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Current Affairs Today — April 17, 2026

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TODAY'S EDITION AT A GLANCE

— April 17, 2026

April 17, 2026 — PM Modi chaired India's first high-level CAPF Conference in New Delhi; LG Vinai Kumar Saxena's Project Him Sarovar in Ladakh entered execution; India and New Zealand confirmed an FTA signing date of April 27; the Supreme Court clarified that dowry givers cannot be prosecuted when reporting matrimonial abuse; and India's FY26 patent filings rose 30.2% to a record 1,43,729.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Supreme Court — Dowry Givers Cannot Be Prosecuted as Aggrieved Parties A Supreme Court bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and K. Vinod Chandran ruled that dowry givers — including brides and their families — cannot be prosecuted under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, when they are the aggrieved party reporting matrimonial cruelty. The bench cited Section 7(3) of the Act as a clear safeguard: brides' families typically face coercion, not free choice, when giving dowry. The ruling protects complainants from being threatened with counter-prosecution by accused husbands or their families.

Supreme Court on Bengal SIR Voting Rights The Supreme Court ruled that voters whose appeals against electoral roll exclusion under West Bengal's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) have been **accepted** by appellate tribunals retain voting rights, but those with **pending** appeals cannot vote. Over 34 lakh appeals are pending across 19 appellate tribunals (each headed by a retired High Court judge). The Court directed Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to publish supplementary electoral rolls promptly after each tribunal disposal.

ECONOMY

India FY26 Patent Filings Rise 30.2% — Record 1,43,729 Applications Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that patent application filings in India rose 30.2% to 1,43,729 in FY 2025–26, up from 1,10,375 in FY 2024–25. Domestic filings reached 99,721 — accounting for 69.4% of total filings, up from 61.8% the previous year — reflecting rising R&D investment by Indian firms. The growth is attributed to faster examination timelines under the Indian Patent Office's modernised IT systems and the Startup India IPR fee waiver.

India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement Signing — April 27 India and New Zealand will sign a Free Trade Agreement on April 27, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. The pact targets doubling bilateral merchandise trade to USD 5 billion within five years (current: ~USD 1.3 billion in 2024–25). India secures zero-duty access for 100% of its exports to New Zealand; in return, 95% of New Zealand exports get reduced Indian tariffs over 10 years. A skilled-worker visa pathway allows up to 5,000 Indian professionals annually for three years.

WEF Projects USD 56 Trillion AI-Driven Global GDP Expansion A World Economic Forum outlook report projects global GDP will expand by approximately USD 56 trillion over the next five years, primarily driven by artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and digital innovation. Top beneficiary sectors: IT services, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism. Sectors flagged as at-risk include real estate, electronics, insurance/pensions, and bulk chemicals — facing demand restructuring or AI-substitution pressure.

FIU-IND Signs MoU with PFRDA — AML/CFT in Pension Sector The Financial Intelligence Unit–India (FIU-IND), under the Ministry of Finance, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) to strengthen anti-money laundering (AML) and countering financing of terrorism (CFT) compliance across the pension sector. The MoU enables information sharing between FIU-IND and PFRDA-regulated pension intermediaries under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Project Him Sarovar — Ladakh’s Snow-Harvesting Water Security Initiative Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena launched Project Him Sarovar on April 14, 2026, to address chronic water scarcity in Ladakh’s cold desert region. The project creates 50 water bodies (each 40×30 metres × 2 metres deep) in Leh (Nimoo, Nubra, Diskit) and Kargil (Suru, Padum) districts to capture snowmelt and glacial-melt that otherwise runs off unused. The initiative pairs water infrastructure with high-altitude crop promotion (apricot, seabuckthorn, apples) and is supported by the Indian Army, ITBP, and BRO.

Dillenia nagalim — New Plant Species from Indo-Myanmar Border Botanists described *Dillenia nagalim*, a new flowering plant species in the family Dilleniaceae, from Kamjong district, Manipur, along the Indo-Myanmar border. The small shrub grows at 250–350 m altitude in tropical deciduous forests, features bright yellow flowers and double-serrated leaves, and flowers in May–June. The species name “nagalim” honours the Naga people who inhabit the discovery region.

Painted Leopard Gecko Recorded in Bastar, Chhattisgarh The Painted Leopard Gecko (*Eublepharis pictus*) was recorded for the first time in Bastar district, Chhattisgarh — significantly expanding its known geographic range. The species, family Eublepharidae, was first scientifically described from the Eastern Ghats in 2022. The Brahmani River was previously thought to be a distribution barrier; the Bastar finding suggests the species’ range crosses major river systems in central India.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Tata Semiconductor Plant — Dholera SEZ Notification Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Private Limited's (TSMPL) facility at Dholera Special Investment Region (SIR), Gujarat — India's first commercial wafer fabrication plant — was formally notified under the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Rules, 2006 (as amended in 2025). The notification grants the unit SEZ tax benefits, streamlined customs procedures, and single-window clearances. The Dholera fab will produce silicon wafers using mature-node technology in partnership with Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC) of Taiwan.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Israel–Lebanon 10-Day Ceasefire — Pakistan as Backchannel A 10-day US-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon began but faced immediate violations with reports of continued shelling in Khiam and Dibbine in southern Lebanon. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun is consulting Hezbollah leadership while Pakistan has emerged as an unconventional backchannel mediator between Washington and Tehran. Brent crude initially spiked but stabilised below USD 100/barrel as ceasefire confidence partially returned.

India–Germany Mark 75 Years of Diplomatic Ties India and Germany jointly launched a commemorative logo on April 14, 2026, in Berlin, marking 75 years of diplomatic relations. The launch occurred during the India–Germany Foreign Office Consultations co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and German State Secretary Dr. Géza Andreas von Geyr. The two countries are expanding cooperation in green hydrogen, defence procurement (P-75I submarine programme), skilled worker mobility, and Indo-Pacific maritime security.

SECURITY & DEFENCE

PM Chairs First High-Level CAPF Conference Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired India's first-ever high-level conference dedicated exclusively to the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in New Delhi. The conference brought together leadership of the CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, and SSB — all under the Ministry of Home Affairs — to address *insurgency*, left-wing extremism (LWE), border infiltration, and cyber-enabled threats. The PM emphasised inter-force synergy, intelligence integration, and modernisation of welfare frameworks for jawans and their families.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Karnataka HC — Menstrual Leave as Article 21 Right The Karnataka High Court directed the state government to strictly implement its menstrual leave policy granting one paid day per month to women employees aged 18–52, recognising menstrual health as a fundamental right linked to Article 21 (Right to Life

and Dignity). The court extended the policy’s reach to unorganised sector workers and daily-wage women, citing the doctrine of substantive equality. The Karnataka Menstrual Leave and Hygiene Bill, 2025 remains pending in the state legislature.

Ayush Chintan Shivir 2026 — Aligning AYUSH with Viksit Bharat 2047 The Ministry of AYUSH organised the Ayush Chintan Shivir 2026 from April 15–17, 2026, in New Delhi to align the AYUSH sector (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy) with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision. Union AYUSH Minister Shri Prataprao Jadhav launched a national toll-free citizen helpline 1800-11-0008 for AYUSH consultations and grievance redressal. The Shivir focused on integrating AYUSH with primary healthcare, evidence-based research protocols, and global outreach.

FACTS CORNER

TOPIC	KEY FACT
CAPF Conference	First high-level meeting; CRPF + BSF + CISF + ITBP + SSB; PM-chaired
Project Him Sarovar	50 water bodies; 40×30×2 m each; Leh + Kargil; LG Saxena launched April 14
India–NZ FTA	Sign April 27, 2026, Bharat Mandapam; USD 5B trade in 5 years; 5,000 visa/year
SC on Dowry Givers	Section 7(3) Dowry Prohibition Act 1961; bench: Sanjay Kumar + K. Vinod Chandran
Bengal SIR voting	34+ lakh pending appeals; 19 appellate tribunals (retired HC judges)
FY26 Patents	1,43,729 filings (+30.2% YoY); domestic share 69.4%
WEF AI Outlook	USD 56T global GDP expansion in 5 years; AI/quantum/digital drivers
FIU-IND + PFRDA	MoU on AML/CFT for pension sector under PMLA 2002
Dillenia nagalim	New shrub species; Kamjong, Manipur; family Dilleniaceae
Painted Leopard Gecko	<i>Eublepharis pictus</i> ; Bastar, Chhattisgarh; first described 2022 (Eastern Ghats)
Tata Dholera SEZ	India’s first commercial wafer fab; SEZ Rules 2006 (amended 2025)
Israel–Lebanon	10-day US-brokered truce; Pakistan as backchannel; Brent <\$100
India–Germany 75 yrs	Logo launch April 14, Berlin; Vikram Misri + von Geyr co-chairs
Karnataka HC Menstrual Leave	1 paid day/month; ages 18–52; Article 21 anchor
Ayush Chintan Shivir	April 15–17, 2026; toll-free 1800-11-0008; Viksit Bharat 2047 alignment

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