

25/04/2026 Daily Current News

Prelims articles:

1. *Project DANTAK:*

Context: Project DANTAK of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) celebrated its 66th Raising Day on April 24, 2026, at Thimphu, Bhutan, marking 65 years of dedicated service in the Kingdom since its establishment in April 1961.

About Project DANTAK:

- ❖ Border Roads Organisation launched **Project Dantak** on 24 April 1961 as its overseas infrastructure project in Bhutan.
- ❖ The project was established through an agreement between Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and Jawaharlal Nehru.
- ❖ Project Dantak focuses on road construction and infrastructure connectivity in remote areas of Bhutan.
- ❖ It constructed Bhutan's pioneering motorable roads.
- ❖ In 1968, it completed the Samdrup Jongkhar–Trashigang road and connected Thimphu with Phuentsholing.
- ❖ Major works include Paro Airport, Yonphula Airfield, Thimphu–Trashigang Highway, telecom and hydropower infrastructure.
- ❖ The project also contributed to institutions such as Sherubtse College and India House Estate.
- ❖ Project Dantak employs both Bhutanese workers and Indian workers from border districts.

2. *SARAS Aajeevika Melas:*

Context: The Ministry of Rural Development has finalized the Calendar of SARAS Aajeevika Melas at the National Level for the Financial Year 2026–27, aimed at promoting rural livelihoods, women entrepreneurship and traditional crafts across the country.

About SARAS Aajeevika Melas:

- ❖ SARAS Aajeevika Melas are flagship events under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- ❖ They provide a national marketing platform for rural Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and artisans.
- ❖ The Melas promote women empowerment by connecting rural women entrepreneurs directly with urban consumers.
- ❖ Participants from States and UTs showcase handlooms, handicrafts, organic products, and regional cuisines.
- ❖ The initiative strengthens rural livelihoods through direct market access and better income opportunities.
- ❖ SARAS Melas support 'Vocal for Local' and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives.
- ❖ They also promote capacity building in packaging, branding, and marketing.

- ❖ The Melas showcase India's cultural diversity through traditional arts, food, and performances.
- ❖ They contribute to inclusive growth and preservation of indigenous crafts.

3. *Net FDI:*

Context: Net foreign direct investment (FDI) into India turned positive in February 2026 after six months of being in the negative, latest Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data show. In February, the inflows exceeded outflows of direct investment by \$4.6 billion, the highest in nearly four years.

What is net FDI?

- ❖ FDI refers to the investment through equity instruments by a person resident outside India in an unlisted Indian company; or in
- ❖ 10% or more of the post issue paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis of a listed Indian company.
- ❖ Gross FDI: Total investment made by foreign entities directly into the productive assets of India.
- ❖ Net FDI: Difference between inward FDI flows and outward FDI flows (Repatriation by foreign firms + Outward FDI by Indian firms).
- ❖ Singapore, the U.S., Mauritius, Japan, and the Netherlands were the major source countries of inward FDI to India, accounting for around three-fourth of the total inflows.

4. *Payments Bank:*

Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday cancelled the banking licence issued to Paytm Payments Bank Limited under Section 22 (4) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 ('BR Act') effective from close of business on April 24, 2026.

About Payment Banks:

- ❖ Payments Banks are small-scale banks that operate without taking credit risk.
- ❖ They were established based on the recommendations of the Nachiket Mor Committee.
- ❖ Their main objective is to promote financial inclusion among the unbanked and underbanked population.
- ❖ They mainly serve migrant workers, low-income households, and small businesses.
- ❖ Payments Banks are registered as public limited companies under the Companies Act, 2013.
- ❖ They are licensed under Section 22 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- ❖ They are regulated by laws such as the Banking Regulation Act, RBI Act, and FEMA.
- ❖ Payments Banks are differentiated banks, not full-service universal banks.
- ❖ They function on a smaller operational scale compared to commercial banks.
- ❖ The minimum paid-up capital requirement is ₹100 crore.
- ❖ Promoters must contribute at least 40% of the equity capital for the first five years.
- ❖ Payments Banks can accept demand deposits through savings and current accounts.

- ❖ A customer can deposit a maximum of ₹2 lakh in a Payments Bank account.
- ❖ About 75% of deposits must be invested in government securities under SLR requirements.
- ❖ The remaining 25% of deposits must be kept as time deposits with scheduled commercial banks.
- ❖ Payments Banks can provide remittance and digital payment services.
- ❖ They can issue ATM/debit cards and offer internet banking facilities.
- ❖ They can act as Banking Correspondents (BCs) for other banks.
- ❖ Payments Banks cannot provide loans or issue credit cards.
- ❖ They are not allowed to accept time deposits or NRI deposits.
- ❖ They cannot establish subsidiaries for non-banking financial activities.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ The Indian Air Force has launched the third edition of the Mehar Baba Competition-3. The theme of MBC-3 is “Collaborative Drone-Based Surveillance Radars.” The competition aims to encourage innovation in advanced drone and radar technologies.
- ☐ The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development launched the UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development. The initiative was part of the International Conference on “Women Leading the Future of Work” organised in collaboration with UNESCO at Symbiosis Skills and Professional University (SSPU), Pune.
- ☐ The exposition of the holy sacred Tathagata Relics of Gautama Buddha will take place in Ladakh. Tathagata Relics symbolize the physical remains and memorials associated with Buddha, representing reverence, peace, and protection from conflict. “Tathagata” was a term used by the historical Buddha Śākyamuni for himself in the Tripitaka of the Pali Canon, meaning “the one thus-come” or “the one thus-gone.” The concept holds special importance in Mahayana Buddhism and Vajrayana traditions, particularly in understanding textual and realization lineages.
- ☐ Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2026 report released by UN ESCAP. India’s economy is projected to grow at 6.4% (following 7.4% in 2025) this year and 6.6% in 2027
- ☐ Scientists discover new frog species in Arunachal Pradesh, *Limnonectes Motijheel*.
- ☐ Uttar Pradesh has received India’s first integrated recycling facility for lithium-ion batteries and rare earth magnets at the UPSIDC Industrial Area in Sikandrabad. Developed by Rocklink India, the plant is a major step toward strengthening domestic recovery of critical minerals and supporting India’s clean energy transition.
- ☐ Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) has won the 4th Gender Equality Mobilisation (GEM) Award presented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Vienna. The recognition was given during the International Day of Women in Industry 2026 celebrations for GMC’s work in combining women’s empowerment with sustainable waste management.