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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 13-04-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

Puducherry Deployed 'Nila' Humanoid Robot at Polling Booth

Election authorities in Puducherry deployed 'Nila' humanoid robot for the first time during Assembly elections at the VOC Government School polling booth to enhance voter experience through technology-driven assistance.

The initiative aimed to create a high-technology and welcoming environment for voters, especially to encourage participation among young voters and first-time voters.

The robot was developed by Robo Mirror, Coimbatore, and was dressed in a traditional saree, greeting voters with flowers, providing polling booth directions, and assisting elderly and first-time voters.

'Nila' is an event-based interactive humanoid robot equipped with sensor-based voter detection capability, supports communication in Tamil and English languages, and can perform walking and hand-waving interactions.

The robot is designed for deployment in multiple public settings, including elections, official functions, and social events such as weddings.

CCEA Approved Two Hydroelectric Projects in Arunachal Pradesh Worth ₹40,175 Crore

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved two hydroelectric projects in Arunachal Pradesh with a total investment of ₹40,175.33 crore to strengthen renewable energy capacity, energy security, and infrastructure development in the North-Eastern region.

The approved projects include the 1,200-megawatt Kalai-II Hydroelectric Project in Anjaw district and the 1,720-megawatt Kamala Hydroelectric Project across Kamle district, Kra Daadi district, and Kurung Kumey district.

The Kalai-II Hydroelectric Project, to be developed on the Lohit River, received approval with an investment of ₹14,105.83 crore.

The project has an installed capacity of 1,200 megawatts and is expected to generate 4,852.95 million units of electricity annually, with completion planned within 78 months.

The project also includes construction of 29 kilometres of roads and bridges to improve connectivity in Namsai district and Anjaw district.

The Kamala Hydroelectric Project received approval with an investment of ₹26,069.50 crore and has an installed capacity of 1,720 megawatts, expected to generate 6,870 million units of electricity annually.

The project includes ₹4,743.98 crore for flood moderation, ₹1,340 crore for enabling infrastructure, and ₹750 crore as Central Financial Assistance for the State's equity share.

The Kamala project will support peak demand management, national grid balancing, and flood moderation in the Brahmaputra River basin, contributing to sustainable development and improved energy infrastructure in the region.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Elected to United Nations Economic and Social Council Subsidiary Bodies

The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations announced that India was elected by acclamation to key subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

India has secured positions in major UN bodies, including the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) (2027–2030), the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Committee) (2027–2030), and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) (2027–2029).

The CSTD serves as an intergovernmental forum to discuss issues related to science, technology, and development.

The NGO Committee is responsible for evaluating applications for consultative status and handling reclassification requests from NGOs.

The CPC acts as the main subsidiary organ for planning, programming, and coordination within the United Nations system.

Additionally, Preeti Saran, India's Ambassador, has been re-elected to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) for 2027–2030.

The CESCR is a body of 18 independent experts that monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The Covenant ensures key economic, social, and cultural rights such as adequate food, housing, education, health, social security, water, sanitation, and work.

This achievement strengthens India's global presence and enhances its role in international policymaking, development, and human rights governance.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Indian Council of Agricultural Research Forms Special Task Force

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has constituted a Special Task Force (STF) on Agriculture to strengthen India's agricultural resilience amid global disruptions.

The STF aims to address challenges related to geopolitical uncertainties, climate variability, supply chain disruptions, and rising input costs affecting the agriculture sector.

The initiative focuses on ensuring food security, agricultural input security, and data-driven policy support for the Government of India (GoI).

The first meeting of the STF was chaired by Mangi Lal Jat, Secretary of DARE (Department of Agricultural Research and Education) and Director General (DG) of ICAR.

The STF was formed in response to issues such as global food and fertiliser supply chain disruptions, energy market volatility, and climate risks.

ICAR is strengthening the Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav (MGMG) programme in 100 Aspirational Districts through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs).

Key initiatives include promoting balanced fertiliser use, millet region mapping, and eco-fisheries diversification during the Kharif season.

A major technological focus is on Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR), which helps save 20–30% water and reduces labour costs.

ICAR is also strengthening the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Agricultural Meteorology for real-time weather-based advisories.

A weekly monitoring system will be implemented through Nodal Officers in each Subject Matter Division (SMD) for coordinated execution of action plans.

The STF will ensure continuous institutional feedback and periodic meetings for effective implementation of agricultural strategies.

BANKING

FIU-IND and I4C Sign Landmark Memorandum of

Understanding

The Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen India's fight against cyber frauds and financial crimes.

The MoU was signed by Shri Amit Mohan Govil (Director, FIU-IND) and Shri Rajesh Kumar (CEO, I4C), marking enhanced inter-agency intelligence collaboration.

The agreement aims to improve information sharing, coordination, and operational intelligence support between both agencies.

It comes at a time when India's digital payment ecosystem has expanded significantly, increasing the need for cybersecurity safeguards and fraud prevention mechanisms.

The collaboration will help in preventing financial crimes, protecting digital transactions, and supporting asset recovery efforts.

A key objective is to develop feedback mechanisms to improve fraud detection systems at the national level.

The MoU also focuses on creating and sharing red flag indicators and guidelines for financial institutions to strengthen cyber fraud prevention.

The initiative represents a "whole-of-government" approach to tackling cybercrime and financial misconduct.

Reserve Bank of India's First Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy for Financial Year 2026-27

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) conducted the 60th and 1st Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting for Financial Year 2026-27 (FY27) from April 06 to April 08, 2026.

The meeting was chaired by Sanjay Malhotra, with participation from MPC members Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Saugata Bhattacharya, Prof. Ram Singh, Dr. Poonam Gupta, and Indranil Bhattacharyya.

The MPC kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.25% under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) and maintained a 'Neutral' policy stance due to global uncertainties and West Asia conflict.

The Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate was retained at 5.00%, while the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and Bank Rate were held at 5.50%.

The MPC cited factors like rising crude oil prices, rupee depreciation, and supply chain disruptions as key reasons for its cautious stance.

The GDP growth forecast for FY27 was revised downward by 50 basis points to 6.9% from the earlier estimate of 7.4%.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation is projected at 4.6% for FY27, remaining within the tolerance band of ±2%, with core inflation estimated at 4.4%.

The next MPC meeting is scheduled to be held from June 03 to June 05, 2026.

FINANCE

National Stock Exchange of India Partners with S&P Global Energy

The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) has partnered with S&P Global Energy to launch exchange-traded derivatives based on Platts benchmarks.

The initiative will initially introduce futures contracts linked to Platts Dated Brent Crude Oil, a globally recognised international crude oil pricing benchmark.

The move will enable Indian market participants to access global crude oil prices through a regulated domestic exchange platform.

The NSE, based in Mumbai, was incorporated in 1992 and began operations in 1994 to bring transparency to Indian financial markets.

The collaboration integrates S&P Global Platts pricing benchmarks into India's commodity derivatives ecosystem.

The Dated Brent Crude Oil (Platts) Futures received regulatory approval, with the official launch scheduled for 13 April 2026.

The contracts aim to serve a wide range of participants including refiners, importers, traders, financial institutions, and investors.

The initiative will provide exposure to global Brent crude oil markets while operating within a domestic regulated framework.

The integration of Platts benchmarks is expected to enhance transparency, price discovery, and credibility in India's energy derivatives market.

Overall, the move strengthens India's position in global commodity trading and energy price alignment mechanisms.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

NITI Aayog Released Report Titled "From Borrowers to Builders: Women and India's Evolving Credit Market"

Nidhi Chhibber, Chief Executive Officer of the National Institution for Transforming India Aayog, released the second edition of the report titled "From Borrowers to Builders: Women and India's Evolving Credit Market" in New Delhi.

The report highlighted that women hold a credit portfolio of ₹76 lakh crore, accounting for 26% of total system credit, registering a 4.8-fold increase since 2017.

The report was prepared under the Women Entrepreneurship Platform and developed by TransUnion CIBIL in collaboration with MicroSave Consulting.

Credit penetration among women increased from 19% in 2017 to 36% in 2025, with around 16 crore credit-active women borrowers, growing at a 9% Compound Annual Growth Rate.

The report stated that nearly 45 crore women are credit-eligible in India, of which around two-thirds remain unserved, indicating significant potential for expansion in women's access to formal credit system.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Nasscom Foundation Names U.B. Pravin Rao as Its New Chairperson

Nasscom Foundation has appointed B. Pravin Rao as its new Chairperson, effective immediately.

He succeeds Rostow Ravanan, who has completed his tenure as Chairperson.

B. Pravin Rao brings over 35 years of experience in the technology sector, including global operations, large-scale transformation, and execution excellence.

He previously served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Infosys from 2014 to 2021.

He has been associated with National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) since 2014, holding key roles such as Vice-Chairperson and Chairman.

His appointment brings continuity and strategic depth to the Foundation's next phase of growth and initiatives.

As Chairperson, he will help guide the Foundation's strategic priorities and contribute to the government's vision of Viksit Bharat (Developed India).

IMPORTANT DAYS

Central Reserve Police Force Valour Day

Central Reserve Police Force Valour Day, also known as Shaurya Diwas, is observed every year on April 9 across India to honour the bravery of Central Reserve Police Force personnel during the Battle of Sardar Post in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.

April 9, 2026 marks the 61st Central Reserve Police Force Valour Day.

On April 9, 1965, the Pakistan Army launched Operation Desert Hawk, deploying a full infantry brigade to attack Sardar Post.

A small unit of the 2nd Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force successfully repulsed the attack, eliminating 34 Pakistani soldiers and capturing 4 soldiers, while 6 Central Reserve Police Force personnel laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Since then, April 9 is observed annually as Central Reserve Police Force Valour Day to commemorate the courage, sacrifice, and dedication of Central Reserve Police Force personnel.

National Safe Motherhood Day

India observes National Safe Motherhood Day every year on April 11 to raise awareness about maternal health, safe pregnancy, and access to quality healthcare services for mothers.

The day is observed on the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi, spouse of Mahatma Gandhi.

The theme for National Safe Motherhood Day 2026 is “Equity in Maternal Healthcare: Leaving No Mother Behind.”

India became the first country to officially declare April 11 as National Safe Motherhood Day, following a proposal by the White Ribbon Alliance India, and the day was designated by the Government of India in 2003.

The observance focuses on improving maternal healthcare awareness, institutional delivery support, and access to medical services, which contribute to reducing maternal mortality in the country.

OBITUTARY

Jim Whittaker, First American to Climb Mount Everest

James Warren Whittaker (Jim Whittaker), the first American to summit Mount Everest, passed away at the age of 97 in Port Townsend, Washington,United States of America (USA).

He was born on 10 February 1929 in Seattle, Washington, and became one of the most celebrated mountaineers in history.

He achieved global fame by becoming the first American to summit Mount Everest on 1 May 1963, along with Nawang Gombu, becoming the 10th climber ever to reach the summit.

His achievement came 10 years after the historic climb of Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, and helped boost mountaineering popularity in the USA.

He was the first full-time employee and later CEO (1971–1979) of Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), expanding it into a major outdoor retail cooperative.

He led and participated in major expeditions, including the 1978 American ascent of K2, the 1965

Mount Kennedy expedition with Robert F. Kennedy, and the 1990 Everest International Peace Climb.

He also led unique initiatives such as guiding 10 differently-abled climbers up Mount Rainier in 1981, highlighting his commitment to inclusive mountaineering.

He received the prestigious Hubbard Medal from the National Geographic Society, presented by former US President John F. Kennedy.