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Current Affairs Today — April 4, 2026

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NEW INCOME TAX ACT 2025 TAKES EFFECT; CBDT LAUNCHES KAR SAATHI

The Income Tax Act, 2025 came into force on April 1, 2026, replacing the six-decade-old Income-tax Act, 1961. CBDT launched the Kar Saathi AI chatbot and a new website on April 2, 2026 to guide taxpayers through the transition.

Background

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) launched **Kar Saathi** — an AI-powered 24x7 chatbot meaning “tax companion” in Hindi — alongside a revamped taxpayer website. The chatbot answers queries on the new Act, forms, and ITR procedures. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had earlier launched **PRARAMBH** (Policy Reform and Responsible Action for Mission Viksit Bharat), a nationwide outreach programme for the transition.

Key Simplifications

- Rules reduced from 510 to **333**

- Forms reduced from 399 to **190** (a ~52% reduction)
- Over **2,200 FAQs** covering 186 forms published
- CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal led the rollout

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INCOME TAX ACT, 2025:

Replaced: Income-tax Act, 1961 (in force for 65 years)

Effective from: April 1, 2026

Rules: 510 → 333; Forms: 399 → 190

Kar Saathi launched: April 2, 2026 (24x7 AI chatbot)

Campaign: PRARAMBH — launched by FM Nirmala Sitharaman

Ministry: Ministry of Finance, CBDT

NSE GETS SEBI NOD TO LAUNCH NATURAL GAS DERIVATIVES LINKED TO GIXI

The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) received SEBI approval on April 1, 2026 to launch exchange-traded natural gas derivatives linked to the domestic GIXI benchmark — India's first such instruments based on indigenous pricing.

Background

The **Gas IndeX of India (GIXI)** is operated by the **Indian Gas Exchange (IGX)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX). GIXI reflects real-time weighted average prices at six regional hubs across India (Northern, North-Eastern, Western, Eastern, Central, and Southern). The NSE derivatives will allow gas producers, consumers, and CGD companies to hedge price exposure without relying on international benchmarks like TTF or Henry Hub.

Why It Matters

- Hedging tools for CGD companies (IGL, MGL), ONGC, and industrial consumers
- IGX began operations on June 15, 2020
- Promotes price discovery via a domestic, transaction-based index



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NSE-IGX NATURAL GAS DERIVATIVES:

Regulator approval: SEBI (April 1, 2026)

Exchange: NSE; Index: GIXI (Gas IndeX of India)

GIXI operated by: IGX (Indian Gas Exchange, subsidiary of IEX)

GIXI hubs: 6 regional delivery points

IGX started: June 15, 2020 (launched by Dharmendra Pradhan)

First: Exchange-traded gas derivatives with a domestic benchmark in India

PLR SYSTEMS DELIVERS FIRST 2,000 NEGEV LMGS TO INDIAN ARMY

Adani Defence and Aerospace's joint venture PLR Systems delivered the first batch of 2,000 Prahar (NEGEV NG-7) 7.62mm Light Machine Guns to the Indian Army on March 28, 2026 — 11 months ahead of schedule.

Background

PLR Systems is a joint venture between **Adani Defence and Aerospace** and **IWI (Israel Weapon Industries)**. The contract for 41,000 units was signed in August 2024 under emergency procurement and represents the **largest single small-arms contract ever awarded to an Indian private company**. The Prahar LMG replaces the ageing 5.56mm INSAS LMG. Delivery occurred at the Small Arms Complex, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. Indigenous content is targeted at 75% within three years and 90% by end of decade.

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PLR SYSTEMS NEGEV LMG:

JV: Adani Defence and Aerospace + IWI (Israel Weapon Industries)

Gun: NEGEV NG-7 (branded Prahar LMG in India); Calibre: 7.62x51mm NATO

Contract: 41,000 units (August 2024, emergency procurement)

First delivery: 2,000 units — March 28, 2026 (Gwalior MP); 11 months early

Replaces: INSAS LMG (5.56mm)

Plant: Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh



IRDAI DESIGNATES LIC, GIC RE, NEW INDIA AS D-SIIS FOR FY 2025-26

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) released the FY 2025-26 list of Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) on April 2, 2026, retaining the same three insurers as the previous year.

Background

D-SIIs are insurers considered “too big to fail” — their distress could cause significant disruption to the domestic financial system. The three designated insurers are **LIC** (Life Insurance Corporation of India), **New India Assurance Company Ltd. (NIACL)**, and **GIC Re** (General Insurance Corporation of India). They face enhanced corporate governance requirements and heightened IRDAI supervision. The D-SII framework was introduced in FY 2021-22 and is analogous to RBI’s D-SIB framework for banks.

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IRDAI D-SII FY 2025-26:

Designation date: April 2, 2026

D-SIIs: LIC, GIC Re, New India Assurance (NIACL)

D-SII framework first: FY 2021-22 (IRDAI)

Analogy: RBI’s Domestic Systemically Important Bank (D-SIB) framework

Basis: Size, market importance, interconnectedness

Global basis: IAIS standards (post-2008 financial crisis)

UIDAI SIGNS MOU WITH MAPMYINDIA; AADHAAR CENTRES TO APPEAR ON MAPPLS APP

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CE Info Systems Ltd. (MapmyIndia) on April 1, 2026, to enable citizens to locate over 60,000 Aadhaar enrolment centres via the Mappls navigation app.

Key Details

- Citizens will be able to search for **Aadhaar Seva Kendras (ASKs)** and enrolment centres on Mappls, filterable by service type (adult enrolment, child enrolment, address/mobile update)
- Integration to roll out within **2 months** of signing



- Helps combat misinformation about fake/unauthorised Aadhaar centres
- UIDAI is established under the **Aadhaar Act, 2016**; Aadhaar has over **1.4 billion enrolments**

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UIDAI-MAPMYINDIA MOU:

Signed: April 1, 2026

Purpose: List 60,000+ Aadhaar centres on Mappls app

MapmyIndia brand: Mappls (CE Info Systems Ltd.)

UIDAI under: Aadhaar Act, 2016; Ministry of Electronics & IT

Aadhaar enrolments: 1.4 billion+

Earlier tie-up: Google Maps (for Aadhaar centre listing)

GANGOTRI NATIONAL PARK REOPENS FOR SUMMER 2026

Gangotri National Park in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand, reopened its gates on April 1, 2026 after the winter closure period, allowing tourists to access trekking routes including Kedartal, Gaumukh Tapovan, Gartang Gali, and Nelang Valley.

Key Facts

- Gangotri National Park established: **1989**; Area: **1,553 sq km**
- Located in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand
- Home to snow leopard (~35 individuals), Asian black bear, brown bear, musk deer, Himalayan monal, blue sheep (bharal)
- The Gangotri glacier (~30 km long) is one of the largest glaciers in the Himalayas and the primary source of the Ganga; it has been retreating due to climate change
- Winter 2025-26 saw 29,000+ visitors before closure



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GANGOTRI NATIONAL PARK:

Established: 1989; Area: 1,553 sq km

District: Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand

Key wildlife: Snow leopard, brown bear, musk deer, Himalayan monal, bharal

Key treks: Gaumukh Tapovan, Kedartal, Gartang Gali, Nelang Valley

Gangotri glacier: ~30 km long; source of the Ganga; retreating

Reopened: April 1, 2026

INDIA'S DEFENCE EXPORTS HIT RECORD ₹38,424 CRORE IN FY 2025-26

India's defence exports reached ₹38,424 crore in FY 2025-26 — an all-time high — representing 62.66% growth over the previous year's ₹23,622 crore, the Ministry of Defence announced on April 2, 2026.

Breakdown

- **DPSUs (Defence Public Sector Undertakings):** ₹21,071 crore (54.84% share; +151% growth)
- **Private sector:** ₹17,353 crore (45.16% share; +14% growth)
- Major exports include munitions, fuses, lightweight torpedoes, armoured vehicles, small arms, bulletproof jackets, and UAVs

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INDIA DEFENCE EXPORTS FY 2025-26:

Total: ₹38,424 crore (record high)

Growth: +62.66% over FY 2024-25 (₹23,622 crore)

DPSUs share: ₹21,071 cr (54.84%); growth: +151%

Private sector: ₹17,353 cr (45.16%); growth: +14%

Announced: April 2, 2026 by Ministry of Defence



NCERT GETS DEEMED UNIVERSITY STATUS UNDER NEP 2020

The Ministry of Education notified the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) as a deemed-to-be university on March 30, 2026, empowering it to offer degree, PG, doctoral, and specialised programmes.

Background

The status is granted under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 in a “distinct category.” Six constituent units — five Regional Institutes of Education (Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru, Shillong) and the Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education, Bhopal — are included. The move is aligned with NEP 2020 goals. NCERT will not engage in commercial or profit-making activities. NCERT was established in 1961.

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NCERT DEEMED UNIVERSITY:

- Notification: March 30, 2026; Ministry of Education
- Under: Section 3, UGC Act, 1956 (distinct category)
- Constituent units: 5 RIEs + 1 PSSCIVE (Bhopal) = 6 total
- RIEs at: Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru, Shillong
- NCERT established: 1961
- Aligned with: NEP 2020

QDenga — INDIA’S FIRST DENGUE VACCINE RECEIVES REGULATORY CLEARANCE

India’s Subject Expert Committee (SEC) under DCGI gave clearance to Qdenga (TAK-003) by Takeda Pharmaceutical (Japan) — India’s first dengue vaccine — for use in the 4 to 60 years age group.

Key Details

- Type: Live-attenuated tetravalent — covers all four dengue serotypes (DENV-1, 2, 3, 4)
- Condition: Local safety and effectiveness study required within 6 months of market entry
- Manufacturing in India: **Biological E (Hyderabad)** — capacity up to 100 million doses/year
- Expected availability: second half of 2026 (private hospital chains)
- India records ~20 million dengue cases annually



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QDENG A DENGUE VACCINE:

Name: Qdenga (TAK-003); Maker: Takeda Pharmaceutical (Japan)

India partner: Biological E (Hyderabad); capacity: 100 million doses/year

Age group: 4 to 60 years

Type: Live-attenuated tetravalent (all 4 serotypes: DENV 1, 2, 3, 4)

Significance: India's first approved dengue vaccine

Expected launch: H2 2026 (private hospitals)

★ OVERALL FACTS CORNER — APRIL 4, 2026

KEY NUMBERS:

Kar Saathi: 24x7 AI chatbot; IT Act rules 510→333; forms 399→190

NEGEV LMGs: 41,000 unit contract; 2,000 delivered (11 months early)

IRDAI D-SIIs: LIC, GIC Re, NIACL (since FY 2021-22)

UIDAI centres on Mappls: 60,000+ centres listed

Gangotri NP: 1989; 1,553 sq km; Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand

Defence exports FY26: ₹38,424 cr (+62.66%)

NCERT: 6 constituent units; Section 3 UGC Act

Qdenga: First dengue vaccine; 4-60 yrs; Takeda/Biological E

Sources: [The Hindu](#), [PIB](#), [Indian Express](#), [Business Standard](#)

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**CBDT Kar Saathi & New Income Tax Act 2025
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