuclear attack submarines to bolster its defence and nuclear deterrence.
- ❖ For details on the Nuclear submarine programme.

### IIT Guwahati to host 2024 India International Science Festival

For the first time, the prestigious Indian International Science Festival will be held in the country's Northeastern region. The Indian Institute of Technology - Guwahati will host the 10th India International Science Festival 2024 from 30 November to 3 December 2024.

- ❖ The Indian International Science Festival is the largest science event in the country, engaging the general public and the scientific community. The 9th edition of the India International Science Festival 2023 was held in Faridabad, Haryana, from 17-20 January 2024.
- ❖ The 1st edition of the India International Science Festival was held at the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi in 2015.
- ❖ A large number of students, the Indian and foreign scientific community and the general public are expected to participate in the India International Science Festival 2024.

### Theme of the 10th Indian International Science Festival

The 10th India International Science Festival theme is **"Transforming India into an S&T driven Global Manufacturing Hub"**.

The theme focuses on the government's mission to make India the global manufacturing hub and the crucial contribution of science and technology to industrial growth.

### Organiser of the 10 India International Science Festival

The Indian International Science Festival is organised by the Union Ministry of Science and Technology and the Union Ministry of Earth Science in association with Vijnana Bharati.

- ❖ The various departments of the Ministry of Science and Technology—the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), and Department of Biotechnology (DBT)—are involved in the India International Science Festival. One of the ministry's departments is usually responsible for coordinating the Indian International Science Festival in a particular year.
- ❖ This year, the coordinating job has been given to the Thurivanathpuram-based CSIR laboratory- National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology.

### About Vijnana Bharati

Vijnana Bharti is a non-governmental organisation that works for the development of the swadeshi science movement in the country.

- ❖ Prof. K I Vasu of the Indian Institute of Science (Bengaluru) led a group of like-minded eminent scientists to start the Swadeshi Science Movement in the country.
- ❖ In 1991, during the Nagpur meeting, it was decided to launch the Swadeshi Science Movement at the national level named Vijnana Bharati. Headquarters: New Delhi

### Hemant Soren sworn in as the Jharkhand Chief Minister for 4th time

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Hemant Soren was sworn in as the chief minister of Jharkhand on 28 November 2024 for the fourth time.



- ❖ Governor Santosh Kumar Ganagwar administered the oath of office and secrecy as the 14th chief minister of Jharkhand in a ceremony at Ranchi's Morabadi Ground.
- ❖ Hemant Soren, who led the ruling INDIA alliance, of which his party JMM is a member, to victory in the recent legislative assembly election, was the sole minister to be sworn in. Other ministers of his cabinet will be sworn in later.



#### Who attended the swearing-in ceremony?

During the swearing-in ceremony, all the top leaders of the Indian alliance-Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, and others-were present.

- ❖ The swearing-in ceremony was also attended by the chief ministers of INDIA alliance ruled states: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, and Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.
- ❖ Udhayanidhi Stalin, the Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar also attended the swearing-in ceremony.

#### Fourth Time Jharkhand Chief Minister

This is the fourth time Hemant Soren has been sworn in as the Chief Minister of Jharkhand. He was first sworn in on 13 July 2013 and remained in office until 28 December 2014. His second term was from 2019- 31 January 2024, and his third term was from 4 July—28 November 2024.

- ❖ He broke the record of his father, Shibu Soren, who was also the Chief Minister of Jharkhand three times.
- ❖ During the recently held Jharkhand Legislative Assembly election, Hemant Soren led the INDIA alliance to a thumping majority. The INDIA alliance won 56 seats in the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly.
- ❖ Hemant Soren won his Barhait assembly seat by 39,791 votes, defeating BJP's Gamliyel Hembrom in the recently held assembly polls.

#### Chief Ministers of Jharkhand

Jharkhand was created on 15 November 2000 as the 28th state of India after the enactment of the Bihar Reorganisation Act 2000.

- ❖ To date, seven people have served as its chief minister. Bharatiya Janata Party's Babulal Marandi was the first Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

S. N.	Chief Minister	Term	Political Party
1	Babulal Marandi	15 March 2000-17 March 2003	Bharatiya Janata Party
2	Arjun Munda	18 March 2003-02 March 2005	Bharatiya Janata Party
3	Shibu Soren	2 March 2005 - 12 March 2005	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
4	Arjun Munda	12 March 2005 - 19 September 2006	Bharatiya Janata Party
5	Madhu Koda	19 September 2006 -27 August 2008	Independent
6	Shibu Soren	27 August 2008-18 January 2009	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
7	Shibu Soren	30 December 2009-I June 2010	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
8	Arjun Munda	11 September 2010-18 January 2013	Bharatiya Janata Party
9	Hemant Soren	13 July 2013-28 December 2014	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
10	Raghubar Das	28 December 2014-23 December 2019	Bharatiya Janata Party
11	Hemant Soren	27 December 2019 – 31 January 2024	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
12	Champai Soren	2 February 2024-4 July 2024	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
13.	Hemant Soren	4 July 2024-28 November 2024	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
14	Hemant Soren	28 November 2024-	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

## Indian Coast Guard Commences 2-day SAREX-24 exercise

The Indian Coast Guard, responsible for executing /coordinating Search and Rescue (SAR) missions in the Indian Maritime Search and Rescue Region, commenced its two-day National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise and Workshop (SAREX24) in Kochi, Kerala on November 27, 2024. The 22nd National Maritime Search and Rescue Board meeting is also being held alongside the SAREX-24 in Kochi.

- ❖ The 11th edition of SAREX, which will be held on 27 and 28 November 2024, will test the efficiency of the various stakeholders in conducting Mass Rescue Operations in the sea in case of emergency.

### Who inaugurated the SAREX-24 exercise?

- ❖ The SAREX-24 exercise was inaugurated by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.
- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard comes under the Union Ministry for Defence.

### Who is Organising the SAREX-24 Exercise?

The SAREX exercise is being held under the aegis of the National Maritime Search and Rescue Board.

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard Chairman is the National Maritime Search and Rescue Board chairman.
- ❖ The Director General of the Indian Coast Guard has been designated as the National Maritime Search and Rescue Coordinating Authority (NMSARCA) in India.
- ❖ Thus, the Indian Coast Guard is the main agency that conducts all search and rescue operations in the sea.
- ❖ Under NMSARCA, the Indian Maritime Search and Rescue Region is divided into three areas, with Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) located in Mumbai, Chennai, and Port Blair.

### Participants of the SAREX -24?

The Indian Coast Guard is leading the SAREX-24 exercise with the participation of the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Cochin Port Authority, and Customs.

- ❖ Various other central government agencies and foreign delegates also participated in the Seminar, which was part of the SAREX-24.

### Why were the foreign delegates invited for SAREX-24?

The Indian Ocean Rim Association has appointed the Indian Coast Guard as the implementing agency for the Search and Rescue mission in the Indian Ocean Region.

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard has also been nominated as the nodal agency for Search and Rescue mission activities in the Pacific Region.

### Theme of the SAREX-24

The theme of the SAREX-24 is "Enhancing Search and Rescue capabilities through Regional Collaboration".

- ❖ The theme highlights the Coast Guard's commitment to assisting with large-scale contingencies regardless of location, Nationality, or circumstances in the Indian Maritime Search and Rescue Region and other regions.
- ❖ Director General of the Indian Coast Guard: DG Paramesh Sivamani.

## US leads the 2024 Network Readiness Index, India at 49th Position

India was ranked 49th in the Network Readiness Index 2024, published by the Portulans Institute and the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford on November 21, 2024.

- ❖ Last year, it was ranked 60th, and this year, it has improved its rank by 11 positions.
- ❖ The United States of America led the Network Readiness Index for the third consecutive year, followed by Singapore.

- ❖ The Network Readiness Index ranks 133 economies (countries) based on their citizens' access to and use of information and communications technology (ICT).
- ❖ The Network Readiness Index is considered one of the leading global indices of ICT application and impact in economies worldwide.

### Performance of India

- ❖ The Network Readiness Index 2024 ranks India at 49th place amongst 133 economies of the world, with a score of 53.63
- ❖ India has been ranked second among the low-middle-income countries after Vietnam.
- ❖ India secured the first rank in 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) scientific publications', 'AI talent concentration' and 'ICT services exports',
- ❖ 2nd rank in 'FTTH (Fiber to the Home)/Building Internet subscriptions', 'Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country' and 'International Internet bandwidth',
- ❖ 3rd rank in 'Domestic market scale' and 4th rank in 'annual investment in telecommunication services'.

### About the Network Readiness Index

- ❖ The Network Readiness Index was launched by the World Economic Forum in 2002
- ❖ Since 2019, it has been published by the Portulans Institute.
- ❖ Portulan Institute, an independent nonprofit research and educational institute based in Washington, DC, USA, was founded in 2019 by Soumitra Dutta and Bruno Lanvin.
- ❖ The Network Readiness Index is built on four pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact.
- ❖ Each pillar comprises three sub-pillars and a total of 54 variables.
- ❖ It ranks 133 economies based on their performance across 54 variables.
- ❖ It is published annually.

### Top Ten Economies in the Network Readiness Index 2024

- ❖ For the third consecutive year, the United States topped the index.
- ❖ Singapore and South Korea are the only countries in Asia and the Pacific that appear in the top 10.
- ❖ Seven of the top 10 countries are from Europe.
- ❖ China has been ranked 17th, and it is the only middle-income country to be included in the top 20.

Rank	Economies(Country)	Index Score
1	United States	78.96
2	Singapore	76.94
3	Finland	75.76
4	Sweden	74.99
5	Republic of Korea (South Korea)	74.85
6	Netherlands	73.94
7	Switzerland	73.71
8	United Kingdom	73.57
9	Germany	73.54
10	Denmark	72.70

### A Book Titled 'My Beloved Life' By Amitava Kumar

Amitava Kumar's *My Beloved Life* tells the story of Jadunath "Jadu" Kunwar, a man from a small village in Bihar, and his daughter Jugnu, as they navigate the challenges of life in a rapidly changing India.

- ❖ Amitava Kumar's *My Beloved Life* tells the story of Jadunath "Jadu" Kunwar, a man from a small village in Bihar, and his daughter Jugnu, as they navigate the challenges of life in a rapidly changing India.
- ❖ The novel explores their journeys of love, loss, and growth, while also reflecting on significant historical events that shaped the country.

### *UK's John Tinniswood, World's Oldest Man, Passes Away at 112*

John Tinniswood, born in Liverpool, UK, on August 26, 1912, was recognized as the world's oldest man after the death of Venezuelan Juan Vicente Perez in April 2023.

- ❖ He passed away peacefully at the age of 112 in a care home in Southport, England, on November 25, 2024.
- ❖ Tinniswood lived through significant historical events, including both World Wars and the sinking of the Titanic, and attributed his longevity to "pure luck" while promoting moderation in all aspects of life.
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#### **Birth and Death**

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- ❖ Died peacefully at 112 years old on November 25, 2024, in Southport, England.

### *International Gita Mahotsav 2024: Celebrating the Essence of Srimad Bhagavad Gita*

The International Gita Mahotsav, also referred to as Bhagavad Gita Jayanti Samaroh, is an annual global celebration that commemorates the birth of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, a timeless scripture revered for its spiritual and philosophical wisdom.

- ❖ Organized by the Kurukshetra Development Board and Haryana Tourism, this vibrant festival has gained international acclaim since the Haryana government decided to mark Gita Jayanti as an International event in 2016.

- ❖ Over the years, it has become a significant cultural and spiritual event, drawing millions of visitors to Kurukshetra.
- ❖ The International Gita Mahotsav, also referred to as Bhagavad Gita Jayanti Samaroh, is an annual global celebration that commemorates the birth of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, a timeless scripture revered for its spiritual and philosophical wisdom.
- ❖ The event highlights the momentous occasion when Lord Krishna imparted divine knowledge to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, marking a pivotal moment in the epic Mahabharata, over 5152 years ago.

#### **Why is Gita Mahotsav Celebrated?**

The Bhagavad Gita, comprising 700 verses, is not only a sacred text but also a guide to living a life of purpose, morality, and spiritual insight.

- ❖ The Mahotsav underscores the teachings of the Gita, encouraging people to embrace its principles of dharma (righteousness), karma (duty), and jnana (knowledge) in their lives. The festival aims to promote the universality of the Gita's teachings, emphasizing its relevance in addressing modern challenges and inspiring humanity toward inner peace and harmony.

#### **Gita Mahotsav 2024: Dates and Venue**

In 2024, the International Gita Mahotsav will commence on November 28 and conclude on December 15, aligning with the Shukla Paksha Ekadashi of the Margashirsha month (Hindu lunar calendar).

- ❖ This year, the grand event will take place in Kurukshetra, Haryana, a city steeped in history and spirituality. The primary celebrations will occur at the Brahma Sarovar, a sacred site believed to be the location where Lord Krishna delivered the Gita to Arjuna.



**Govt collects Rs 16,398 crore GST on health, life insurance in FY24:**

The revenue collected by the union government through Goods and Services Tax (GST) on healthcare and life insurance services surged by 680 per cent to Rs 16,398 crore in 2023-24 from Rs 2,101 crore in 2019-20, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in Lok Sabha. This comes amid demands from stakeholders, including states, to reduce GST rates on health and life insurance premiums.

- ❖ However, GST collections in this category dropped marginally in FY24 compared to Rs 16,770 crore collected in FY23.

**NADA suspends Bajrang Punia for four years over anti-doping code violation**

The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) handed a four-year suspension to Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia after he refused to provide a sample for a dope test during the national selection trials on March 10.

- ❖ Initially suspended by NADA on April 23, the Tokyo Games bronze medallist was also suspended by the World Wrestling Federation (UWW) in light of the incident.
- ❖ The Panel holds that the Athlete is liable for sanctions under Article 10.3.1 and liable for ineligibility for a period of 4 years," the ADDP said in its order.



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