

13/04/2026 Daily Current Affairs

1. *Exercise DUSTLIK:*

Context: The Indian Army contingent departed for the 7th edition of India-Uzbekistan joint military Exercise DUSTLIK. The Exercise is scheduled to be conducted at Gurumsaray Field Training Area, Namangam, Uzbekistan from 12 to 25 April 2026.

About Exercise DUSTLIK:

- ❖ Exercise DUSTLIK is a yearly event conducted alternatively in India and Uzbekistan.
- ❖ Last edition was conducted at Foreign Training Node, Aundh (Pune) in April 2025.
- ❖ Aim of Exercise DUSTLIK is to foster military cooperation and enhance combined capabilities to execute joint operations in semi-mountainous terrain.
- ❖ It would focus on high degree of physical fitness, joint planning, joint tactical drills and basics of special arms skills.

2. *Sentinel species:*

Context: On April 9, the International Union for Conservation of Nature declared the emperor penguin to be an endangered species. Emperor penguins are sentinel species for warming in the Antarctic region.

About Sentinel species:

- ❖ Definition of Sentinel Species - Species whose health reflects the condition of the ecosystem they inhabit
- ❖ Early Warning Indicators - They respond quickly to environmental stressors like pollution and disease, providing early signals of ecosystem decline
- ❖ Reason for Monitoring - Their responses are more visible and occur earlier than in most other species
- ❖ Key Characteristics - Usually have fixed habitats, long lifespans, and accumulate toxins over time
- ❖ Physiological Sensitivity - Their biology amplifies environmental changes, making impacts easier to detect
- ❖ Frogs as Indicators - Frog are highly sensitive due to permeable skin, indicating pollution and disease in ecosystems
- ❖ Canary Example - Canary used in coal mines to detect carbon monoxide due to rapid response
- ❖ Honeybees Role - Honeybee help track pesticide and chemical exposure in agriculture
- ❖ Polar Bears as Indicators - Polar Bear used to monitor accumulation of pollutants in Arctic ecosystems
- ❖ Fish as Indicators - Certain Fish species detect industrial runoff and water pollution

3. *Biomass stoves:*

Context: Owing to the LPG crisis, many areas—especially rural regions—have reported going back to firewood that are generally seen as increasing drudgery for women, while also causing pollution and health hazards.

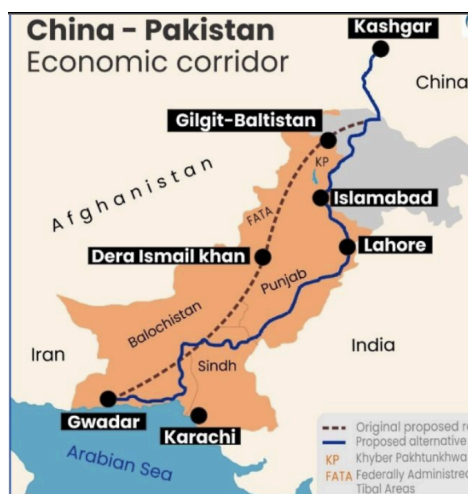
More details:

- ❖ Biomass stoves are devices that burn biomass fuels (firewood, crop waste, dung, charcoal) to produce heat for cooking
- ❖ They are designed structures that control air–fuel combustion and direct heat efficiently to cooking vessels
- ❖ Modern biomass stoves (improved cookstoves) use scientific design to increase efficiency and reduce smoke and emissions
- ❖ They aim to provide safer, cleaner, and more fuel-efficient cooking compared to traditional open fires or chulhas

4. *China-Pakistan Economic Corridor:*

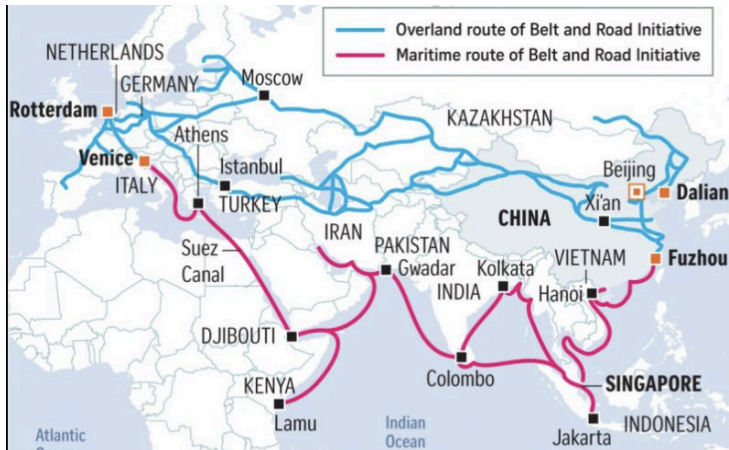
Context: China created a new region called Cenling near the Karakoram range, close to PoK and the Wakhan Corridor, aimed at securing Xinjiang and CPEC amid Uyghur unrest and concerns over groups like ETIM.

About China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):



- ❖ It is a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan.
- ❖ It is a bilateral project between Pakistan and China, intended to promote connectivity across Pakistan with a network of highways, railways, and pipelines accompanied by energy, industrial, and other infrastructure development projects.
- ❖ It will pave the way for China to access the Middle East and Africa from Gwadar Port, enabling China to access the Indian Ocean
- ❖ In return China will support development projects in Pakistan to overcome the latter's energy crises and stabilising its faltering economy.
- ❖ It is a part of the Belt and Road Initiative launched in 2015.

About Belt and Road initiative:



- ❖ It represents a multifaceted development strategy aimed at enhancing global connectivity and cooperation.
- ❖ It was launched in 2013 with the aim to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes.
- ❖ The initiative includes two principal components: the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road.

India's stand:



- ❖ India opposes the project on the grounds of sovereignty and transparency.
- ❖ India has boycotted the BRI summits held by China in 2017, and 2019.
- ❖ India has not endorsed the BRI joint statements issued by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- ❖ India's main objection to the BRI is that it includes the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which passes through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

- ❖ India also argues that the BRI projects should respect the international norms, rule of law, and financial sustainability, and should not create debt traps or environmental and social risks for the host countries.

5. *Amarnath Yatra:*

Context: The annual pilgrimage to the holy cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir will commence on July 3 and conclude after 57 days on August 28.

About Amarnath Yatra:

- ❖ Location and Nature - Amarnath Temple is a Hindu cave shrine located in Pahalgam tehsil of Anantnag district at 3,888 m altitude
- ❖ Accessibility - Situated about 141 km from Srinagar and 168 km from Anantnag, reachable via Pahalgam or Sonamarg routes
- ❖ Geographical Setting - Located in the Sind Valley, surrounded by glaciers and snow-covered mountains; accessible only during a short summer period
- ❖ Religious Significance - One of the holiest Hindu shrines and also considered a Shakti Peetha (associated with Sati)
- ❖ Duration of Yatra - Annual pilgrimage duration varies between 20 to 60 days depending on conditions
- ❖ Pilgrimage Season - Amarnath Yatra is held during July–August when the ice lingam forms fully
- ❖ Duration of Yatra - The pilgrimage typically lasts around 45 days, aligned with the holy month of Shraavana
- ❖ Religious Significance - It coincides with the festival of Shravani Mela and peak formation (waxing phase) of the ice lingam

6. *Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency-3 (CAFE-3) norms:*

Context: The government has proposed a flexible compliance framework under the draft Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency-3 (CAFE-3) norms, easing penalty provisions and introducing carbon credit trading for the automobile sector. The move aims to reduce overall fleet emissions while encouraging a transition towards cleaner mobility solutions in line with India's net-zero target for 2070.

About Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency-3 (CAFE-3) norms:

- ❖ Overview: Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) regulations aim to improve fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from vehicles.
- ❖ Global Presence: CAFE norms are implemented in many developed and developing countries, including India.
- ❖ Objective: Reduce fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions, thereby lowering oil dependence and controlling pollution.
- ❖ Meaning of Corporate Average: Refers to the sales-volume weighted average emissions of vehicles produced by each manufacturer.
- ❖ Applicability: Covers petrol, diesel, LPG and CNG passenger vehicles.
- ❖ Implementation in India: Came into force from April 1, 2017.

- ❖ Emission Targets: Average corporate CO₂ emissions must be below 130 g/km till 2022 and below 113 g/km thereafter.
- ❖ Comparison with BS6: CAFE focuses mainly on CO_x emissions, while BS6 regulates overall emissions including NO_x and SO_x.
- ❖ Environmental Impact: Reduction in CO_x emissions lowers carbon footprint and improves fuel economy.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ First edition of Indian Navy's biannual Commanders' Conference 2026 is scheduled over a period of three days at Nausena Bhawan, New Delhi, from 14 Apr to 16 Apr 2026.
- ☐ Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle passed away at the age of 92, marking the end of an era in Indian music. She breathed her last at Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital after battling exhaustion and a chest infection. Asha Bhosle recorded over 12,000 songs in more than 20 languages. She was the sister of , known as the 'Nightingale of India'. Recipient of India's highest cinema honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.
- ☐ The first-ever life-size statue of Swami Vivekananda in the United States was unveiled in Seattle, marking a significant milestone in India's cultural diplomacy efforts.
- ☐ The Indian Army has launched "Sikkim Sundari", the first community radio station in a border village of Sikkim, marking a significant step towards improving communication in remote high-altitude regions. The initiative, led by the Trishakti Corps, aims to bridge information gaps and empower local communities living near sensitive border areas.

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