

April 13, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. India has rejected the new names assigned by China to certain places within the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

(i) For many years, China has laid claim to India's state of Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that it constitutes a territory belonging to its own region of Tibet. It has also become a recurring practice for China to periodically assign new names to various geographical features within Arunachal Pradesh—including mountains and hills. India has consistently condemned these actions.

(ii) Against this backdrop, China has now assigned new names to several additional locations within Arunachal Pradesh. Questions regarding this matter were raised by journalists in New Delhi to Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for India's Ministry of External Affairs. His response was as follows:

- All these locations belong to India. They have always been, and will always remain, integral parts of Indian territory; they can never be separated from India. Consequently, India categorically rejects the new names assigned to these places by China.
- Assigning new names to these locations or laying claim to them does not alter the factual reality in any way. He further stated that China must refrain from engaging in actions that introduce negativity into bilateral relations between India and China, and from undertaking activities that undermine the ongoing efforts to foster mutual understanding.

2. Asha Bhosle, a renowned singer in the Indian film music industry, passed away on Sunday (April 12) in Mumbai, Maharashtra. She was 92 years old.

(i) It is noteworthy that Asha Bhosle, a recipient of the Padma Vibhushan award, sang over 12,000 songs in more than 20 languages, including Hindi and Tamil.

3. Peace talks held in Pakistan between Iran and the United States ended in failure. Consequently, the risk of war erupting once again in West Asia has emerged.

(i) While Iran presented a 10-point plan, the United States imposed certain conditions, stipulating that Iran must not engage in the production of nuclear weapons nor seek to exercise complete control over the Strait of Hormuz. No agreement could be reached between the two nations regarding these matters.

(ii) U.S. President Trump has stated that the U.S. Navy will intercept foreign vessels transiting through the Strait of Hormuz.

4. Reports have emerged stating that Saudi Arabia and Qatar have provided financial assistance amounting to Rs.46,550 crore to Pakistan, a nation currently grappling with a severe financial crisis. A report published in the Pakistani newspaper 'Dawn' provides the following details regarding this matter:

(i) The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has insisted that Pakistan repay a loan of Rs.32,580 crore by the end of this month. Consequently, Pakistan is under compulsion to return this amount. This situation has placed a strain on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves.

(ii) To help rescue Pakistan from this crisis, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have jointly provided financial assistance totaling Rs.46,550 crore.

(iii) Saudi Arabia stands as the largest provider of financial aid to Pakistan. The report notes that, to date, Saudi Arabia alone has provided financial assistance exceeding Rs.46,000 crore to Pakistan.

(iv) Pakistani Military Deployment to Saudi Arabia – Meanwhile, reports indicate that, in accordance with a defense pact signed with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan has deployed 13,000 military personnel and between 10 and 18 fighter jets to that country. It is reported that Pakistan had actually dispatched these troops and aircraft last month with the objective of bolstering Saudi Arabia's security, but the Saudi Government has only now officially disclosed this information.

(v) Similarly, another report suggests that Pakistan also dispatched missile interception systems to Saudi Arabia last month.

(vi) In retaliation for attacks by the United States and Israel, Iran had been continuously launching missile and drone strikes against U.S. military bases located in Saudi Arabia. Following the U.S. announcement of a two-week ceasefire, Iran has temporarily suspended these attacks. It is anticipated that should the United States launch further attacks, Iran would likely retaliate in kind. Against this backdrop, Pakistan's deployment of troops and fighter jets to Saudi Arabia is viewed as a development of significant importance.

5. For the first time in the United States, a full-figure statue of the Indian spiritual leader Swami Vivekananda has been unveiled in the city of Seattle.

(i) Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson and India's Consul in Seattle, Prakash Gupta, jointly unveiled the statue. The event was attended by numerous people of Indian origin and local community leaders. Speaking at the ceremony, Mayor Katie Wilson stated that the statue of Vivekananda not only reflects the diversity of Seattle but will also further strengthen the relationship between the two nations.

(ii) Located in the bustling Westlake Square in downtown Seattle, this bronze statue was sculpted by the Indian artist Naresh Kumar Kumawat. It was presented as a gift on behalf of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) to acknowledge and celebrate the city's diversity.

(iii) The statue is situated in close proximity to several key landmarks, including the Amazon headquarters—known as 'The Spheres'—the Seattle Convention Center, and the Seattle Center Monorail. This location attracts a daily footfall of over 400,000 visitors.

(iv) Swami Vivekananda garnered global attention for his historic address delivered at the Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago in 1893. Referencing this milestone, the Indian Consulate shared a social media post stating: "From Chicago 1893 to Seattle 2026! India's new landmark in the city."

6. In a marathon held in the Netherlands, India's Chawan Parwal crossed the finish line in 2 hours, 11 minutes, and 58 seconds, securing 20th place and setting a new national record. Prior to this, the national record—set 48 years ago in 1978—was held by Shivnath Singh, who had completed the race in 2:12.

7. At the US Open Pickleball Championships, the Indian duo of Arjun Singh and Aditya Singh delivered a stellar performance, winning the gold medal in the Under-18 Men's Doubles category.

8. At the Monte Carlo Masters tennis tournament held in France, Italy's Jannik Sinner clinched the championship title.

(i) Having already won titles at the Indian Wells Open and the Miami Open, Sinner has now achieved a

"hat-trick" of Masters titles in the current season with this victory.

(ii) Ranked World No. 2, Sinner defeated the defending champion and World No. 1 player, Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, in the final match. With this victory, Sinner not only became the Monte Carlo Masters champion but also reclaimed the World No. 1 ranking.

9. Young Indian player Ayush Shetty won a silver medal in the Men's Singles category at the Asian Badminton Championships.

(i) The Asian Badminton Championships are currently underway in Ningbo, China. In the singles final match of the tournament, India's Ayush Shetty faced off against the world's second-ranked player, Shi Yu Qi of China.

(ii) Ayush Shetty earned the distinction of being the first Indian player in 61 years to advance to the singles final of the Asian Badminton Championships.

10. The World Bank has released Rs.3,165 crore for the development of Amaravati, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh. In the next phase, an additional Rs.1,396 crore is scheduled to be released by the end of this month. In this regard, State Government officials stated the following:

(i) The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are providing funding for the development project of Andhra's capital city. These loans carry an interest rate ranging from 8% to 8.5%.

(ii) The interest rate is subject to change based on prevailing international economic conditions. Together, the two banks have agreed to provide a total loan of Rs.14,894 crore. In addition to this, the Central Government is allocating Rs 15,000 crore in funds; of this amount, Rs 1,400 crore is set to be released in the first phase.

(iv) The loans from these international banks must be repaid over a period of 29 years. If deemed necessary, an additional grace period of six years may be granted. Repayment of the World Bank loan is scheduled to commence in June 2031.

(v) The city of Amaravati is being constructed in a manner designed to prevent significant damage from natural disasters, including floods.

(vi) Amaravati is set to be developed utilizing world-class, cutting-edge technologies. Officials affirmed that the city would foster economic growth, create employment opportunities, and ensure a superior quality of life for its residents.

11. Extending the Parliamentary Budget Session, the BJP Whip has issued a directive to all party MPs, mandating their mandatory participation in the special session scheduled to be held for three days, commencing April 16.

(i) The special session is being convened with the objective of introducing and passing constitutional amendment bills that provide for the implementation of a 33 percent reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies starting from the year 2029, and, in accordance with this, to facilitate an increase in the total number of Lok Sabha constituencies from 543 to 816.

(ii) It appears that the Union Cabinet has already accorded its approval to the draft bills pertaining to this matter.

(iii) Against this backdrop, the BJP Whip has issued a directive stipulating that all Union Ministers and MPs belonging to the party must ensure their mandatory presence and participation in the special parliamentary session scheduled to commence on April 16.

12. impact of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) on recent electoral participation and list accuracy.

(i) Causes

- Voter List Inflation: Lists previously included a significant number of deceased persons, permanent migrants, and double entries.
- Ensuring Accuracy: The primary goal was to ensure that only eligible and verified voters remained on the rolls to improve democratic health.
- Political Allegations: Opposition parties alleged that the revision was a plot to snatch voting rights, which paradoxically motivated voters to participate.

(ii) Events (Chronological Facts)

- Late 2025 (Bihar): The Election Commission initiated the SIR process before the Bihar Assembly elections. In the draft list, 65 lakh names were initially removed, followed by another 3.66 lakh.
- September 2025 (Bihar Final List): After adding 21 lakh new eligible voters, the final list was set at 7.42 crore, with a total net removal of 47 lakh names compared to previous rolls.
- April 2026 (Tamil Nadu Final List): Following the SIR, Tamil Nadu's voter base was reduced from 6.41 crore to 5.73 crore, resulting in the removal of approximately 68 lakh names.
- Regional Reductions: During this same period, voter lists were reduced by 7.5% in Puducherry, 3.2% in Kerala, and 1% in Assam.
- Record Turnout (Recent Weeks): Following the revision, recent elections saw record-breaking participation: 85.91% in Assam, 89.97% in Puducherry, and 78.27% in Kerala.

(iii) Consequences

- Statistical Turnout Surge: By removing "ghost" voters (dead or moved), the voter turnout percentage increased automatically. For instance, Bihar saw a 9% increase in participation (66.91%)—the highest since 1951.
- The "Fear Factor": The fear created by political narratives—that rights might be lost—actually drove previously inactive voters to the polling booths to "save" their right.
- Enhanced Credibility: The Chief Election Commissioner noted that these records are not just an Indian milestone but a global record for democratic health.

(iv) Remedies

- Continuous Verification: Such intensive revisions are necessary to maintain clean electoral rolls.
- Public Awareness: Increasing awareness among the younger generation about the importance of their vote is critical to maintaining these high turnout levels.

(v) Steps Taken by the Government

- The Election Commission conducted Special Intensive Revisions (SIR) through active field-level verification to identify non-residents and deceased voters.
- Citizens whose names were flagged for removal were given the opportunity to submit valid

documents and ensure they remained on the final list.

- The Commission emphasized the use of digital and verified identification to prevent the re-emergence of double entries in future cycles.

13. Strategic analysis of the 2026 West Asian crisis and its impact on the global trade infrastructure.

(i) Causes of the Crisis

- **Geopolitical Conflict:** The primary cause is the military confrontation between the US-Israel alliance and Iran, which began with heavy attacks on Iran on February 28, 2026.
- **Nuclear Ambitions:** The US and Israel justify their strikes by alleging that Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles.
- **Strategic Vulnerability:** Modern global trade, valued at approximately \$35 trillion (₹3,250 lakh crore), is overly dependent on narrow, unchangeable maritime corridors that are easy to blockade.
- **Iran's Retaliation:** In response to the strikes, Iran used its geographic advantage to close the Strait of Hormuz, effectively holding the global economy hostage.

(ii) Significant Events (Chronological Facts)

- **February 28, 2026:** Outbreak of hostilities; US and Israel strike Iranian infrastructure.
- **The Blockade:** Iran blockades the Strait of Hormuz, a 167 km long waterway which is only 33 km wide at its narrowest point.
- **Volume of Trade:** Through this passage, 2 crore barrels of crude oil pass daily, representing 20% of global maritime oil trade and 19% of the world's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).
- **April 8, 2026:** Under extreme global pressure and a US ultimatum, President Trump announced a two-week ceasefire just 90 minutes before the deadline for total war expired.
- **April 12, 2026 (Islamabad Talks):** Peace talks mediated by Pakistan between the US and Iran failed to reach an agreement. Disagreements remained over Iran's nuclear program and the permanent control of the Strait.
- **US Navy Order:** Following the failed talks, President Trump ordered the US Navy to clear all underwater mines placed by Iran in the Strait and to intercept any Iranian attempts to collect illegal tolls from international ships.

(iii) Global Consequences

- **Energy Inflation:** Crude oil prices surged by 51% since the start of the conflict, reaching \$94 per barrel.
- **Supply Chain Collapse:** Life-saving medicines and energy supplies are disrupted; medicines are reportedly "rotting" in export hubs like Dubai because cold storage facilities are failing due to energy shortages.
- **South Korea's Crisis:** Dependent on the Strait for 97% of its energy imports, the nation faces a collapse of its high-tech sector. Samsung and SK Hynix, which produce 67% of the world's RAM and 80% of high-end computer storage, are severely impacted, threatening the global Artificial Intelligence (AI) industry.
- **Qatar's Loss:** Iran's strikes on Qatari LNG plants have caused an estimated \$20 billion annual revenue loss and a global Helium shortage (essential for semiconductors), causing Helium prices to double.
- **Logistics Delay:** Ships forced to divert around Africa face an additional 10 to 14 days of travel and massive increases in freight costs.

(iv) Proposed Remedies

- **Systemic Recognition:** The world must stop viewing this as a local conflict and recognize it as a hostage situation affecting 800 crore people.
- **Stable Maritime Corridors:** There is a call for international cooperation to ensure that vital sea lanes cannot be unilaterally blockaded by any single nation.
- **Diplomatic Alternative:** Since global economies are totally interdependent, a permanent diplomatic solution is the only "dignified alternative" to avoid total economic ruin.

(v) Steps Taken by the Government

- **Essential Services (India):** To prevent domestic panic, the Indian Government implemented the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to ensure a steady supply of fuel and gas despite global volatility.
- **Indian Diplomacy:** As a "friendly nation," India initially secured a temporary agreement from Iran to allow Indian ships carrying oil and gas to pass through the Strait.
- **US Naval Intervention:** The US Government has officially authorized mine-clearing operations and direct military protection for international shipping to prevent Iran from using "toll collection" as a weapon of extortion.
- **Evacuation Efforts:** During the current ceasefire, the Indian Government has urged the remaining 9,000 Indian citizens in Iran to evacuate immediately before hostilities potentially resume.