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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 29-04-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

Andhra Pradesh Launches ₹13,000 Crore Mushroom Mission

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched its first Mushroom Mission with an investment of ₹13,000 crore, announced by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

The mission aims to make the state India's largest mushroom producer with a target of 67,500 tonnes annually, surpassing Bihar.

Around 1.62 lakh mushroom units will be established, each covering 5,000 square feet, focusing on small farmers, Self-Help Groups, and rural women.

The government will provide a ₹5,184 crore subsidy (about 40% of project cost) through Central and State support.

Key varieties promoted include milky mushroom, paddy straw mushroom, and button mushroom for better climate suitability and market demand.

The initiative will boost rural employment, exports (especially to Gulf countries), and agri-value chain development.

The mission is expected to strengthen agricultural diversification and income generation in the state.

MoEFCC Launch Five-Year Biodiversity Project (2025–2030)

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) have launched a five-year biodiversity project (2025–2030).

The project, titled "Strengthening Institutional Capacities for Securing Biodiversity Conservation Commitments", is supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with a funding of USD 4.88 million.

The initiative aims to integrate biodiversity conservation into Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), making it part of local governance and rural planning.

It focuses on strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) to ensure community participation and benefit sharing.

Key regions covered:

Tamil Nadu: Sathyamangalam landscape including Mudumalai Tiger Reserve and Sathyamangalam

Tiger Reserve.

Meghalaya: Garo Hills region including Nokrek Biosphere Reserve, Balpakram National Park, and Siju Wildlife Sanctuary.

The project promotes sustainable financing mechanisms such as: Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) co-financing and Green micro-enterprises

Special emphasis is given to women, Scheduled Castes, and tribal communities for inclusive participation.

The initiative aligns with:

India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2030)

India's Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement

Government Expands Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan Procurement In Chhattisgarh

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has expanded procurement under Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan in Chhattisgarh and launched the first structured pulse procurement under Atmanirbhar Pulses Mission in Bihar.

The initiative aims to enhance farmer income support and ensure price stability.

Procurement operations are led by National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited.

In Chhattisgarh, procurement has been strengthened through digitised farmer registration through Electronic Samyukti portal and awareness campaigns.

Around 85 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies centres are operational across districts such as Dhamtari, Durg, Raipur, and Raigarh, with further expansion planned.

In Bihar, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited has started organised procurement of masoor (lentil) using scientific storage in Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority-approved warehouses, in collaboration with Central Warehousing Corporation.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited is also expanding procurement under the Price Support Scheme through its cooperative network.

The move will strengthen pulse procurement systems, improve market access for farmers, and stabilise prices.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UK Parliament Approves Tobacco and Vapes Bill Prohibiting Cigarette Sales

The UK Parliament passed the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, introducing one of the strictest anti-smoking laws

The law bans the sale of cigarettes to individuals born on or after January 1, 2009, creating a “smoke-free generation” with a lifetime prohibition.

This means children aged 17 or younger will never be legally allowed to purchase tobacco products.

The bill has been approved by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and will come into force after royal assent by King Charles III.

The legislation grants the government powers to regulate tobacco, vaping, and nicotine products, including flavours, packaging, and marketing practices.

It also introduces restrictions on vaping in public spaces, such as cars carrying children, playgrounds, and areas near schools and hospitals.

The bill is part of broader efforts to tackle smoking-related health issues, which are a leading cause of preventable death, disability, and illness in the UK.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

GalaxEye to Deploy World’s First OptoSAR Satellite

GalaxEye is set to launch its first satellite Mission Drishti within three months, marking a major milestone in India’s private space ecosystem.

The satellite introduces the world’s first “OptoSAR platform”, combining optical sensors with Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) for high-resolution Earth imaging.

This hybrid OptoSAR system enables all-weather, day-and-night imaging, overcoming limitations of optical (cloud/light dependent) and SAR (complex interpretation) technologies individually.

The satellite has a weight of approximately 180–190 kg and offers 1–1.5 metre resolution, creating a new category in Earth observation capabilities.

GalaxEye has partnered with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) for data distribution to government users.

The company plans to build a constellation of 10–20 satellites by 2029, enabling near-daily global coverage.

The initiative also aims to expand into AI-driven analytics and global space data markets, strengthening India’s space-tech innovation ecosystem.

BANKING

CBIC Removes ₹10 Lakh Cap on Courier Exports

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has removed the ₹10 lakh value cap on courier export consignments, effective from April 1, 2026, to boost India's e-commerce exports and ease of doing business.

The reform is part of broader government measures to streamline courier-based imports and exports, aimed at improving logistics efficiency and enhancing India's global trade competitiveness.

Earlier, exporters using courier mode were restricted to ₹10 lakh per shipment, which limited scalability for MSMEs, start-ups, artisans, and online sellers engaged in e-commerce exports.

As part of the reforms, CBIC has introduced a Return to Origin (RTO) mechanism, under which uncleared or unclaimed imported goods (after 15 days) can be sent back to the origin country, reducing congestion at courier terminals.

The RTO facility applies only to goods that are not prohibited, restricted, or under enforcement hold, and is designed to improve clearance efficiency at International Courier Terminals.

CBIC has also simplified the re-import process for returned or rejected goods by adopting a risk-based assessment approach instead of consignment-wise verification, improving processing speed.

A dedicated return module has been developed in the Express Cargo Clearance System to facilitate smoother handling of e-commerce-related returns and cross-border courier shipments.

The reforms are expected to reduce dwell time, lower logistics costs, and significantly benefit exporters, logistics operators, MSMEs, and the wider e-commerce ecosystem.

These changes align with the Union Budget 2026–27 announcement and reflect the Government of India's focus on strengthening India's e-commerce export ecosystem and improving global trade competitiveness.

ECONOMY

India's Textile Exports Rise 2.1% to ₹3.16 Trillion in FY26 Despite US Tariff Pressures

India's Textile sector demonstrated resilience in FY 2025–26, with total exports (including handicrafts) rising 2.1% to ₹3.16 lakh crore, reflecting steady global demand and competitiveness.

Ready-Made Garments (RMG) remained the largest export segment, growing 2.9% to ₹1.39 lakh crore, while man-made textiles grew 3.6% and cotton textiles remained largely stable (0.4%).

Among value-added segments, handicrafts (excluding carpets) recorded the highest growth of 6.1%, highlighting rising demand for artisanal and niche products.

Strong export growth was seen in key markets including the UAE (22.3%), UK (7.8%), Germany (9.9%), Spain (15.5%), Japan (20.6%), Egypt (38.3%), Nigeria (21.4%), Senegal (54.4%), and Sudan (205.6%), indicating global diversification of exports.

Textile exports expanded across 120+ destinations (April 2025–Feb 2026), showing broad-based geographical growth.

India's expanding Free Trade Agreement network (FTAs) with EFTA, UK, Oman, New Zealand, and EU is expected to improve market access, reduce tariffs, and strengthen global value chain integration.

Despite facing high US tariffs, including a peak of 50% under the reciprocal tariff regime, the sector maintained positive export growth momentum.

The performance reflects continued global demand for Indian textile products and strong sectoral competitiveness across product categories.

United Nations Projects India's Economic Growth at 6.4%

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has revised India's GDP growth forecast for 2026 downward to 6.4%, from the earlier estimate of 6.6%, citing rising global uncertainties.

India's growth is projected at 7.4% in 2025 and 6.6% in 2027, indicating a moderation in near-term growth momentum due to external pressures.

The report estimates India's inflation at 4.4% in 2026, reflecting rising price pressures and potential monetary tightening.

Economic activity in India slowed in the second half of 2025 as exports to the United States fell by 25% following 50% tariffs imposed in August 2025.

Despite global challenges, India remains a key driver of regional growth in South and South-West Asia, which expanded by 5.4% in 2025.

The report highlights India's Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme as a major policy tool to boost domestic manufacturing in sectors such as solar modules, batteries, and green hydrogen.

India remained among the top destinations for greenfield FDI in Asia-Pacific, attracting around USD 50 billion in announced investments.

However, FDI inflows to developing Asia-Pacific economies declined by 2% in 2025, amid trade tensions and geopolitical uncertainty.

India is also the world's largest remittance recipient (USD 137 billion in 2024) and may face impact due to the 1% US tax on remittances from January 2026.

The country accounts for around 1.3 million green jobs globally, highlighting its role in the renewable energy and green employment sector.

DEFENCE

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh to Head Indian Delegation at SCO Defence Ministers' Meet

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will lead a high-level Indian delegation to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' Meeting scheduled on April 28, 2026 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

The SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting will focus on regional defence and security issues, including international peace, counter-terrorism, and defence cooperation among member states.

The meeting is being held amid geopolitical tensions in West Asia, with discussions likely on measures to mitigate the impact of ongoing conflicts.

India will emphasise its commitment to global peace and reiterate its policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and extremism.

On the sidelines, Rajnath Singh is expected to hold bilateral meetings with defence ministers of participating countries.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Whole-Time Director and Executive Director of AU Small Finance Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of Vivek Tripathi as Executive Director (ED) of AU Small Finance Bank.

He will serve a three-year term and assume charge as Whole-Time Director (WTD) effective April 24, 2026.

Vivek Tripathi is currently the Chief Credit Officer (CCO) and has been associated with the bank since 2014, bringing extensive experience in credit and banking operations.

He oversees enterprise-wide credit policy, underwriting, portfolio management, collections, and legal recovery under an integrated governance framework.

His leadership has strengthened risk management, process standardisation, and early-warning systems, improving portfolio quality and balance-sheet resilience.

He previously led commercial banking growth, focusing on disciplined credit expansion and liability mobilisation.

He has also driven innovation-led initiatives such as digital trade and remittance solutions, enhancing engagement with MSMEs and emerging businesses.

Vivek Tripathi has over two decades of experience and has worked with ICICI Bank, Reliance Capital, and Aditya Birla Group.

The move comes as AU Small Finance Bank has received in-principle approval to transition into a Universal Bank, preparing for its next phase of sustainable growth and expansion.

Brand Ambassador for Census 2027

The Government of India (GoI) appointed renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik as the Brand Ambassador for Census 2027 to promote public awareness and participation in the nationwide census exercise.

The appointment has been made by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as part of preparations for the 16th National Census of India.

As Brand Ambassador, Sudarsan Pattnaik will use his sand art creations to spread awareness and encourage citizens' participation in the Census 2027

Census 2027 will be the 16th Census of India and the 8th after Independence, conducted under the Census Act, 1948 by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.

The official mascots of Census 2027 are "Pragati" (female) and "Vikas" (male), symbolising progress and development.

Census 2027 will be conducted in two phases: House Listing (2026) and Population Enumeration (2027), making it the first digital census of India.

The reference date for population enumeration will be 1 March 2027, while for snow-bound regions (Ladakh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand) it will be 1 October 2026.

The census will be implemented under the supervision of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI) and is based on the Seventh Schedule (Union List, Article 246) of the Constitution.

Sudarsan Pattnaik is a Padma Shri awardee (2014) and a Guinness World Record holder (2017) for creating the world's tallest sandcastle (48 ft 8 in).

He is widely known for using sand art for social awareness campaigns including issues like climate change, COVID-19, and children's rights.

The Government has sanctioned an amount of ₹11,718.24 crore for conducting the Census 2027

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

World Day for Safety and Health at Work is observed every year on April 28 to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally.

The day aims to raise awareness about workplace safety, ensuring healthy and secure working conditions for all workers.

It focuses on building a strong safety culture to reduce work-related injuries, illnesses, and deaths.

The observance was initiated in 2003 by the International Labour Organization as part of its global strategy on occupational safety and health.

The initiative emphasizes prevention, social dialogue, and policy support to improve workplace conditions worldwide.

April 28 is also marked as the International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers, observed by the trade union movement.

The day highlights the need to strengthen occupational health policies and ensure safe and dignified working environments across all sectors.

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