

Have you ever felt like you're juggling ten things at once, only to drop them all? Enter Single Tasking Day to help you out! This day urges us to switch gears from our multi-tasking madness to doing one thing at a time. It's like giving your brain a cozy, focused hug, making it a standout moment in our calendar of chaos. Unplug and unwind. Try turning off your gadgets for a few hours. This digital detox lets your mind breathe from the constant buzz of notifications. Use this time to enjoy a quiet walk, meditate, or sip on your favourite tea, savouring the calm.

#FOOD-TALK

Nature's Candy

This fruit contains serotonin, and eating just two before bed can help promote better sleep.



That processed or refined sugar is bad for health and can cause numerous ailments like high blood pressure, acne, weight gain, diabetes, and fatty liver disease, among others, is a well-known fact. Still, those with a sweet tooth find it extremely hard to stay away from such foods. But, what if we told you that there is a super healthy way to satiate your sweet cravings minus all the detrimental effects? Look no further than fruit! We would like to think of fruit as 'nature's candy' as it is naturally sweet and also provides many mood-boosting plant compounds that support mental fitness. All you need is a little bit to feel satisfied.



Benefits of Fruits

Fruits, naturally, have a sweet flavour and also contain a wide range of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other plant components, all of which are beneficial to one's health. Additionally, fruits are high in a number of essential vitamins and minerals like vitamin C, potassium, and folate. She added that natural sugars give the body the nutrients it needs, to stay healthy along with quick but long-lasting energy, and also keep the metabolism steady. Natural sweetness and essential nutrients like potassium, vitamin C, and folate can be found in fruits.

Benefits of Certain Specific Fruits

- Strawberry, Blueberry:** Rich in fibre and antioxidants for reduced neuroinflammation.
- Kiwi:** Contains serotonin, and eating just two before bed can help promote better sleep.
- Lemon, Orange:** Loaded with vitamin C, which helps regulate neurotransmitter function.
- Cherries:** Contain polyphenols that have been shown to support healthy memory and cognitive function.
- Watermelon, Melon:** Naturally high in vitamin B6, a nutrient whose deficiency has been associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Apple:** Excellent source of pectin, a probiotic fibre that feeds the good bacteria in the gut for a healthy microbiome.

Natural vs Processed (White) Sugar

Sugar, in any form, is a source of carbohydrate that is converted into glucose and used for energy by the body. But, the level of energy depends on the source of sugar. Fruits, dairy products, vegetables, and other foods are a natural source of sugar, whereas refined or processed sugar comes from packaged food or is added to foods and beverages during the manufacturing process or before eating, adding that consuming too much sugar can lead to weight gain, acne, and risk of type 2 diabetes, along with several medical conditions.

Harmful Effects of Processed Sugar

Processed sugar has numerous bad effects on health. These include obesity, type 2 diabetes, and even increased chances of getting a heart disease. Additionally, they are linked to an increased risk of liver disease, certain types of cancer, depression, and dementia. Numerous health issues, including obesity and belly fat, both of which are risk factors for more serious conditions like diabetes and heart disease, are related to refined sugars.



How Green should a Green Rajasthan be!

Loss of Biodiversity is a major concern. The introduction of non-native species, alteration of habitats and disruption of ecosystems can lead to a decline in biodiversity, affecting local flora and fauna. This has been seen in the areas now benefitting from The Indira Gandhi Canal, particularly in the Jodhpur area. So much so that a concerted effort has been made to uproot the foreign shrubs and replace it with the native plants in the hills surrounding Mehrangarh.



Isarda Dam.



Dr. Goutam Sen
CTVS Surgeon
Traveller Storyteller

Rajasthan Government has been trying to enhance its economic status in the recent months. The present administration has the added advantage of being in synchrony with the Central Government.

Besides the attempts to bring in more industries into the state through concerted efforts with ambitious projects like 'Rising Rajasthan,' there are many projects, which have lain idle in the back shelves of our offices, are getting attention again. Most of these projects were good to begin with, but could not be taken up because of political compulsions.

Among these projects, one of the most important was the Eastern River Canal Project (ERCP). After new initiatives, it is proposed to be finished within five years, once the work begins, following the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR). ERCP is an ambitious project of over 40,000 crores, which will help augment irrigation facilities in an area of around 2 lakh hectares in 13 semi-arid districts of Rajasthan, namely Jhalawar, Baran, Kota, Bundi, Sawai Madhopur, Karauli, Dholpur, Bharatpur, Dausa, Alwar, Jaipur



Merging of Parvati-Kalisindh and Rajasthan Canal.

and Ajmer in eastern Rajasthan. The major hitch was the finances. Earlier, the project couldn't get status of national project as it was planned on 50% dependable yield against the established norm of 75% dependability. On December 13, 2022, the proposal to integrate Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal Link Project with ERCP was approved by the central government as a priority link project. This added to the yield by 10%.

A tripartite MoU (which has now matured into a Memorandum of Agreement, MoA) was signed on January 28, 2024 in New Delhi for preparation of joint DPR of the project among the Centre, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh governments.

According to the latest Mr. A. Ramgarh Barrage, Mahalpur Barrage, Navnaira Barrage, Mej Barrage, Rathore Barrage, Dungi Dam, feeder system from Ramgarh Barrage to Dungi Dam, capacity enhancement of Isarda Dam and rehabilitation of 26 pre-built dams are included in the East Rajasthan Canal Project. It is hoped that the dams surrounding Jaipur will benefit from this project. The long cherished dream of bringing water to the Ramgarh Dam near Jaipur will also be a beneficiary. The state will provide a smaller portion of the total expense of the project instead, according to the new MoA, as it is now part of the interlinking of rivers project of the union government. Now, 60% bearing of the cost will be under the national project.

The greening of this region will have additional benefits. The



Soil salination lays land unproductive and bare.

#PIPPED DREAMS



Ramgarh Dam, Jaipur.

master plan of Jaipur is now being expanded into a much larger region to include the outlying areas upto forty kilometers from the central point. This will increase the population of Jaipur by an estimated 20 lakh people. Newer Economic zones will sprout in this area, giving employment to a large number of people. It will help in increasing the number of tourist spots, which have been neglected due to scarcity of water.

The question that arises is that, will this project have any deleterious effects also? Rajasthan, being one of the driest states in India, has indeed been witnessing various initiatives to bring water to its arid areas. While these projects aim to alleviate water scarcity and promote development, it's essential to consider their potential environmental and ecological implications.

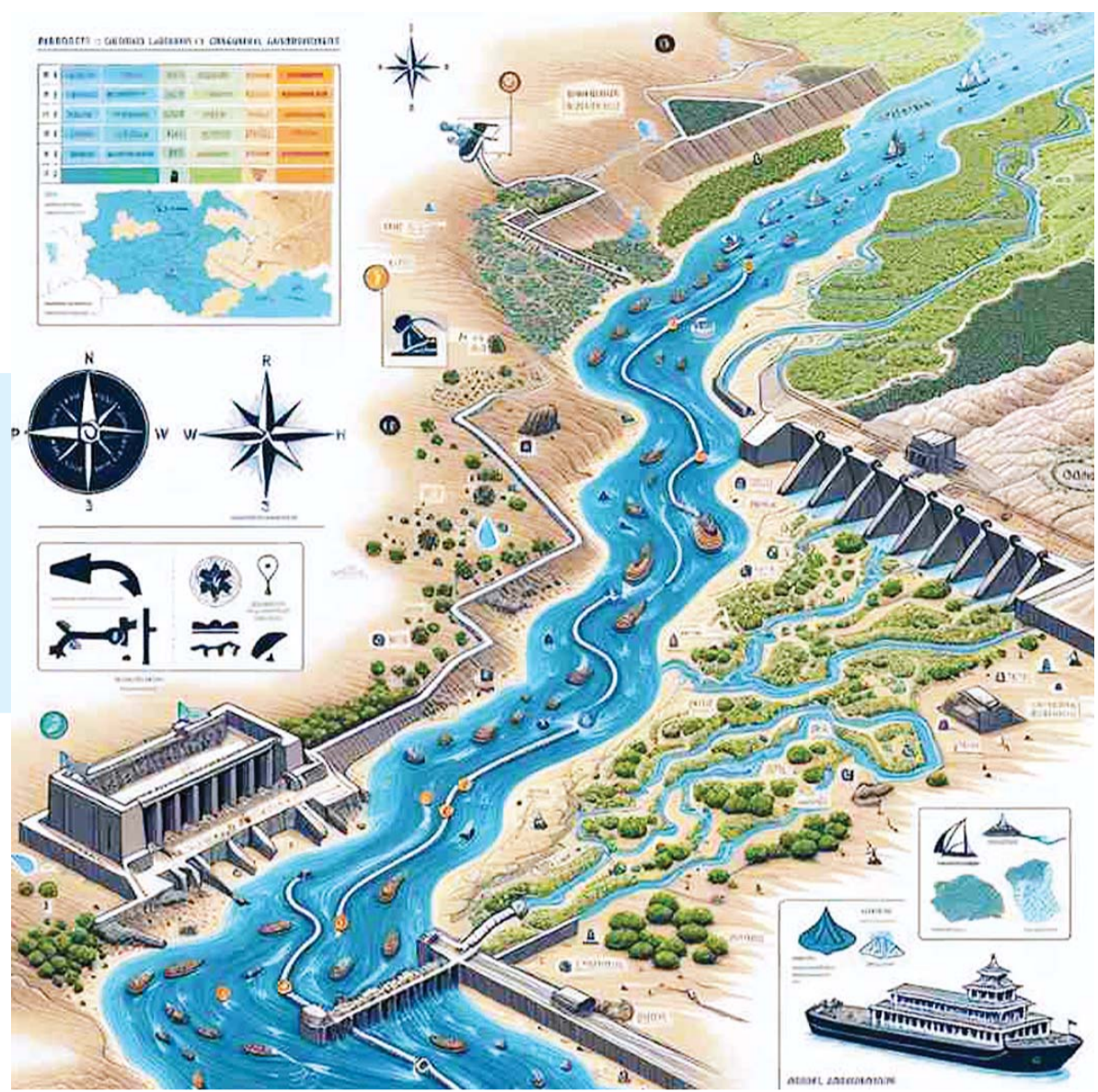
Finally, the displacement of local communities, alteration of traditional livelihoods and cultural heritage can have significant social and economic implications. The example is seen in the region of the Kevadia in Gujarat, where the Statue of Unity has been erected. The tribals were displaced and had to learn new trades to survive.

The Climate Change implications are multiple. It can alter precipitation patterns, leading to more frequent and intense droughts and floods, which can impact the efficacy and sustainability of water projects. Rising temperatures can lead to increased evaporation from water bodies, reducing the availability of water for various uses. Climate change can lead to increased water pollution, affecting both

What are the Potential Risks and Concerns?

There is a risk of disruption of Natural Water Cycles. Large-scale water diversion projects can alter natural water cycles, leading to changes in groundwater recharge, soil moisture, and evapotranspiration patterns.

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Parvati-Kalisindh Project.

#PIPPED DREAMS

While water projects in Rajasthan aim to address water scarcity, it's essential to carefully consider their potential environmental and ecological implications. By implementing mitigation measures and adopting sustainable water management practices, we can minimise adverse effects and promote a more resilient and sustainable future for the region.

Deserts are home to unique and adapted flora and fauna, such as cacti, succulents, and desert animals like camels, reptiles, and insects. They help in Carbon Sequestration. Deserts, especially those with vegetation like the Mojave or Sonoran Deserts, absorb and store carbon dioxide, contributing to climate regulation. Arid areas are a significant source of dust, which carries essential nutrients to other ecosystems, influencing global nutrient cycles. Deserts influence global wind patterns, which in turn, affect weather and climate conditions worldwide. These tracts of dry land help regulate Earth's temperature by absorbing and releasing heat, which, in turn, influences global climate patterns. Considerable

However, there are mitigation measures!

This requires assessment of the potential environmental and ecological impacts of water projects to identify mitigation measures. It becomes possible by promoting water-saving technologies, efficient irrigation systems, and rainwater harvesting to reduce water waste and optimize water use. Special care for reserve and restore natural habitats, such as wetlands and forests, to maintain ecological connectivity and promote biodiversity is of primary importance.

The success of such massive projects are an ongoing process. Continuous monitoring of the environmental and ecological impacts of water projects and adaptation of management strategies are needed to minimise



Eastern Rajasthan Canal.

#PIPPED DREAMS

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economic and cultural significance of deserts are often unrealised. These areas are rich in mineral resources, such as copper, gold, and lithium, which are essential for various industries. Some of the rare metals, like lithium, are found in these regions only. Deserts have cultural and spiritual importance for many communities, providing a connection to their heritage and traditions. Now, if all arid areas of the world were made water-sufficient, some issues will require attention.

Altering desert ecosystems could lead to the loss of unique and adapted species, compromising global biodiversity. Changes in desert ecosystems could influence global climate patterns, potentially leading to unpredictable and extreme weather events, which are occurring more often in these days.

Making deserts water-sufficient would require significant water management efforts, which could strain global water resources and lead to conflicts over water allocation.

In conclusion, deserts play a vital role in maintaining the Earth's ecological balance, regulating the climate, and supporting unique ecosystems. While making deserts water-sufficient might seem appealing, it's essential to consider the potential consequences and strive for sustainable solutions that balance human needs with environmental conservation.

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#ENTERTAINMENT

Loved 'Chhaava?'

Here are some other historical dramas that will transport you to the past.

Our current interest in historical dramas stems from a growing interest in revisiting the past to reflect on the present we've inherited.



On Monday, it was reported that 'Chhaava,' the historical drama based on the life of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj (Vicky Kaushal), the son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, recorded the highest first Monday of 2025 with an earning of INR 24 crores. While it's only February and we have ten more months to go before a film is crowned the 'highest-earning Indian film of 2025,' Chhaava points to the rising popularity of historical dramas, which stems from a growing interest in revisiting the past to reflect on the present we've inherited. From Mangal Pandey's first war of Indian independence to a Bengali-language film about a brothel situated near the India-Pakistan border, which inspired *Heeramandi*, we've rounded up a few historical dramas from around the world, that you can watch to travel back to the past.



Mangal Pandey: The Rising (2005)

Set in 1857, *Mangal Pandey: The Rising* (2005) depicts an Indian soldier's growing resentment against British rule, especially after the introduction of new rifle cartridges, rumoured to be greased with cow and pig fat, offending Hindu and Muslim soldiers. His rebellion sparks the first war of Indian independence, also known as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. Amid friendship with British officer William Gordon (Toby Stephens) and conflicts with colonial oppression, Pandey's defiance leads to his execution, but his sacrifice ignites a nationwide uprising against British rule.



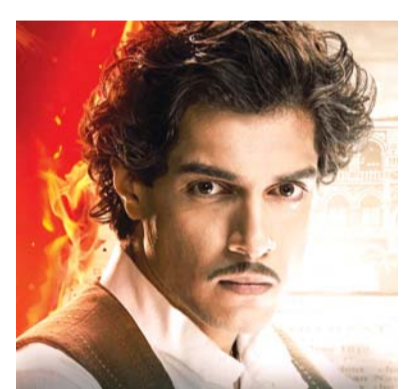
Jodhaa Akbar (2008)

A historical epic that tells the love story of Mughal Emperor Akbar and Rajput princess, Jodhaa Bai, through Hrithik Roshan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's sizzling chemistry. To strengthen political ties, Akbar marries Jodhaa, but their relationship starts cold due to cultural and religious differences. Over time, Jodhaa's strong will and intelligence earn Akbar's admiration, and love blossoms between them. As Akbar expands his empire, he faces betrayal, court conspiracies and rebellions, even as his just rule and religious tolerance make him a beloved leader. The film beautifully blends history, romance and politics, portraying the evolution of an emperor and his queen.



Bajirao Mastani (2015)

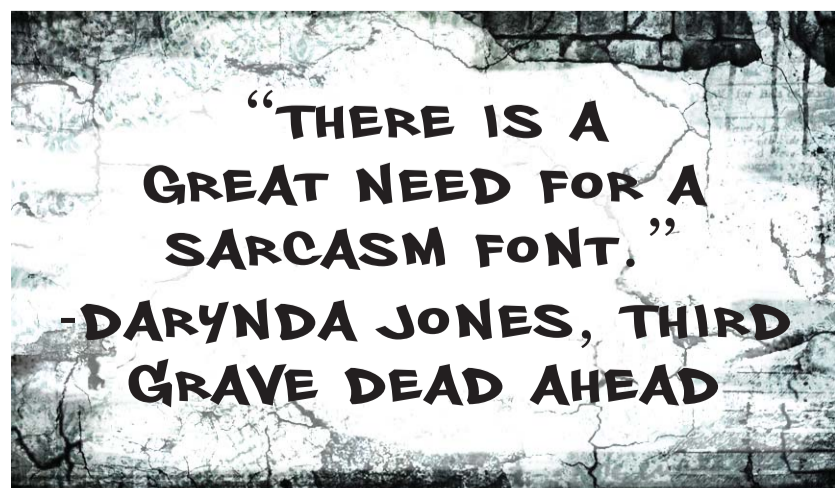
Despite being married to Kashi Bai (Priyanka Chopra), Maratha Peshwa Bajirao I (Raveesh Singh) falls deeply in love with the Bundelkhand princess, Mastani (Deepika Padukone), a fierce warrior. Their passionate romance faces fierce opposition from society, his family and orthodox traditions, with Bajirao not only having to battle enemies on the battlefield but also the prejudices of his time. As war and politics take their toll, Bajirao and Mastani's love story ends in tragedy, but their devotion remains immortal. The sets and music in this Sanjay Leela Bhansali directorial deserve a special mention.



Maharaj (2024)

A historical drama based on the 1862 Maharaj Libel Case, *Maharaj* follows Karsandas Mulji (Junaid Khan), a journalist and social reformer. He challenges the revered religious leader Maharaj 'J' (Jaideep Ahlawat), after uncovering that he is abusing his female followers under the pretext of re-enacting the 'charan seva,' an act of worship between Krishna and his gopis. Determined to expose the truth, Karsandas embarks on a legal battle that shakes societal norms and questions blind faith. Facing threats and opposition, he fights for justice, leading to a landmark case that redefined press freedom and religious accountability. Set in 19th-century Bombay, the film explores themes of courage, morality and the power of truth.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman