

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CSE PREPARATION

■ APRIL 2026

APRIL 2026

--- TOPICS COVERED ---

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India-South Korea Summit,
India-Africa Outreach, BRICS Health Meet

ECONOMY & TECHNOLOGY

Tata Semiconductor Plant,
Ethanol E20 Achieved, India Semiconductor Mission

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Lok Sabha Delimitation 2026, Census 2026,
131st Constitutional Amendment

ENVIRONMENT

Earth Day 2026, NAPCC Missions,
Odisha Marine Spatial Plan

SECURITY

Pahalgam Attack Review,
J&K Architecture Shift, INS Taragiri Commission

SCIENCE & BIODIVERSITY

Fanged Frog Discovery, New Gecko Species,
Samriddh Gram – WSIS 2026

SECURITY

Cybersecurity Framework, Coastal Security,
Defence Modernisation, Border Infrastructure

SOCIAL ISSUES

Urban Employment, Women in STEM,
Nutrition & Anaemia, Mental Health Policy

INVESTMENT
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This magazine is curated exclusively for UPSC CSE aspirants. All articles connect directly to the Prelims and Mains syllabus. MCQs at the end of each section help reinforce understanding for the Preliminary Examination.

◆ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | ARTICLE 01

India–South Korea Strategic Partnership: A New Chapter

■ GS Paper II | International Relations | Bilateral Relations

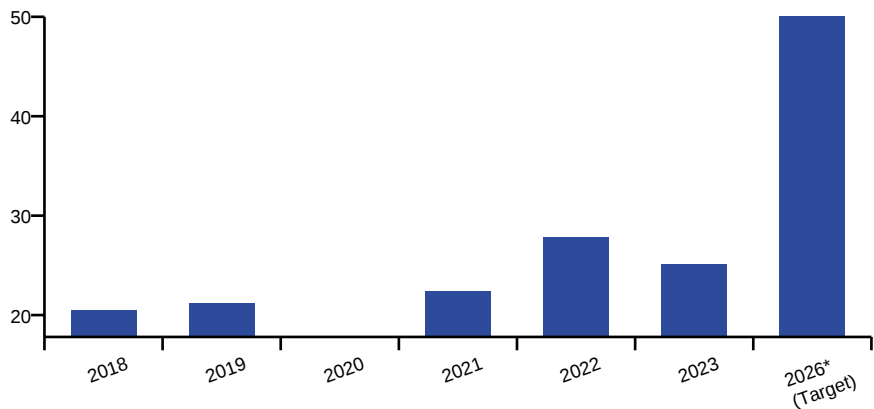
In April 2026, Indian Prime Minister and South Korean President signed a landmark **Joint Strategic Vision (2026–2030)**, elevating bilateral ties to a new level. The two nations committed to doubling bilateral trade to **\$50 billion by 2030**, anchoring cooperation in technology, supply chains, and Indo-Pacific stability. This state visit, the first in eight years, signals a decisive shift in India's Act East Policy with a deepened commitment to North-East Asia.

The partnership broadens across multiple strategic pillars. The two nations upgraded their Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA 2.0) to include digital trade, green economy, and resilient supply chains. A new 2+2 Dialogue mechanism was also established — mirroring India's existing frameworks with the US, Japan, and Australia — signifying the strategic seriousness of the relationship. Both nations share convergent interests in the Indo-Pacific through India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and South Korea's New Southern Policy.

Key Outcomes of the Summit

- Bilateral trade target: \$50 billion by 2030 (up from ~\$25 billion)
- CEPA 2.0: Expanded to digital trade, green energy, and supply chains
- New 2+2 Dialogue: Defence and Foreign Ministerial format
- Technology cooperation: Semiconductors, EVs, and AI
- Indo-Pacific security alignment through IPOI and New Southern Policy
- Parliamentary exchanges and annual summit mechanism institutionalised

India–South Korea Bilateral Trade (USD Billion)



* 2030 target redrawn as 2026 projection trend | Source: Ministry of Commerce, GoI

Why It Matters: India's Act East Policy

India's Act East Policy (AEP), launched in 2014, aims to foster economic and strategic ties with South-East and East Asian nations. South Korea, as a technologically advanced democracy, represents a key partner for India's aspirations of becoming a global manufacturing hub under Atmanirbhar Bharat. South Korea's semiconductor expertise complements India's growing fab ambitions (covered in Article 02). Both countries are also aligned on concerns around Chinese assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific.

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE	■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE
• GS1 Prelims: India & its neighbourhood, bilateral relations • International organisations: CEPA, Indo-Pacific frameworks • Act East Policy and Look East Policy distinction	• GS Paper II: India's relations with South Korea, Act East Policy • GS Paper II: Indo-Pacific — India's strategic interests and bilateral cooperation • Mains Q: "Examine the strategic significance of India's Act East Policy in the context of the India–South Korea Summit 2026."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 01 — INDIA–SOUTH KOREA

Q1. India's Act East Policy was formally launched in which year?

- (A) 2012
- (B) 2014
- (C) 2016
- (D) 2018

✓ Answer: (B) 2014

Explanation: Act East Policy was announced by PM Modi at the 12th ASEAN-India Summit in 2014, upgrading the earlier Look East Policy.

Q2. The Joint Strategic Vision 2026–2030 between India and South Korea targets bilateral trade of:

- (A) \$30 billion
- (B) \$40 billion
- (C) \$50 billion
- (D) \$75 billion

✓ Answer: (C) \$50 billion

Explanation: The summit communiqué set a target of \$50 billion in bilateral trade by 2030.

Q3. Which of the following best describes the "2+2 Dialogue" format?

- (A) Commerce and Finance Ministers
- (B) Defence and External Affairs Ministers
- (C) Home and Foreign Ministers
- (D) Science and Technology Ministers

✓ Answer: (B) Defence and External Affairs Ministers

Explanation: The 2+2 Dialogue involves Defence and Foreign Ministers of both countries for strategic consultation.

Q4. Which Indian initiative aligns with South Korea's "New Southern Policy" in the Indo-Pacific?

- (A) SAGAR doctrine
- (B) Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)
- (C) Project Mausam
- (D) Cotton Route Initiative

✓ Answer: (B) Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)

Explanation: IPOI was launched by India in 2019 at the East Asia Summit to promote cooperation across seven pillars in the Indo-Pacific.

◆ ECONOMY & TECHNOLOGY | ARTICLE 02

Tata Semiconductor Plant, Dholera: India's Chip Manufacturing Leap

■ GS Paper III | Economy | Technology | Atmanirbhar Bharat

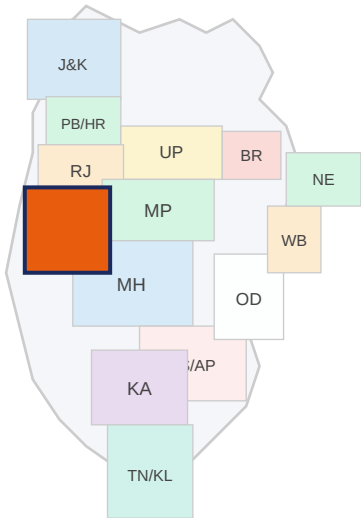
India's first semiconductor fabrication plant (fab), being established by **Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Private Limited** at the **Dholera Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Gujarat**, marks a historic milestone in the country's journey toward technological self-reliance. With an investment of approximately **■91,000 crore** spread across 66 hectares, the plant is expected to create around **21,000 jobs** and significantly reduce India's dependence on semiconductor imports, primarily from Taiwan.

Semiconductors are at the heart of virtually every modern device — from smartphones and electric vehicles to defence equipment and medical devices. India currently imports nearly 100% of its semiconductor requirements, making domestic production a critical national security and economic priority. The Dholera fab is part of India's broader **■76,000 crore India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**, launched under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

Key Project Facts

Parameter	Details
Developer	Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Pvt. Ltd.
Location	Dholera SEZ, Gujarat
Total Investment	■91,000 Crore (~\$11 Billion)
Area	66 Hectares
Expected Jobs	~21,000 (direct + indirect)
Technology Node	28nm (initial phase)
Chip Types	Power, automotive, telecom chips
Mission Framework	India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

Dholera SEZ — Gujarat (Highlighted in Orange)



★ Dholera is India's first Greenfield Smart City and a flagship Special Economic Zone in Gujarat

Why Semiconductors Matter

Semiconductors are classified as a **critical and strategic technology**. The global chip shortage of 2020–22 disrupted automotive, consumer electronics, and defence supply chains worldwide. India's PLI for semiconductors, along with the Dholera fab, positions it to become a key node in the global semiconductor value chain. The SEZ structure provides tax incentives, land subsidies, and simplified regulatory compliance — making Dholera an attractive investment destination.

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE	■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE
• GS1 Prelims: PLI schemes, SEZs, semiconductors • Science & Tech: Semiconductor properties, chip fabrication • Economy: Atmanirbhar Bharat, import substitution	• GS Paper III: Technology — semiconductor manufacturing, strategic autonomy • GS Paper III: Economy — PLI, ISM, industrial policy • Mains Q: "Assess the strategic and economic significance of India's semiconductor mission."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 02 — SEMICONDUCTORS

Q5. India's first semiconductor fab plant is being established in which SEZ?

- (A) Noida SEZ, UP
- (B) GIFT City, Gujarat
- (C) Dholera SEZ, Gujarat
- (D) Cochin SEZ, Kerala

✓ **Answer: (C) Dholera SEZ, Gujarat**

Explanation: Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing is setting up India's first fab at Dholera SEZ, Gujarat with ₹91,000 crore investment.

Q6. Which of the following statements about semiconductors is INCORRECT?

- (A) They exhibit properties between conductors and insulators
- (B) Silicon is a commonly used semiconductor material
- (C) They are used in transistors and integrated circuits
- (D) They conduct electricity better than metals

✓ **Answer: (D) They conduct electricity better than metals**

Explanation: Semiconductors conduct electricity between conductors and insulators; metals are much better conductors.

Q7. The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) falls under which larger scheme?

- (A) Make in India
- (B) Startup India
- (C) PLI Scheme
- (D) Digital India

✓ **Answer: (C) PLI Scheme**

Explanation: ISM is part of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) framework worth ₹76,000 crore for semiconductor development.

Q8. Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in India are governed by which Act?

- (A) SEZ Act, 2000
- (B) SEZ Act, 2005
- (C) FEMA Act, 1999
- (D) Industrial Policy Act, 1991

✓ **Answer: (B) SEZ Act, 2005**

Explanation: The SEZ Act 2005 provides the legal framework for SEZs in India, offering tax benefits and simplified compliance.

◆ POLITY & GOVERNANCE | ARTICLE 03

Lok Sabha Expansion & Delimitation 2026: Reshaping India's Democracy

■ GS Paper II | Polity | Constitution | Governance

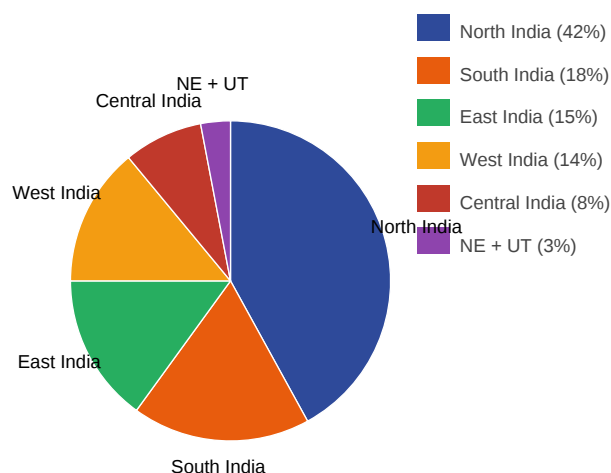
Among the most consequential political developments of April 2026 is the discussion around the **Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026**, which proposes expanding the Lok Sabha from its current **543 seats** to accommodate population growth, based on the **2011 Census** (and the pending 2026 Census). This exercise, known as **delimitation**, will redraw constituency boundaries and reallocate seats among states.

The seats have been **frozen since 1971** — first until 2001 by the 42nd Amendment, then extended to 2026 by the 84th Amendment — to protect states that implemented family planning from losing representation. With the freeze now expiring, northern states with higher population growth (UP, Bihar, MP, Rajasthan) are expected to gain significantly more seats, raising concerns about the **North-South political divide**.

Constitutional Framework

- Article 81: Governs Lok Sabha composition; allows maximum 550 elected members
- Article 82: Readjustment of seats after each Census (Delimitation)
- 84th Amendment (2001): Extended freeze till first Census after 2026
- Women's Reservation: 131st Amendment to implement 33% reservation (as per 106th CA, 2023)
- Delimitation Commission: Statutory body that redraws boundaries after each Census

Projected Lok Sabha Seats Post-Delimitation (Indicative)



Source: Estimates based on 2011 Census population shares | Indicative only

Key Concerns & Debates

Southern states — Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana — successfully brought their population growth under control, and fear being penalised with fewer seats per capita. This has sparked a national debate on whether the delimitation exercise could undermine **cooperative federalism**. Political parties from the South have demanded an alternative formula that accounts for development indicators, not just population.

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE	■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE
• GS1 Prelims: Article 81, Article 82, Delimitation Commission • 42nd and 84th Constitutional Amendments • Women's Reservation: 106th Constitutional Amendment	• GS Paper II: Parliament — structure, delimitation, representation • GS Paper II: Federalism — North-South divide, cooperative federalism • Mains Q: "Critically analyse the implications of the Lok Sabha delimitation on federal balance in India."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 03 — DELIMITATION

Q9. Which Constitutional Amendment extended the freeze on Lok Sabha seats until the first Census after 2026?

- (A) 42nd Amendment
- (B) 73rd Amendment
- (C) 84th Amendment
- (D) 101st Amendment

✓ **Answer: (C) 84th Amendment**

Explanation: The 84th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001 extended the freeze on Lok Sabha seats till the first census after 2026.

Q10. Article 81 of the Indian Constitution relates to:

- (A) Rajya Sabha composition
- (B) Composition of Lok Sabha
- (C) President's powers
- (D) Election Commission

✓ **Answer: (B) Composition of Lok Sabha**

Explanation: Article 81 deals with the composition of the House of the People (Lok Sabha), setting a maximum of 550 elected members.

Q11. The Delimitation Commission in India is established under:

- (A) Article 82 directly
- (B) A Parliamentary Statute
- (C) Presidential Order
- (D) Election Commission Act

✓ **Answer: (B) A Parliamentary Statute**

Explanation: The Delimitation Commission is a statutory body established by Parliament under the Delimitation Commission Acts (latest 2002).

Q12. Women's reservation of 33% in Lok Sabha was provided by which Constitutional Amendment?

- (A) 101st Amendment
- (B) 103rd Amendment
- (C) 105th Amendment
- (D) 106th Amendment

✓ **Answer: (D) 106th Amendment**

Explanation: The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 provided 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and state legislatures.

◆ ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT | ARTICLE 04

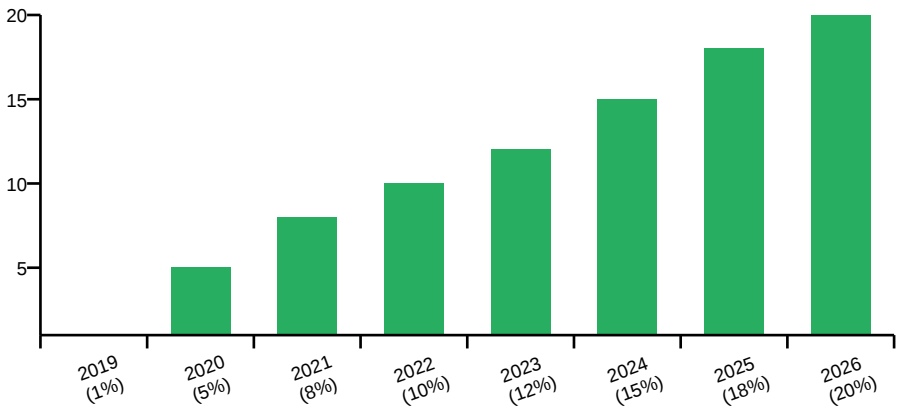
Ethanol Blending 20% Achieved: India's Green Energy Milestone

■ GS Paper III | Economy | Environment | Energy Security

From **April 1, 2026**, the Indian government has mandated the sale of petrol blended with **20% ethanol (E20)** across all States and Union Territories. This marks the achievement of a key target set under the **National Policy on Biofuels (2018, amended 2022)**, which originally aimed for E20 by 2025. The government is now also exploring **E85 fuel** (85% ethanol), which could revolutionise India's fuel landscape for flex-fuel vehicles.

India imports nearly **85% of its crude oil** requirements, making energy security a perennial strategic challenge. Ethanol blending reduces the oil import bill, lowers carbon emissions, and supports sugarcane farmers by creating demand for their produce. The programme has also expanded ethanol sourcing to include **maize, damaged food grains**, and other feedstocks — diversifying supply and improving food security dynamics.

India Ethanol Blending Progress (% in Petrol)



Source: Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, GoI | 2026 figure as mandated

Benefits of Ethanol Blending

- Reduces crude oil imports — saves ~\$4–5 billion annually at E20
- Lowers vehicular CO2 emissions by up to 20% compared to pure petrol
- Boosts farmer income — provides a new market for sugarcane and maize
- Supports Atmanirbhar Bharat in the energy sector
- Reduces particulate matter and improves urban air quality
- Creates rural employment in ethanol distillery sector

★ E20 vehicles are now mandatory for all new automobile manufacturers in India (2026 onwards).

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE	■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE
• GS1 Prelims: Biofuels, ethanol blending, PLI scheme • - Environment: Carbon emissions, renewable energy • - Economy: Energy security, import substitution	• GS Paper III: Economy — biofuels policy, energy security • GS Paper III: Environment — green energy, carbon neutrality • Mains Q: "Evaluate India's Ethanol Blending Programme as a tool for energy security and environmental sustainability."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 04 — ETHANOL BLENDING

Q13. What percentage of ethanol blending has India mandated in petrol from April 1, 2026?

- (A) 10%
- (B) 15%
- (C) 20%
- (D) 25%

✓ **Answer: (C) 20%**

Explanation: E20 (20% ethanol blending in petrol) was mandated across all States and UTs from April 1, 2026.

Q14. Which of the following is NOT a source for ethanol production in India?

- (A) Sugarcane
- (B) Maize
- (C) Damaged food grains
- (D) Coal

✓ **Answer: (D) Coal**

Explanation: Ethanol is a biofuel produced from biological feedstocks. Coal is a fossil fuel and cannot be used for ethanol production.

Q15. The National Policy on Biofuels was originally launched in which year?

- (A) 2013
- (B) 2015
- (C) 2018
- (D) 2020

✓ **Answer: (C) 2018**

Explanation: The National Policy on Biofuels was launched in 2018, with a 2022 amendment that advanced E20 target from 2030 to 2025.

Q16. India imports approximately what percentage of its crude oil requirements?

- (A) 55%
- (B) 65%
- (C) 75%
- (D) 85%

✓ **Answer: (D) 85%**

Explanation: India is highly import-dependent for crude oil, importing approximately 85% of its requirement, making energy diversification critical.

◆ ENVIRONMENT | ARTICLE 05

Earth Day 2026: "Our Power, Our Planet" — A Call to Climate Action

■ GS Paper III | Environment | Climate Change | Biodiversity

World Earth Day 2026 was celebrated on **April 22** with the global theme "**Our Power, Our Planet**", emphasising that individual and community action lies at the heart of the climate solution. Observed by over 190 countries since its inception in **1970 in the United States**, Earth Day has grown into the world's largest civic environmental observance. This year's theme powerfully connects personal responsibility with systemic change — aligning with ongoing global climate negotiations and India's NDC commitments.

India's own climate commitments under the **Paris Agreement** target net zero emissions by **2070**, with 50% of electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. Earth Day 2026 comes amid heightened urgency, with global average temperatures recording their hottest year on record in 2024, and extreme weather events intensifying across South Asia. India's contribution includes the **Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)** mission and the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**, with its eight national missions.

India's 8 National Missions under NAPCC

Mission	Focus Area
National Solar Mission	Solar energy capacity addition
National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency	Industrial energy savings
National Mission on Sustainable Habitat	Green buildings and urban transport
National Water Mission	Integrated water resource management
National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem	Glaciers and biodiversity
National Mission for a Green India	Afforestation and ecosystem restoration
National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture	Climate-resilient farming
National Mission for Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change	Research and knowledge networks

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE

■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE

• GS1 Prelims: Earth Day, Paris Agreement, NDC, NAPCC • Environment: Biodiversity, climate change, UNFCCC • Ecology: Carbon cycle, greenhouse gases

• GS Paper III: Environment — climate change, India's NDC commitments • GS Paper III: Disaster management — extreme weather events • Mains Q: "Critically examine India's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement in light of its development imperatives."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 05 — ENVIRONMENT & EARTH DAY

Q17. World Earth Day is celebrated every year on which date?

- (A) April 5
- (B) April 15
- (C) April 22
- (D) June 5

✓ **Answer: (C) April 22**

Explanation: World Earth Day has been observed on April 22 since it was first celebrated in the United States in 1970.

Q18. India's target for achieving Net Zero emissions under its NDC is:

- (A) 2040
- (B) 2050
- (C) 2060
- (D) 2070

✓ **Answer: (D) 2070**

Explanation: India pledged to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2070 at COP26 in Glasgow (2021).

Q19. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) includes how many national missions?

- (A) 5
- (B) 6
- (C) 8
- (D) 10

✓ **Answer: (C) 8**

Explanation: NAPCC, launched in 2008, has 8 national missions covering solar energy, water, agriculture, forests, etc.

Q20. The "LiFE" (Lifestyle for Environment) mission was launched by India at which international platform?

- (A) G20 Summit
- (B) COP26 Glasgow
- (C) ASEAN Summit
- (D) BRICS Summit

✓ **Answer: (B) COP26 Glasgow**

Explanation: PM Modi launched the LiFE mission at COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021 to promote pro-planet lifestyles.

◆ SECURITY & INTERNAL AFFAIRS | ARTICLE 06

Pahalgam Attack Anniversary: J&K; Security Architecture Reviewed

■ GS Paper III | Internal Security | Disaster Management | J&K;

The first anniversary of the devastating **Pahalgam terror attack** — which targeted tourists in Jammu & Kashmir, marking the first large-scale attack on civilians since Article 370 abrogation — prompted a comprehensive review of the Valley's security architecture in April 2026. The attack fundamentally altered security doctrine in J&K;, shifting from **urban containment** to a strategy of **high-altitude terrain dominance** across the Pir Panjal ranges and Himalayan passes.

The security review highlighted the need for enhanced surveillance grids, including drone networks and AI-assisted monitoring systems. The government has also expedited infrastructure development in border areas — roads, tunnels, and forward camps — to enable faster deployment of security forces. The J&K; Police, CRPF, and the Army have been operating in coordinated tri-force operations in critical zones.

Key Security Developments Post-Pahalgam

- Shift from urban to high-altitude terrain-based security posture
- Drone surveillance networks expanded across border districts
- AI-assisted monitoring systems deployed at key entry points
- Enhanced coordination between J&K; Police, CRPF, and Army
- Tourist security grid introduced: Real-time tracking of tourist locations
- Fast-tracking of border road and tunnel infrastructure projects

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE

- GS1 Prelims: Internal security, J&K;, Article 370, CRPF
- Polity: Special status provisions, Union Territories
- Science & Tech: Drone technology, surveillance

■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE

- GS Paper III: Internal security — terrorism, insurgency, J&K; • GS Paper II: Centre-State relations, J&K; reorganisation • Mains Q: "Discuss the transformation of J&K;'s security architecture since 2019. What are the remaining challenges?"

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 06 — INTERNAL SECURITY

Q21. Jammu & Kashmir was reorganised into two Union Territories under which Act?

- (A) J&K; Reorganisation Act, 2018
- (B) J&K; Reorganisation Act, 2019
- (C) Constitutional Amendment 2019
- (D) Presidential Order 2019

✓ **Answer: (B) J&K; Reorganisation Act, 2019**

Explanation: J&K; was bifurcated into two UTs — J&K; (with legislature) and Ladakh (without legislature) by the J&K; Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Q22. Article 370 of the Indian Constitution was related to:

- (A) Financial Emergency
- (B) Special powers of J&K;
- (C) Minority rights
- (D) Language rights

✓ **Answer: (B) Special powers of J&K;**

Explanation: Article 370 granted special autonomous status to J&K; it was abrogated in August 2019.

Q23. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) comes under which Ministry?

- (A) Ministry of Defence
- (B) Ministry of Home Affairs
- (C) Ministry of External Affairs
- (D) PMO

✓ **Answer: (B) Ministry of Home Affairs**

Explanation: CRPF, India's largest paramilitary force, operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Q24. Which of the following is NOT a challenge to internal security in India?

- (A) Left-wing extremism
- (B) Cybersecurity threats
- (C) Coastal security vulnerabilities
- (D) Space weather

✓ **Answer: (D) Space weather**

Explanation: Space weather is a scientific phenomenon, not a direct internal security challenge. The others are classified as internal security threats by India.

◆ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | ARTICLE 07

India–Africa Diplomatic Outreach: Strengthening Continental Ties

■ GS Paper II | International Relations | Diplomacy | South-South Cooperation

April 2026 saw a major diplomatic push by India toward the African continent, with the **India-Africa Summit framework** being bolstered by high-level visits and new development partnerships. India has opened **16 new diplomatic missions in Africa since 2018**, bringing the total to **45 missions** — the largest diplomatic presence on the continent after China and France. This expansion reflects India's strategic intent to compete for influence in Africa's resource-rich and demographically young economies.

The summit framework — building on the **India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)** held since 2008 — focuses on four pillars: development assistance, defence cooperation, digital connectivity, and diaspora engagement. Africa's **55 nations** represent a growing market for Indian pharmaceuticals, IT services, and infrastructure. India has committed over **\$12 billion in Lines of Credit (LoC)** to African nations for infrastructure, healthcare, and agricultural projects.

Key Pillars of India–Africa Engagement

Pillar	Key Initiatives
Development Assistance	Lines of Credit (\$12B+), ITEC Programme, technical training
Defence & Security	Maritime security, anti-piracy cooperation, defence exports
Digital & ICT	Pan-Africa e-Network, digital payments, satellite connectivity
Trade & Investment	Indian pharmaceutical exports, IT, infrastructure development
People-to-People	Indian diaspora (3 million+), ITEC scholarships, cultural ties

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE

• GS1 Prelims: India-Africa relations, IAFS, South-South cooperation • Organisations: African Union, G77, NAM • Geography: African continent, resources

■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE

• GS Paper II: India's foreign policy — Africa, South-South cooperation • GS Paper II: India's soft power and diaspora • Mains Q: "Analyse India's Africa policy in the context of growing competition with China for continental influence."

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 07 — INDIA–AFRICA

Q25. India-Africa Forum Summits (IAFS) began in which year?

- (A) 2003
- (B) 2008
- (C) 2010
- (D) 2015

✓ **Answer: (B) 2008**

Explanation: The first India-Africa Forum Summit was held in New Delhi in 2008, initiating a structured framework for India-Africa cooperation.

Q26. How many diplomatic missions does India now have in Africa (as of 2026)?

- (A) 35
- (B) 40
- (C) 45
- (D) 55

✓ **Answer: (C) 45**

Explanation: India has opened 16 new missions in Africa since 2018, bringing its total to 45 diplomatic missions on the continent.

Q27. India's "Lines of Credit" to African countries are primarily disbursed through which institution?

- (A) RBI
- (B) EXIM Bank of India
- (C) World Bank India
- (D) NABARD

✓ **Answer: (B) EXIM Bank of India**

Explanation: The Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India is the primary vehicle for extending Lines of Credit to African nations for development projects.

Q28. The "Pan-Africa e-Network" project connected African nations through which technology?

- (A) Undersea cables
- (B) Satellite connectivity
- (C) 5G towers
- (D) Optical fibre

✓ **Answer: (B) Satellite connectivity**

Explanation: Pan-Africa e-Network, launched in 2009, used satellite technology to connect 53 African nations for tele-education and telemedicine.

◆ ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY | ARTICLE 08

April 2026: New Species Discoveries Across India's Biodiversity Hotspots

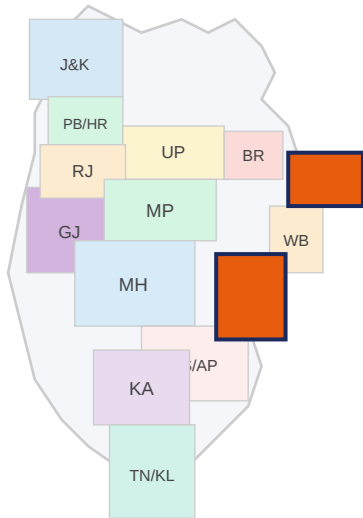
■ GS Paper III | Environment | Biodiversity | Science & Technology

April 2026 witnessed a remarkable cluster of new species discoveries across India, reinforcing the country's status as one of the world's 17 **megadiverse nations**. The discoveries span reptiles, amphibians, and plants — spanning from the Himalayan foothills of **Arunachal Pradesh** to the Eastern Ghats of **Odisha**. These findings carry significant implications for India's biodiversity conservation strategy and its commitments under the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022)**.

Key Discoveries of April 2026

Species	Location	Significance
Limnonectes Motijheel (Fanged Mud Frog)	Namdapha Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh	Named after Motijheel Lake; 6th known Limnonectes species in India
Cryodactylus sp. (Gecko — new species)	Northeast India (Indo-Burma region)	Brings Cryodactylus count in NE India to 31; suggests rich undiscovered
Syzygium paleosalicifolium (Fossil plant species)	Kasauli Formation, Himachal Pradesh	Fossil leaf from Early Miocene (~20 mya); revises Syzygium's evolution
Black Panther (Panthera pardus — melanistic)	IGZP, Visakhapatnam (Captive)	First black panther at Vizag zoo in 40 years; highlights CZA exchange

Biodiversity Discovery Hotspots — April 2026



Orange areas = key discovery zones: Arunachal Pradesh & Odisha

Significance for UPSC: Biodiversity Concepts

- India is a megadiverse nation — 8th in the world for plant species, 7th for mammal species
- Biodiversity Hotspots: India has 4 (Western Ghats, Himalayas, Indo-Burma, Sundaland)
- Namdapha Tiger Reserve: Easternmost tiger reserve; one of India's 10 richest biodiversity zones
- Kunming-Montreal GBF (2022): 30x30 goal — protect 30% of land and ocean by 2030
- Central Zoo Authority (CZA): Governs zoos under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- Schedule I species (WPA 1972): Highest protection; leopard (including black panther) is Schedule I

■ UPSC PRELIMS LINKAGE	■ UPSC MAINS LINKAGE
• GS1 Prelims: Biodiversity hotspots, megadiversity, tiger reserves • Species: Schedules under WPA 1972, IUCN categories • Environment: GBF 2022, CBD, species conservation	• GS Paper III: Environment — biodiversity conservation, species discovery • GS Paper III: Science & Tech — taxonomy, fossil discoveries • Mains Q: "How do species discovery and conservation frameworks contribute to India's commitments under the Kunming-Montreal GBF?"

◆ MCQ PRACTICE | ARTICLE 08 — BIODIVERSITY

Q29. India has how many Biodiversity Hotspots as recognised internationally?

- (A) 2
- (B) 3
- (C) 4
- (D) 5

✓ **Answer: (C) 4**

Explanation: India has 4 biodiversity hotspots: Western Ghats, Eastern Himalayas, Indo-Burma region, and Sundaland (Nicobar Islands).

Q30. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted in which year?

- (A) 2020
- (B) 2021
- (C) 2022
- (D) 2023

✓ **Answer: (C) 2022**

Explanation: The Kunming-Montreal GBF was adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022 in Montreal.

Q31. Namdapha Tiger Reserve is located in which state?

- (A) Assam
- (B) Nagaland
- (C) Meghalaya
- (D) Arunachal Pradesh

✓ **Answer: (D) Arunachal Pradesh**

Explanation: Namdapha Tiger Reserve is located in the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh and is the easternmost tiger reserve in India.

Q32. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) was established under which Act?

- (A) Environment Protection Act, 1986
- (B) Biological Diversity Act, 2002
- (C) Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- (D) Forest Conservation Act, 1980

✓ **Answer: (C) Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**

Explanation: CZA was established under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to oversee the functioning of zoos and animal exchange programmes.

◆ BONUS MCQ SET | MIXED TOPICS — APRIL 2026

Additional Practice Questions: Miscellaneous Current Affairs

Q33. INS Taragiri, commissioned in April 2026, belongs to which class of frigates?

- (A) Project 15B
- (B) Project 17
- (C) Project 17A
- (D) Project 28

✓ **Answer: (C) Project 17A**

Explanation: INS Taragiri is the fourth ship of the Project 17A (Nilgiri class) frigates, built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited.

Q34. The "Samridhh Gram" initiative is associated with which Ministry?

- (A) Ministry of Rural Development
- (B) Ministry of Electronics & IT
- (C) Department of Telecommunications
- (D) Ministry of Agriculture

✓ **Answer: (C) Department of Telecommunications**

Explanation: Samridhh Gram is an initiative of DoT that uses BharatNet's broadband to create one-stop Samridhh Kendras in rural areas.

Q35. The Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE) was launched by:

- (A) NITI Aayog
- (B) Reserve Bank of India
- (C) National Statistics Office
- (D) SEBI

✓ **Answer: (C) National Statistics Office**

Explanation: NSO under MoSPI launched ASISSE in April 2026 to build a comprehensive database of the incorporated services sector.

Q36. Which country's President visited India in April 2026, marking a state visit after 8 years?

- (A) Japan
- (B) South Korea
- (C) Vietnam
- (D) Australia

✓ **Answer: (B) South Korea**

Explanation: South Korean President's April 2026 state visit to India was the first in eight years, resulting in the Joint Strategic Vision 2026-30.

Q37. Odisha became India's first state to launch which initiative in April 2026?

- (A) Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)
- (B) Coastal Biodiversity Register
- (C) Blue Carbon Initiative
- (D) Ocean Literacy Programme

✓ **Answer: (A) Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)**

Explanation: Odisha became the first Indian state to formally launch a Marine Spatial Plan, supported by India-Norway Integrated Ocean Initiative.

Q38. The BRICS Health Working Group (HWG) Meeting 2026 was hosted by India with which theme?

- (A) Health for All
- (B) Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability
- (C) One Health, One World
- (D) Strengthening Global Health Architecture

✓ **Answer: (B) Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability**

Explanation: The first BRICS HWG Meeting 2026 in New Delhi had the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

Q39. The "Poshan Pakhwada 2026" theme focused on which age group's development?

- (A) 0-3 years
- (B) First 6 years of life
- (C) 3-12 years
- (D) 0-18 years

✓ **Answer: (B) First 6 years of life**

Explanation: The 8th edition of Poshan Pakhwada (April 2026) had the theme "Maximizing Brain Development in the First Six Years of Life."

Q40. India's Population Census 2026 was announced to begin in which month?

- (A) January 2026
- (B) March 2026
- (C) April 2026
- (D) June 2026

✓ **Answer: (C) April 2026**

Explanation: India commenced the nationwide Population Census 2026 from April 1, 2026, involving over 3 million officials.

◆ QUICK REVISION | KEY TERMS & FACTS

Important Terms, Committees & Reports — April 2026

Term / Concept	Definition / Context
CAATSA	Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (2017); US can sanction nations buying
E20 Fuel	20% ethanol + 80% petrol blend; mandatory across India from April 1, 2026
PVTG	Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups; 75 communities across India; Odisha has maximum (13)
Project 17A	Nilgiri-class stealth frigates; INS Taragiri (4th ship) commissioned April 2026
Marine Spatial Plan	Framework for managing ocean use; Odisha = first Indian state to adopt it
ASISSE	Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises; launched by NSO, April 2026
131st CA Bill	Proposed to expand Lok Sabha, redraw constituencies based on 2011/2026 Census data
GBF 30x30 Goal	Kunming-Montreal target: protect 30% of land and 30% of ocean by 2030
IPOI	Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative; launched by India at East Asia Summit, 2019; 7 pillars
LiFE Mission	Lifestyle for Environment; launched at COP26, 2021; promotes pro-planet lifestyles
BharatNet	National optical fibre network for rural broadband; backbone of Samridh Gram initiative
CZA	Central Zoo Authority; established under Wildlife Protection Act 1972; governs India's zoos
CEPA	Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement; India-South Korea CEPA being upgraded to 2
India Semiconductor Mission	PLI-based ₹76,000 crore initiative for domestic chip manufacturing
Ethanol 85 (E85)	Proposed fuel with 85% ethanol; India planning draft rules; for flex-fuel vehicles

◆ IMPORTANT DAYS — APRIL 2026

Date	Day / Event	Theme 2026
April 7	World Health Day	My Health, My Right
April 14	Ambedkar Jayanti	135th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
April 18	World Heritage Day	Heritage & Climate
April 22	Earth Day	Our Power, Our Planet

April 23	World Book & Copyright Day	Read Your Way
April 25	World Malaria Day	Malaria Ends With Us
April 28	World Day for Safety & Health at Work	AI & Workplace Safety

◆ EDITORIAL NOTE

This edition of the **Civil Service India Monthly Current Affairs Magazine (April 2026)** has been curated to give UPSC aspirants a comprehensive, exam-ready analysis of the month's most important developments. Every article is mapped to the UPSC Prelims and Mains syllabus, and the MCQ sections are designed to simulate actual Prelims exam conditions.

★ **Tip: For each article, read the Syllabus Linkage box first — it tells you exactly which GS paper and which questions to expect.**

■ STUDY RESOURCES RECOMMENDED

• The Hindu / Indian Express — Daily reading • PIB (Press Information Bureau) — Government schemes • Economic Survey & Budget Documents — Economy • NCERT Books (6–12) — Foundation concepts • Yojana & Kurukshetra Magazines — Rural development • Civil Service India Monthly Magazine — Current Affairs!

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