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Current Affairs Today — April 19, 2026



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TODAY'S EDITION AT A GLANCE

— April 19, 2026

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung arrives in India for a 3-day state visit (April 19–21) covering defence, semiconductors, and CEPA upgrade. The 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill linking delimitation with women's reservation was defeated in Lok Sabha — NDA fell short of the two-thirds majority. Cabinet extends PMGSY-III to March 2028 with ₹83,977 crore outlay. The US extends its Russian oil sanctions waiver to May 16, preserving India's discounted crude supply. Punjab's Guru Granth Sahib Respect Amendment Bill receives Governor's assent (life imprisonment for desecration). India's Maoist insurgency nears collapse — Central Committee reduced to 2 members, territorial control down to 2 districts. Gangotri Temple opens today — Char Dham Yatra 2026 season begins on Akshaya Tritiya.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Korean President Lee Jae Myung's State Visit to India (April 19–21) South Korean President H.E. Lee Jae Myung is in India for a three-day state visit — the highest-level bilateral engagement between India and South Korea in recent years. The visit is expected to produce MoUs on semiconductor supply chains, defence co-production, and shipbuilding technology, with a stated bilateral trade target of USD 50 billion by 2030. South Korea (Samsung, Hyundai, LG, Kia) is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy.

US Extends Russian Oil Sanctions Waiver to May 16 The United States has extended its waiver on secondary sanctions for Russian crude oil purchases until May 16, 2026 — allowing India to continue importing discounted Russian crude. Russia is currently India's **largest crude oil supplier** (~2.5 million barrels per day in normal conditions). West Asian supply disruptions via the Strait of Hormuz make Russian crude strategically critical. India imports over 88% of its crude oil requirements.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

131st Constitutional Amendment Bill Defeated — Delimitation Battle Deferred The 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill — linking constituency delimitation with women's reservation (as mandated by the 106th Amendment, 2023) — was voted down in Lok Sabha. The NDA secured ~298 votes against the

required two-thirds threshold of 363 votes. The bill's defeat delays both delimitation (frozen since 1971 for inter-state distribution) and the implementation of women's 33% reservation in Parliament, which is contingent on a delimitation exercise.

Punjab: Guru Granth Sahib Respect (Amendment) Bill, 2026 Gets Governor's Assent The Punjab Governor has approved the **Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, which prescribes up to **life imprisonment and ₹25 lakh fine** for conspiracy to commit sacrilege of the Sikh holy scripture. Direct desecration attracts 7–20 years imprisonment plus ₹2–10 lakh fine. The legislation is significant for religious freedom jurisprudence under Articles 25–28 and federal law-making under the Concurrent List.

ECONOMY & INFRASTRUCTURE

PMGSY Extended to March 2028 — ₹83,977 Crore Outlay The Union Cabinet approved extending **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-III** to March 2028, with a revised outlay of ₹83,977 crore — ₹3,727 crore more than the earlier allocation. Bridge projects in hilly and Himalayan regions get a further extension to March 2029. 161 Long Span Bridge projects worth ₹961 crore are included. PMGSY provides all-weather road connectivity to rural habitations; Centre-State cost sharing is 60:40 (general states) and 90:10 (NE and Himalayan states).

INTERNAL SECURITY

Maoist Insurgency Nearing Collapse India's Left Wing Extremist (LWE) movement faces near-total organisational breakdown. CPI (Maoist) General Secretary **Nambala Keshava Rao** was killed in a security forces operation in May 2025; his successor **Thippiri Tirupati** surrendered in early 2026. The Central Committee has shrunk from ~40 members to just 2. Territorial control has contracted from ~180 districts (2013 peak) to 2 districts — Bijapur and Sukma, Chhattisgarh. Operation Kagar (2024) yielded ~3,840 surrenders, ~2,220 arrests, and ~600 Maoist deaths.

HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

Akshaya Tritiya — April 19, 2026 Akshaya Tritiya (Akha Teej) falls today — one of the most auspicious days in the Hindu and Jain calendars. The word 'Akshaya' means 'never diminishing' in Sanskrit. It falls on the third tithi of Shukla Paksha in the month of Vaishakha. Main puja muhurat: 10:49 AM, April 19 to 7:27 AM, April 20. Traditionally associated with gold purchases, new ventures, and auspicious beginnings; also significant in Jain tradition (Varshitap Parana).

Gangotri Temple Opens — Char Dham Pilgrimage Season 2026 Begins The gates of Gangotri Temple (Uttarakhand) were opened today on Akshaya Tritiya — marking the start of the Char Dham Yatra 2026. The four shrines — Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath — remain closed through winter due to Himalayan snowfall. Gangotri Glacier (~30 km long, ~143 sq km) is retreating at ~22 metres per year due to climate change, threatening Bhagirathi-Ganga river flows for millions downstream.

FACTS CORNER

Korean President: Lee Jae Myung — took office 2025 after Yoon Suk Yeol's impeachment; India–South Korea CEPA signed 2010

131st Amendment Bill: Defeated in Lok Sabha; NDA got ~298 votes vs. 363 required (two-thirds of 543)

Delimitation freeze: Inter-state seats frozen since 1971 (Article 81(2)(a)); intra-state since 2001 (81(2)(b))

106th Amendment (2023): Women's 33% reservation — linked to post-delimitation Census

PMGSY-III revised outlay: ₹83,977 crore; extended to March 2028; Centre:State = 60:40 (general), 90:10 (NE/Himalayan)

Russian oil waiver: Extended to May 16, 2026; Russia = India's largest crude supplier; India imports >88% of crude

Guru Granth Sahib Bill: Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Bill, 2026; life imprisonment for conspiracy

Maoist decline: CPI (Maoist) Central Committee ~40 → 2 members; territory 180 → 2 districts; Nambala Keshava Rao killed May 2025

Char Dham: All 4 shrines in Uttarakhand; Gangotri opens Akshaya Tritiya

Akshaya Tritiya: 3rd tithi, Shukla Paksha, Vaishakha; muhurat from 10:49 AM Apr 19

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