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Current Affairs Today — April 10, 2026

10 April 2026

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NATIONAL QUANTUM MISSION — 1,000-KM QKD NETWORK ACHIEVED

India's National Quantum Mission demonstrated a 1,000-km secure quantum communication network using Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology — one of the longest QKD deployments globally, developed by Bengaluru-based QNu Labs.

Background

NQM was approved by the Union Cabinet in April 2023 with an outlay of ₹6,003 crore over 8 years (2023–31). The 1,000-km milestone is a midpoint toward the 2,000-km national QKD backbone targeted by 2031.

Key Data

- Network length: 1,000 km
- Technology: Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) using photons
- Developer: QNu Labs, Bengaluru (supported under NQM)
- Announced by: Dr. Jitendra Singh, MoS Science & Technology

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NATIONAL QUANTUM MISSION:

Approved: April 2023 | Outlay: ₹6,003 crore (8 years)

Four thematic hubs: IISc Bengaluru, IIT Bombay, IIT Madras, IIT Delhi

QKD principle: Any eavesdropping disturbs photon quantum state — immediately detectable

India targets: 2,000-km QKD backbone + manned quantum satellite by 2031

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2026 — POLLING CONCLUDES IN ASSAM, KERALA, PUDUCHERRY

Voting concluded for legislative assembly elections in Assam (126 seats), Kerala (140 seats), and Puducherry (30 seats) on April 9, 2026, with voter turnout reaching historic highs. Results are expected on May 4, 2026.

Key Data

- Assam: 85.70% turnout (126 seats); BJP-NDA vs Congress-led alliance
- Kerala: 78.25% turnout (140 seats); LDF vs UDF
- Puducherry: 89.87% turnout (30 seats); AINRC-BJP vs Congress-DMK
- Next phases: Tamil Nadu and West Bengal — April 23 & 29, 2026

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KEY FACTS:

Puducherry: UT with Legislature under Article 239A; Lieutenant Governor is head

Assam's CM: Himanta Biswa Sarma (BJP); leads NDA alliance

Kerala: LDF (CPM-led) vs UDF (Congress-led) — historically alternating

Article 239A: Applicable to Puducherry (unlike Delhi — Article 239AA; J&K — Article 239AA post-370 abrogation)

16TH FINANCE COMMISSION — ₹4.35 LAKH CRORE FOR RURAL LOCAL BODIES

The 16th Finance Commission's award period (2026–27 to 2030–31) commenced on April 1, 2026, with rural local bodies (RLBs) set to receive ₹4.35 lakh crore — a significant increase over the 15th Finance Commission's ₹2.82 lakh crore released to Panchayati Raj institutions.

Key Data

- Total RLB allocation: ₹4.35 lakh crore (2026–31)
- Distribution: 90% to Gram Panchayats; 10% to Block + District Panchayats
- Peak year: ₹1,13,558 crore in 2030–31
- 15th FC performance: Released ₹2,82,632 crore (94.94% of recommended ₹2,97,555 crore)
- 100% utilisation states: Assam, Kerala, Mizoram, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh

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FINANCE COMMISSION & PANCHAYATS:

Article 243G: Panchayats' powers/functions (Part IX)

Article 243I: State Finance Commission for Panchayats (mandatory every 5 years)

Article 280: Constitution of Finance Commission (every 5 years)

16th FC: Chairman: Dr. Arvind Panagariya | Award period: 2026–27 to 2030–31

14th FC: Raised state share from 32% to 42% — highest ever devolution

SIJIMALI BAUXITE MINING — TRIBAL RIGHTS VS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ODISHA

Tribal villagers clashed with police in Rayagada district, Odisha, over Vedanta Limited's proposed Sijimali bauxite mine — with tribals alleging fraudulent Gram Sabha approvals, echoing the landmark Niyamgiri precedent of 2013.

Key Data

- Location: Sijimali hills, Rayagada and Kalahandi districts (Eastern Ghats)
- Bauxite reserves: 311 million tonnes (high-grade); 1,500 hectares
- Odisha's share: 41% of India's bauxite reserves; 73% of national production
- Vedanta's refinery: Lanjigarh, Odisha — 5 MTPA capacity
- Status: Stage-1 forest clearance received

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KEY LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

PESA Act, 1996: Gram Sabha consent mandatory for mining in scheduled areas

Forest Rights Act, 2006: Community forest rights recognition required

Niyamgiri (2013): SC held Gram Sabhas of Dongria Kondh tribe must decide — they rejected Vedanta

LARR Act, 2013: Land acquisition requires Social Impact Assessment + consent

Bauxite → Alumina → Aluminium: Critical for aerospace, EVs, defence sectors

CABINET APPROVES ₹41,534 CRORE FERTILISER SUBSIDY — KHARIF 2026

The Union Cabinet approved Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers for Kharif Season 2026 (April 1–September 30, 2026) with a total outlay of ₹41,533.81 crore — ₹4,317 crore higher than Kharif 2025.

Key Data

- Total subsidy: ₹41,533.81 crore
- Kharif 2025 subsidy: ₹37,216.15 crore (increase: ₹4,317 crore)
- Period: April 1 – September 30, 2026
- DAP bag (subsidised): ₹1,350 per bag maintained
- NBS coverage: Phosphatic (P) and Potassic (K) fertilisers only (not urea)

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NBS SCHEME:

Launched: 2010 (for P&K fertilisers)

Urea: NOT under NBS — under a separate flat-rate subsidy (MRP fixed at ₹242/bag)

P&K fertilisers: Market-linked pricing; government pays fixed subsidy per kg of nutrient (N, P, K, S)

DAP = Di-Ammonium Phosphate (key kharif fertiliser for paddy, maize, pulses)

Fertiliser subsidy in Union Budget 2025–26: ₹1.64 lakh crore (one of largest line items)

India imports: ~50% of DAP requirements from Saudi Arabia, China, Jordan

EXERCISES CYCLONE-IV & BRAHMASTRA — INDIA'S DEFENCE READINESS IN FOCUS

India launched Exercise Cyclone-IV (joint special forces drill with Egypt, April 9–17) while simultaneously showcasing Apache helicopter firepower in Exercise Brahmastra at Pokhran — signalling expanding defence partnerships and combined arms readiness.

Key Data

- Cyclone-IV: India–Egypt joint special forces exercise; 4th edition; counter-terrorism focus
- Brahmastra: Live-fire exercise at Pokhran Field Firing Range, Rajasthan

- Platform showcased: Boeing AH-64E Apache attack helicopter (22 inducted 2019–20; from USA via FMS)
- India–Egypt defence: Modi visited Egypt in June 2023; joint defence committee active

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APACHE AH-64E:

Inducted: 2019–20 | Quantity: 22 helicopters | Route: Foreign Military Sales (FMS), USA

Armament: AGM-114 Hellfire missiles, 30mm M230 chain gun, Hydra rockets

Nicknamed: “Tank in the air” — primary anti-armour helicopter

Exercise Cyclone: India–Egypt bilateral; 4th edition (2026)

Egypt: Largest military in Africa; important in India’s Act West/Gulf outreach

HARIVANSH NARAYAN SINGH NOMINATED TO RAJYA SABHA

President Droupadi Murmu nominated veteran journalist-parliamentarian Harivansh Narayan Singh to the Rajya Sabha through a Gazette notification on April 10, 2026, filling a nominated seat vacancy.

Key Data

- Nominee: Harivansh Narayan Singh (former Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha; veteran journalist, Prabhat Khabar)
- Constitutional basis: Article 80(1)(a) — President nominates 12 members (literature, science, art, social service)
- Previous vacancy: Created after former CJI Ranjan Gogoi retired from his nominated seat

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA**NOMINATED MEMBERS OF RAJYA SABHA:**

Article 80(3): 12 members nominated by President — expertise in literature, science, art, social service

Not elected — cannot vote in Presidential election (Article 55)

Can vote in Rajya Sabha proceedings and Vice Presidential elections

Rajya Sabha strength: 245 (233 elected + 12 nominated)

Past notable nominees: Sachin Tendulkar (sports), Ranjan Gogoi (judiciary), Sonal Mansingh (classical dance)

ALSO IN NEWS

STORY	KEY FACT
NSTFDC 25th Foundation Day	National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (MoTA) celebrated 25 years; felicitated tribal entrepreneurs
Yoga Mahotsav at Lonar	Ministry of Ayush launched 75-day countdown to 12th International Yoga Day (June 21, 2026) at Lonar crater lake, Maharashtra; 5,000 participants entered Asia Book of Records
Women's Reservation Amendment	Cabinet cleared constitutional amendments to expedite Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (2023) implementation — 33% reservation in Lok Sabha + assemblies
MoSPI State Income Workshop	All-India workshop (Visakhapatnam, April 8–10) to align state GDP estimates with new base year 2022–23
ICAR Agriculture STF	ICAR constituted high-level Special Task Force to develop climate adaptation strategies for Indian agriculture
Energy Statistics India 2026	MoSPI released annual energy data compendium — key reference for India's energy production/consumption
CPA India Region Conference	Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated Zone VII Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Goa
Exercise Brahmastra (Apache)	Indian Army showcased Apache AH-64E attack helicopter in live-fire combined arms drill at Pokhran
C.D. Gopinath Passes Away	Last surviving member of India's maiden Test-winning cricket team (1952 vs England) passes away at 96
Asteroid 2026 GD	Near-Earth asteroid made close approach on April 9 — tracked by ISRO; no impact risk
China 15th Five-Year Plan	China finalised draft of its 15th FYP (2026–30) prioritising domestic consumption over export-led growth
West Asia Tensions Continue	US–Iran ceasefire remains fragile; Gulf states holding emergency consultations on post-conflict regional order

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TODAY'S KEY NUMBERS:

- ₹41,534 crore — Kharif 2026 fertiliser subsidy (P&K, NBS)
- ₹4.35 lakh crore — 16th FC allocation to Rural Local Bodies (2026–31)
- 1,000 km — India's QKD quantum communication network (NQM milestone)
- 85.70% / 78.25% / 89.87% — Assam / Kerala / Puducherry election turnout
- 311 MT — Sijimali bauxite reserves (Odisha, Rayagada district)
- 12 — Rajya Sabha nominated members (Article 80); Harivansh fills one seat

KEY INSTITUTIONS:

- QNu Labs (Bengaluru) — developed India's QKD network under NQM
- BHAVINI — implements PFBR (Kalpakkam); Stage II nuclear programme
- NSTFDC — tribal finance corporation under Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- 16th Finance Commission — Chairman: Dr. Arvind Panagariya

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