

THE COMSOC GAZETTE



APRIL 2026

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FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

STOCK MARKET

STARTUPS

ECONOMY

GEO POLITICS

SCIENCE AND TECH

COMSOG GENIE



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01 INDIA REMAINS OPEN TO GLOBAL CAPITAL: SEBI CHIEF

Securities and Exchange Board of India chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey met VC leaders in San Francisco to discuss India-US investment opportunities, highlighting India's investor-friendly, stable, and simplified market approach.

The dialogue, organised by Confederation of Indian Industry and the Consulate General of India, came amid heavy foreign investor outflows from Indian equities due to global and domestic pressures. K Srikar Reddy said, "Strengthening partnerships with global investors, particularly from the US, is vital for India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047," as per a CII press release. SEBI is easing norms for foreign investors through simplified registration, digitalisation, and improved trading frameworks to boost confidence and inflows.



02 NIFTY, SENSEX REBOUND IN EARLY TRADE DRIVEN BY RALLY IN BANKING STOCKS, POSITIVE TREND IN GLOBAL MARKETS



India's benchmark indices BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty rebounded on April 10, 2026, rising ~630 and 203 points respectively in early trade, led by strong gains in banking stocks.

Gainers included Axis Bank, SBI, ICICI Bank, and Bajaj Finance, while IT and pharma stocks like Infosys, TCS, and Sun Pharma lagged.

The rally was supported by positive global cues, with U.S. and Asian markets trading higher amid optimism around the U.S.-Iran ceasefire, though rising crude oil prices and geopolitical uncertainty kept sentiment cautious.

FII continued selling, while DII provided some support. Analysts say markets remain in a "wait-and-watch" mode, driven by geopolitics, oil prices, and foreign investor activity.

CORPORATE ODYSSEY

01 VOLKSWAGEN TARGETS UP TO 25% VOLUME GROWTH WITH TAIGUN FACELIFT



Volkswagen is focusing on boosting Volkswagen Taigun sales through performance positioning, product updates, and localisation to compete in India's crowded mid-size SUV market, where it currently has a small share (~13–14K units in FY26). While Volkswagen Virtus remains a strong segment leader, the Taigun is expected to drive growth in 2026 as competition intensifies.

Both models are central to Volkswagen's India 2.0 strategy, which emphasizes localisation at scale. The company will continue focusing mainly on petrol vehicles with performance as a key differentiator, while also exploring new segments and future powertrains like EVs, hybrids, and flex fuels.

Volkswagen is also strengthening its dealer network and after-sales services to improve customer experience and brand reach in India. Increased localisation is expected to help control costs and enhance competitiveness against rivals in this high-growth segment.

02 DISNEY PLANS UP TO 1,000 LAYOFFS UNDER NEW CEO JOSH D'AMARO

The Walt Disney Company is planning a new cost-cutting phase that may include up to 1,000 job cuts, mainly in its marketing division, following the appointment of Josh D'Amaro as CEO in March.

The layoffs come after marketing was consolidated under Asad Ayaz in January, who now oversees all divisions—entertainment, experiences, and sports—and reports to D'Amaro and Dana Walden. This is the first time Disney has unified marketing under a single executive.

The restructuring builds on earlier changes under Bob Iger, who in 2023 led a major reorganisation cutting \$5.5 billion in costs and 7,000 jobs. The latest move signals continued efforts to streamline operations after a difficult period, with Disney shares dipping slightly following the news.

The *Walt Disney* Company

- **Up to 1,000 jobs to be cut:** The Walt Disney Company is planning layoffs in the coming weeks, marking the first major job cuts under new CEO Josh D'Amaro.



- **Marketing roles hit the most:** The layoffs will mainly affect the marketing division, which has recently been consolidated as part of cost-cutting efforts.

- **Less than 1% workforce impacted:** Despite the headline number, the cuts will affect under 1% of Disney's 231,000 employees, as the company shifts focus toward digital growth areas.

01 WEST ASIA CONFLICT TRIMS DOWN GLOBAL GROWTH FORECAST

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has decided to reduce the global growth rate forecasts owing to the on-going conflict in West Asia. Kristalina Georgieva, MD at IMF cautioned of “no neat and clean return to the status quo” for the growth forecasts. The fluctuating energy prices, physical infrastructure impairment, and supply chain disruption have added to the woes of the market.

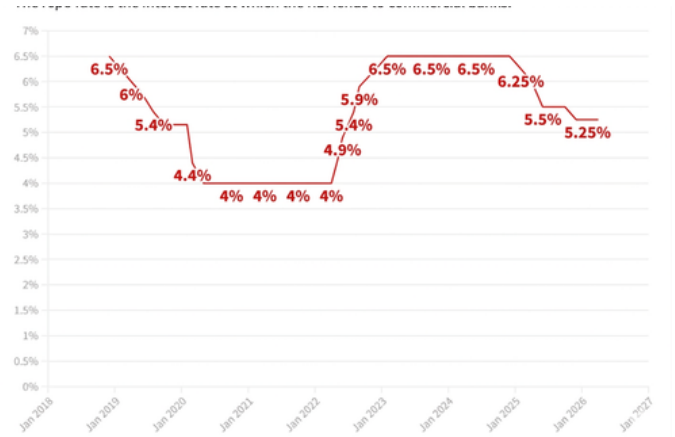
Additionally, the IMF aims to set up an immediate financial assistance of \$50 billion to war-affected countries.

This highlights the “asymmetric” effects of the crisis. The slowdown is expected to weigh more heavily on emerging and developing economies with higher exposure to external shocks.

It also underscores rising global uncertainty, which could dampen investment flows and delay economic recovery.



02 MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE KEEPS REPO RATE UNCHANGED



The repo rate remains unchanged at 5.25% as decided by the latest MPC, held on 8th April by the Reserve Bank of India.

Further, it was declared by the RBI Governor, Sanjay Malhotra, that despite the severe disruptions in the global supply chains, the MPC will continue to maintain a neutral stance.

Additionally, other instruments like the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate, and the Bank rate remain unchanged. This decision reflects the RBI’s focus on balancing inflation control with supporting economic growth amid global uncertainties.

It also signals policy stability, giving markets and businesses clearer expectations in the near term. Stable rates may support credit growth and investment activity, while giving the central bank room to act if inflationary pressures rise again. Overall, the stance suggests a cautious, data-driven approach to future monetary policy decisions.

SUSTAINABLE SYNERGIES

01 SEBI LAUNCHES REVIEW OF ESG RATING PROVIDERS TO STRENGTHEN REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is reviewing rules for ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) rating providers to improve transparency, consistency, and reliability in sustainable investing.

With ESG scores increasingly used by investors to assess corporate accountability and risk, SEBI has formed a working group to identify gaps in the current framework and align it with global standards. The move builds on initiatives like the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) for large listed companies.

The review also aims to curb greenwashing, strengthen investor confidence, and improve the use of ESG data, in line with rising global scrutiny in Europe and the U.S.

If implemented well, these changes could enhance disclosures, boost corporate accountability, and place sustainability at the core of India's capital markets.



02 TURNING WASTE INTO ENERGY: IIT BOMBAY'S DRY LEAVES INNOVATION



Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology Bombay have developed a method to convert dry leaves into cooking fuel using biomass gasification, addressing both energy needs and waste management.

The system turns discarded leaves into a usable fuel alternative to LPG, cutting costs and reducing carbon emissions, with potential savings of up to 40% on LPG use.

Led by Sanjay Mahajani, the project highlights how local waste can be transformed into sustainable energy, supporting India's shift away from fossil fuels.

It demonstrates a practical way to reduce greenhouse emissions and integrate sustainability into everyday life.

THE GLOBAL CHESSBOARD

01 CEASEFIRE OR COLD PAUSE? THE U.S.-IRAN FLASHPOINT

Rising tensions between the U.S. and Iran have again placed the Middle East at the center of global geopolitics. Weeks of military strain were followed by a fragile two-week ceasefire, easing but not removing deep mistrust.

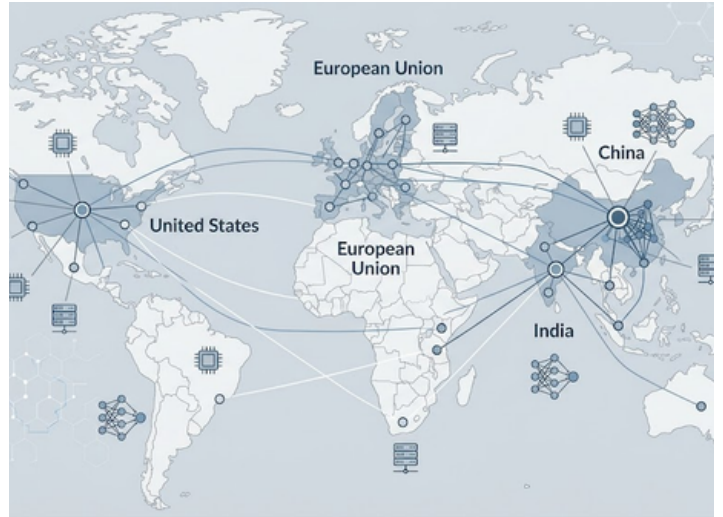
The Strait of Hormuz remains the key flashpoint, handling 20% of global oil supply, so any disruption quickly impacts energy markets. Recent tensions caused oil price volatility and concerns over global supply chains. Although the ceasefire brought temporary calm, Iran's controlled maritime threats signal ongoing strategic suspicion.

The truce appears tactical rather than a lasting solution, with Iran acting cautiously in diplomacy while the U.S. continues economic and military pressure to maintain leverage.

This situation shows that modern conflicts extend beyond battlefields, shaping global trade, energy security, and alliances. Such geopolitical flashpoints influence the global economy, where peace is not permanent but only a temporary phase.



02 AI ARMS RACE: THE BATTLE FOR DIGITAL DOMINANCE



The global AI race is reshaping power dynamics, led by the United States and China, which are heavily investing in AI beyond commercial use.

AI now drives defense, surveillance, and economic competitiveness, from autonomous weapons to governance analytics, making it a strategic resource, not just a regulated technology.

The European Union is taking a different route, focusing on ethical AI and regulation, creating a balance between innovation, control, and governance.

For countries like India, the challenge is balancing rapid adoption with data sovereignty and skill development, as falling behind could mean long-term strategic disadvantage.

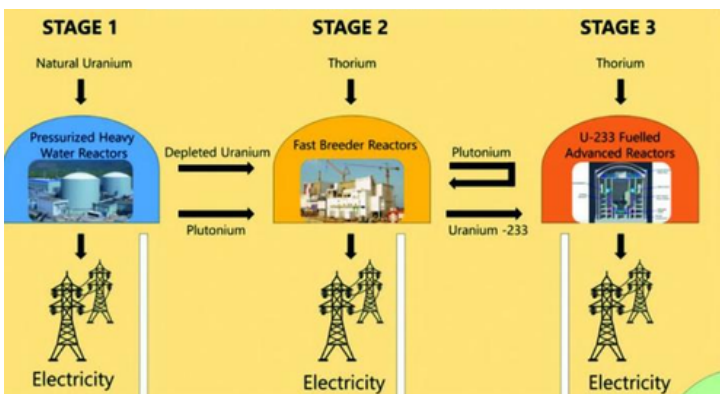
Today, power is defined not just by military strength but by algorithms, data, and digital infrastructure, making AI the key battleground of the 21st century.

01 INDIA'S NUCLEAR GAMBLE PAYS OFF: THE PFBR REACHES CRITICALITY

On April 6, 2026, India achieved a major milestone as a controlled nuclear chain reaction was sustained in the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam, making it the second country after Russia to operate such a reactor and marking the second stage of its nuclear programme.

A fast breeder reactor produces more fuel than it consumes. The PFBR uses uranium-plutonium fuel and converts uranium-238 into plutonium-239 using fast neutrons. It was indigenously developed by Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research and built by BHAVINI under the Department of Atomic Energy.

This reactor can extract 60–100 times more energy from uranium, reducing import dependence. It also enables conversion of thorium-232 into uranium-233, supporting the third stage of India's nuclear program and utilizing its vast thorium reserves. Commercial power generation is expected later in 2026



02 RETURN TO THE MOON: ARTEMIS II AND THE ROAD AHEAD

NASA's Artemis II, launched on April 1, 2026, is the first crewed mission beyond low Earth orbit since Apollo 17. Astronauts Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Jeremy Hansen flew aboard the Orion on a 10-day journey around the Moon.

Though not a landing mission, it tested critical systems like life support for future lunar missions. During the April 6 flyby, the crew set a new record for the farthest human travel from Earth, surpassing Apollo 13, while also observing a rare solar eclipse and new lunar regions.

Artemis II is a key step toward future Moon landings and eventual Mars missions, highlighting growing global collaboration, including contributions from Canadian Space Agency and European Space Agency.

The mission also demonstrated the reliability of deep space navigation and communication systems, ensuring safer and more efficient journeys for upcoming crews.

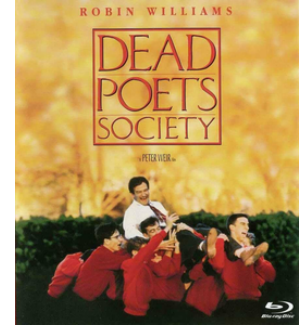


MOVIE RECOMMENDATION

THE DEAD POETS SOCIETY

Some films don't just tell a story, they whisper into your soul. Dead Poets Society is one of them. Set in a strict boarding school, it follows John Keating, a teacher who inspires his students not just to study poetry, but to live boldly and see the world differently. His message is simple yet powerful: seize the day before it fades.

It's a story of friendship, rebellion, first love, and the tender ache of dreams too fragile for the world. Above all, a reminder of the beauty and risk of finding your own voice. "O Captain, my Captain."



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

THE COURAGE TO BE DISLIKED



The Courage to Be Disliked is a thought-provoking book written in a dialogue format between a philosopher and a young man, where the philosopher introduces ideas from Alfred Adler, a 20th-century Austrian psychologist. The book challenges conventional beliefs about happiness, success, and interpersonal relationships, encouraging readers to embrace freedom, self-determination, and courage.

What makes this book unique is its Socratic-style conversation, where the young man raises doubts and challenges, and the philosopher systematically dismantles commonly held assumptions, making complex psychological ideas both accessible and practical.

YOUTUBE RECOMMENDATION

THE INVISIBLE LIFE HIDDEN BENEATH ANTARCTICA'S ICE-

"The Invisible Life Hidden Beneath Antarctica's Ice" by Ariel Waldman

In this captivating talk, Ariel Waldman takes us on a journey beneath the icy expanse of Antarctica to uncover a world teeming with life. Through her exploration, she reveals how the extreme conditions of the continent's subglacial lakes harbor unique ecosystems, challenging our understanding of life's adaptability. Waldman emphasizes the importance of citizen science and encourages us all to engage in the exploration of our planet's most remote corners.



MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Kachha Ghara - Rahgir
2. Vienna - Billy Joel
3. The Nights - Avicii
4. Wavin' Flag - K'NAAN
5. The Older I get - Alan Jackson

GUESS THE PERSONALITY

- Once a Navy SEAL, he transitioned to become a world-record-holding ultra-endurance athlete, completing feats like the Badwater Ultramarathon and Ironman Triathlons.
- He holds a Guinness World Record for the most pull-ups in 24 hours — a staggering 651.
- Author of the bestselling book "Can't Hurt Me", he shares his philosophy of mental toughness and resilience, inspiring millions worldwide.
- Despite facing a challenging upbringing, he transformed his life through sheer willpower and determination, becoming a symbol of personal transformation.



Answers of the previous edition

Personality: Abhishek Gami

Company: Philips



GUESS THE COMPANY

- This company sells coffins... online, and yes, they let you customize them with emojis, colors, and even your favorite memes.
- Founded in the 2010s, it reimagined death as a design problem, turning a taboo into a bold lifestyle statement.
- They offer eco-friendly, biodegradable options, blending sustainability with creativity.
- Their slogan? "Death, but make it fashion."

ANSWERS IN THE NEXT EDITION

JARGONS DECODED

Zombie Startup

A “Zombie Startup” is not a company that will rise from the grave (sadly). It’s a startup that keeps existing but isn’t really growing or making profits — it’s stuck in limbo, surviving on minimal funding or temporary cash flow. These companies shuffle along, paying bills but not really moving the needle in their market.

Burn Rate

Burn Rate refers to the speed at which a startup or company is spending its cash reserves before generating positive cash flow. Essentially, it’s how fast money is “burning” through the business.

How Burn Rate works –

1. Calculate monthly expenses – Add up all fixed and variable costs (salaries, rent, utilities, marketing).
2. Subtract any income – The net cash outflow per month is your burn rate.
3. Estimate runway – Divide available cash by burn rate to see how many months the company can survive without additional funding.

Example: If a startup has ₹50 lakh in the bank and spends ₹10 lakh per month, its burn rate is ₹10 lakh/month, giving it a 5-month runway.

MYTH BUSTERS

You need a lot of money to start investing

Many people think investing is only for the rich, but that’s not true. With modern platforms, mutual funds, and micro-investments, even ₹500–₹1000 per month is enough to start building wealth. The key isn’t the amount you start with—it’s consistency, patience, and strategy. Starting small also lets you learn without risking too much, making investing accessible to everyone, even students.

High returns always mean high risk

People often believe the only way to earn big is to take huge risks. In reality, smart investing strategies like diversification, long-term planning, and compounding can deliver impressive returns without gambling your money. Risk and reward are connected, but calculated, informed decisions can grow your wealth steadily, proving that high returns don’t always require reckless moves.

FORTUNE'S FABLES

Phool.co

What happens to the 8 million tons of flowers dumped every year into Indian rivers from temples and mosques? For most, they’re just waste. But in 2017, Ankit Agarwal saw gold in this floral garbage. He founded Phool.co, a startup that collects floral waste and upcycles it into incense sticks, organic fertilizers, and even Fleather — a sustainable alternative to animal leather made entirely from discarded temple flowers. The brand has created livelihood for hundreds of women in Kanpur, cleaned rivers of toxic waste, and caught the eye of investors like Alia Bhatt. From pollution to perfume, from temples to tech, Phool.co turned devotion into disruption — and is now eyeing global luxury markets with its flower-leather handbags.

**“Discipline is choosing what you want
most over what you want now.”
— Abraham Lincoln**

Thank you for reading!

**Hope you enjoyed the content.
Stay tuned for the next edition!**

