

April - 19

## TNPSC BITS

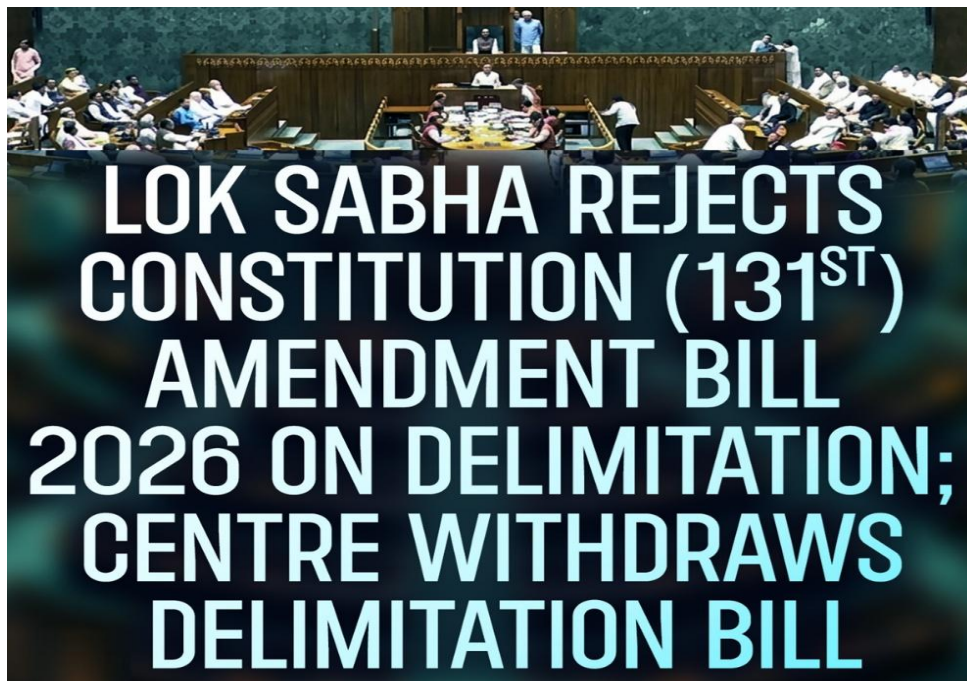
- ❖ Prime minister will chair India's first high-level conference dedicated to Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) to strengthen the internal security framework under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ❖ China became India's largest trading partner in FY 2025-26, surpassing the United States, with total trade at USD 151.1 billion and a record trade deficit of USD 112.6 billion.
- ❖ Integral Coach Factory in Chennai will roll out India's first high-speed Vande Bharat Freight EMU (Electric Multiple Unit) prototype for trials based on the Vande Bharat platform.
- ❖ Prime Minister has inaugurated the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor, a major expressway project with an investment of around ₹12,000 crore aimed at boosting trade, logistics, industry, and employment.
- ❖ International Day for Street Children is observed every year on April 12 to raise awareness about children living or working on the streets worldwide and to promote their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Protect, not Punish".

## NATIONAL NEWS

### 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2026 – Rejection

- ❖ The Lok Sabha rejected the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026.
- ❖ The Bill failed to get the required two-thirds majority, with 298 votes in favour and 230 against, and zero abstentions out of 528 members present and voting.
- ❖ It is mandatory for a Constitutional Amendment Bill to secure a special majority (two-thirds of members present and voting).
- ❖ After the defeat, Union Minister Kiren Rijju withdrew the Delimitation Bill, 2026 and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026.
- ❖ The government stated that the three Bills were interlinked and could not be considered separately.
- ❖ Congress MP K. C. Venugopal opposed clubbing the three Bills, calling it against parliamentary rules and practice.

- ❖ Union Home Minister Amit Shah defended the move, stating that such clubbing has precedents and is needed to implement women's reservation.
- ❖ The draft Bills were circulated to MPs less than 48 hours before introduction, leading to opposition protests over the lack of time.
- ❖ The Opposition forced a division of votes at the introduction stage instead of a voice vote to ensure exact counting.
- ❖ A division vote records the exact number of votes for and against a Bill, usually used for contentious legislation.
- ❖ This is the first time in 12 years that a Constitutional Amendment Bill introduced by the Modi government has been defeated.



### **K.G. Balakrishnan Commission Extension**

- ❖ The Centre extended the tenure of the Commission of Inquiry led by K. G. Balakrishnan for the third time till June 10, 2026.
- ❖ The commission was set up in 2022 to examine the SC status for Dalits who converted to other religions.
- ❖ It was constituted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ❖ The extension is for two months from April 11 to June 10, 2026.
- ❖ The issue relates to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, under Article 341.
- ❖ Currently, SC status is limited to Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists.


A look at the present status of the law, the past amendments and the Centre's argument in the case:

**What does the law say now?**  
The 1950 law provides for only those belonging to Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist communities to be categorised as SCs

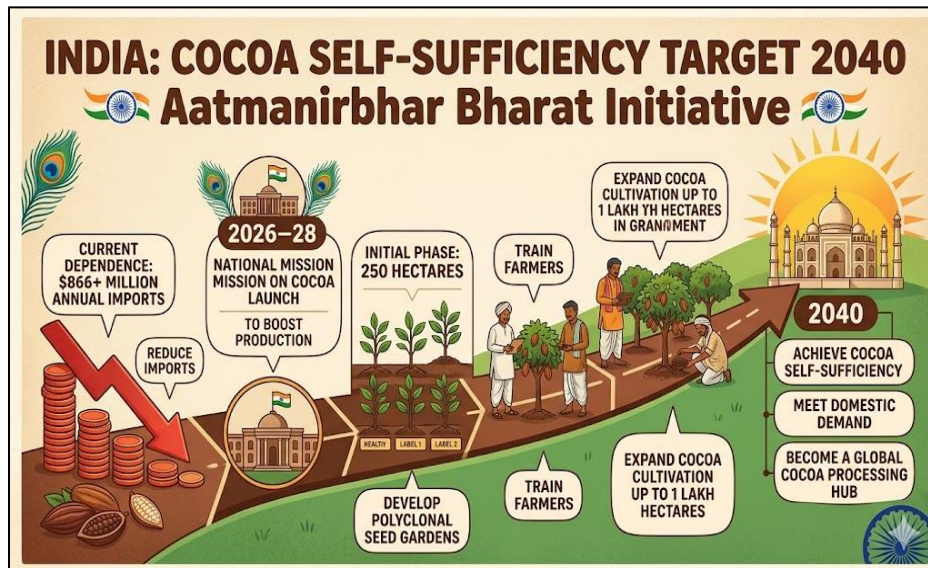
**How were Sikhs and Buddhists included?**  
The Kalelkar panel report (1955) and the high-powered panel report (1983) were the basis for amending the Order to include Dalit Sikhs and Dalit Buddhists as SCs in 1956 and 1990 respectively

**Centre's argument**  
The religions included as SCs under the law are branches of Hinduism. Dalits who converted to Islam or Christianity "cannot claim to be backward" since untouchability is a feature of Hindu religion and its branches alone

The three-member Commission is headed by ex-CJI K.G. Balakrishnan



### Cocoa Self-Sufficiency Target 2040



- ❖ India has launched a roadmap to achieve cocoa self-sufficiency by 2040 under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- ❖ The plan aims to reduce dependence on cocoa imports, which exceed \$866 million annually.
- ❖ A National Mission on Cocoa will be launched in 2026–28 to boost production.
- ❖ Around 250 hectares of polyclonal seed gardens will be developed initially.
- ❖ The roadmap targets the training of farmers and the expansion of cocoa cultivation up to 1 lakh hectares.

- ❖ India aims to meet domestic demand and become a global cocoa processing hub by 2040.

### **Women's Reservation Act 2023**

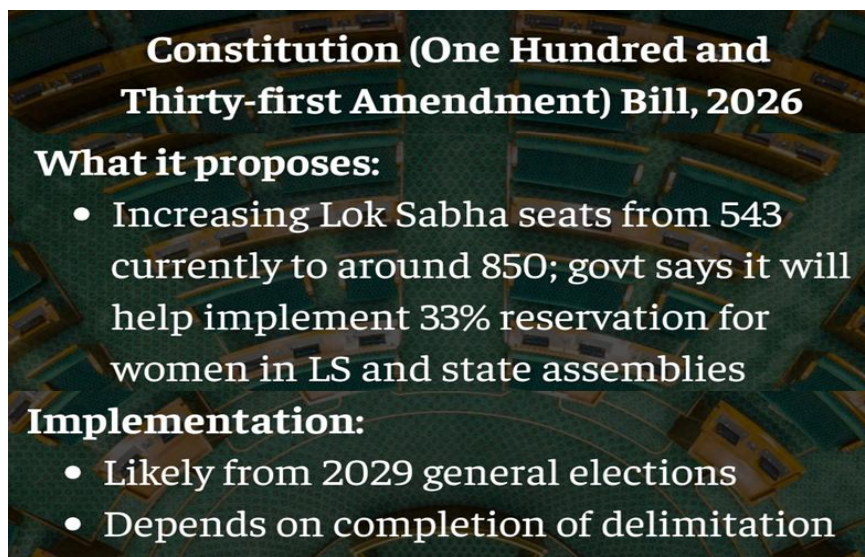


- ❖ Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023 was brought into force by the Central Government from April 16, 2026.
- ❖ The Central Government notified April 16, 2026, as the date of enforcement of the Act.
- ❖ It is a constitutional amendment law that has been passed, but requires a notification to become operational.
- ❖ Without bringing this law into force, the proposed constitutional amendment cannot be implemented.
- ❖ Though the Act has come into force, women's reservation cannot be implemented in the current House.
- ❖ Implementation is linked to delimitation based on the next Census.
- ❖ The reservation will be enforceable only after the delimitation exercise following the 2027 Census.
- ❖ The law is expected to become fully operational around 2034 after completion of the process.

### **Delimitation Bill, 2026 – Key Provisions**

- ❖ The proposed Delimitation Bill, 2026, outlines the structure and functioning of the Delimitation Commission for redrawing constituencies.

- ❖ The Bill provides for the constitution of a Delimitation Commission by the Central Government.
- ❖ The Commission will be chaired by a sitting or former Supreme Court judge.
- ❖ Members will include the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) or an Election Commissioner nominated by the Election Commission, and the State Election Commissioner of the concerned State.
- ❖ Each State will have 10 associate members, including five Lok Sabha MPs and five State legislators, who will assist but will not have voting rights.
- ❖ The Commission will decide Lok Sabha seat allocation for States and Union Territories, the total strength of State Assemblies, and the redrawing of parliamentary and Assembly constituencies.
- ❖ It will also identify seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and women.
- ❖ Draft proposals will be published for public consultation and objections before finalisation.
- ❖ Once notified in the Gazette of India, the Commission's orders will have the force of law and cannot be challenged in any court.
- ❖ The orders will come into effect from a date specified by the President of India.
- ❖ The new constituency boundaries will apply to elections held after final orders are issued.
- ❖ The Commission is a high-powered body whose decisions are legally binding and final.
- ❖ Its orders will be laid before the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, but no changes can be made by them.



**Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-first Amendment) Bill, 2026**

**What it proposes:**

- Increasing Lok Sabha seats from 543 currently to around 850; govt says it will help implement 33% reservation for women in LS and state assemblies

**Implementation:**

- Likely from 2029 general elections
- Depends on completion of delimitation

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Pax Silica Initiative – Philippines



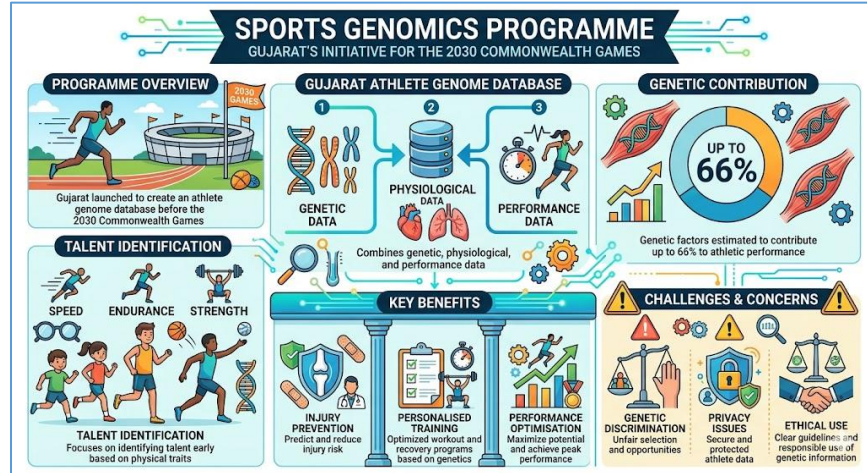
- ❖ The Philippines joined the US-led Pax Silica to strengthen global semiconductor and technology supply chains.
- ❖ The initiative is led by the United States to secure the full technology supply chain from raw materials to advanced chip manufacturing.
- ❖ A 4,000-acre industrial hub will be developed in the Luzon Economic Corridor in the Philippines.
- ❖ The hub will focus on semiconductors, electronics, and the processing of critical minerals like nickel, cobalt, and copper.
- ❖ The Philippines becomes the 13th member of the initiative, joining countries like India, South Korea, Singapore, Qatar, and the UAE.
- ❖ The programme promotes “friend-shoring” to reduce dependence on China and strengthen allied supply chains.

## STATE NEWS

### Sports Genomics Programme

- ❖ Gujarat launched the Sports Genomics Programme to create an athlete genome database before the 2030 Commonwealth Games.
- ❖ The programme aims to build a Gujarat Athlete Genome Database combining genetic, physiological, and performance data.
- ❖ It focuses on identifying talent early based on traits like speed, endurance, and strength.
- ❖ Genetic factors are estimated to contribute up to 66% to athletic performance.

- ❖ It supports injury prevention, personalised training, and performance optimisation.
- ❖ Concerns include genetic discrimination, privacy issues, and ethical use of athlete data.



## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

**Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha - Harivansh**

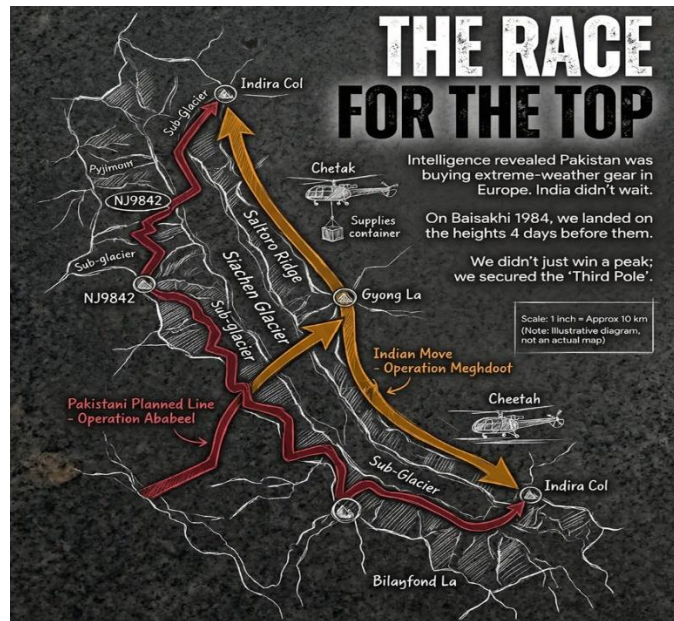


- ❖ Harivansh from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was elected unopposed for a third consecutive term as Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha on April 17, 2026.
- ❖ In a first, a nominated Member of Parliament (MP) was made to occupy the chair.
- ❖ His election was unopposed, reflecting a rare moment of consensus in the Upper House.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Siachen Day 2026 – April 13

- ❖ It commemorates Operation Meghdoot, launched in 1984 to secure the Siachen Glacier, the world's highest battlefield.
- ❖ The operation aimed to pre-empt Pakistan's moves to occupy key heights in the region.
- ❖ Soldiers operate in extreme conditions with temperatures below  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  and high-altitude terrain.
- ❖ The day honours the courage, sacrifice, and endurance of soldiers guarding the glacier.



### World Chagas Disease Day 2026 – April 14

- ❖ The day is marked by the World Health Organization to raise awareness about Chagas disease.

- ❖ Chagas disease is caused by the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* and spreads mainly through triatomine bug bites or contaminated food.
- ❖ Around 8 million people are infected globally, and about 10,000 deaths occur every year.
- ❖ Women, especially of childbearing age, are a key focus due to the risk of mother-to-child transmission.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Women at the Heart: Protecting the Next Generation from Chagas Disease”.

