

Daily Current Affairs: Important National and International News of April 18, 2026

Daily Current Affairs: April 18, 2026. This report brings you the most significant national and international headlines of the day. For students and aspirants of competitive exams, staying updated with these developments is key to mastering the general awareness section.

National News

131st Constitutional Amendment Bill: Redrawing the Lok Sabha

India's parliamentary structure is eyeing a massive overhaul. The 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill has been introduced, proposing to increase the number of Lok Sabha seats from 550 to 850. This delimitation process is rooted in the 2011 Census data. The move is seen as a necessary step to modernize the legislature and ensure fair representation in sync with population growth.

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- Under Article 82 of the Indian Constitution, Parliament can enact a Delimitation Act following every Census.
- The first Delimitation Commission in India was set up in 1952.
- Currently, the allocation of seats in the Lok Sabha remains frozen based on the 1971 Census.

Menstrual Leave Policy in Karnataka

In a landmark ruling for women's rights, the Karnataka High Court has directed the state government to implement a menstrual leave policy. This applies to women working in both organized and unorganized sectors. The court observed that such a policy falls under the fundamental right to 'live with dignity' as guaranteed by Article 21. Women aged 18 to 52 will be eligible for one day of paid leave per month under this directive.

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- Bihar became the first Indian state to introduce menstrual leave for government employees back in 1992.
- Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which the judiciary has often expanded to include health and dignity.

Meghalaya Official Language Ordinance

The Meghalaya cabinet has cleared a new ordinance to grant official status to Khasi and Garo languages, placing them on equal footing with English. Consequently, the Meghalaya State Language Act of 2005 stands repealed. Henceforth, all official government notifications and orders will be published in English, Khasi, and Garo.

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- Meghalaya attained full statehood on January 21, 1972.
- The state is home to the world's wettest places, Mawsynram and Cherrapunji, and its current Chief Minister is Conrad Sangma.

International Relations

Austrian Chancellor's Visit to India

Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker arrived in India for a high-level bilateral visit, marking the first such diplomatic mission from Austria in forty years. The visit yielded significant results, including an MoU between IIT Delhi and Montan University of Austria for collaborative research. Discussions also focused on expanding job opportunities for Indian nurses in Austria.

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- Vienna, the capital of Austria, is the headquarters for the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- The Austrian currency is the Euro.

BRICS Health Working Group Meeting 2026

Under its 2026 BRICS Presidency, India hosted the first BRICS Health Working Group meeting in New Delhi. The primary agenda focused on pandemic preparedness, global health security, and integrating traditional medicine with modern healthcare frameworks.

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- Originally formed by Brazil, Russia, India, and China in 2006, the BRICS group welcomed South Africa in 2010.
- In 2024, the group expanded further to include new members such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE.

Science, Technology & Environment

Yana Caves: New Geo-Heritage Site

The Ministry of Mines, supported by the Geological Survey of India, has officially designated the Yana Caves in Karnataka as a Geo-Heritage site. Located in the North Kannada district, these caves are a prime example of karst topography, formed over millennia by the dissolution of limestone.

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- The Geological Survey of India (GSI), founded in 1851, is responsible for maintaining the country's geo-heritage sites.
- GSI is headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal.

World Heritage Day: April 18

Every year on April 18, the world observes the 'International Day for Monuments and Sites,' commonly known as World Heritage Day. The goal is to raise awareness about the vulnerability of cultural heritage and the efforts required to protect it. The theme for 2026 is "Emergency Response for Living Heritage in Context of Conflict and Disasters."

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- UNESCO officially recognized this day in 1983.
- India currently boasts 42 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

India's First University-Based Quantum Facility

SRM University in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh, has launched the country's first university-based Quantum Reference Facility. This center is set to become a national hub for testing and certifying quantum hardware. It operates at extreme conditions, with temperatures near -273° Celsius, to ensure the stability of quantum particles.

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- Quantum computers use 'qubits' instead of traditional bits to process information at lightning speeds.
- India's National Quantum Mission was launched in 2023 to spearhead research in this cutting-edge field.

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