

The Most Important Current Affairs March 2020

Mega Merger of 10 PSBs to be effective from 1st April 2020

Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** announced a big consolidation of **public sector banks** in 2019. As per the scheme of amalgamation, **10 public sector banks** are to be **merged** into **4 banks**. Now, the Reserve Bank of India has notified with a circular that the **mega merger** of **10 PSBs** will be **effective** from the start of new financial year i.e. **1st April 2020**.

As per the recent RBI circular, 10 PSBs will be merged into 4 in the following manner:


- From 1st April, 2020, all branches of Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India will operate as branches of Punjab National Bank. Also the customers, including depositors of Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India, will be treated as customers of Punjab National Bank with effect from April 1, 2020.
- From 1st April, 2020, all branches of Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank will operate as branches of Union Bank of India. Also, the customers, including depositors of Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank, will be treated as customers of Union Bank of India with effect from April 1, 2020.
- From 1st April, 2020, all branches of Allahabad Bank will operate as branches of Indian Bank. Also the customers, including depositors of Allahabad Bank, will be treated as customers of Indian Bank with effect from April 1, 2020.
- From 1st April, 2020, all branches of Syndicate Bank will operate as branches of Canara Bank. Also the customers, including depositors of Syndicate Bank, will be treated as customers of Canara Bank with effect from April 1, 2020.

After the amalgamation, the total number of Public Sector Banks in the country will come down to 12 banks.

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RBI's 7th Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement for 2019-20

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** decided to **advance the Bi-monthly Monetary Policy** meet which was scheduled to be held on 31st March 2020 and the announcement was meant to be made on **3rd April**. The meeting was advanced to **24th, 26th and 27th March 2020**. During the seventh Bi-monthly Monetary Policy meet, the MPC analysed the current & evolving macroeconomic and financial conditions and has decided to take a accommodative stance and hence reduced the policy repo rate to revive growth as well as to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. With its decisions, MPC aims to keep inflation within the target and hence to preserve financial stability.

The key decisions taken in the 7th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Committee meeting are:

- The **repo rate** under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) has been reduced **by 75 basis points** from **5.15% to 4.40%**.
- The **reverse repo rate** under the LAF has been reduced by **90 basis points** from **4.90% to 4.00%**.
- **The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate have been reduced from 5.40% to 4.65%**.
- Apart from above, RBI has also decided to reduce the Cash reserve Ratio of all banks by **100 basis points** from **4% to 3%** of Net Demand and Time Liabilities. This would be effective from 28th March 2020 for a period of one year. Also, all lending institutions have been allowed a moratorium period of 3 months for all term loans outstanding as on March 1, 2020.

What is Monetary policy?

Monetary Policy is the central bank's policy which uses the monetary instruments like Repo rate, Reverse repo rate, Liquidity Adjustment Facility and many others, to achieve the goals stated in the Act. In India, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been given the responsibility of conducting monetary policy as mandated under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

Objectives of monetary policy?

- The monetary policy has the prime objective of maintaining the price stability in India along with the objective of growth. Price stability is stated as a necessary precondition to achieve the sustainable growth.

- The Reserve Bank of India is also given the task of flexible inflation targeting framework along the Government of India as per the amendment in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934 which was done in May 2016. This is done once in every five years. Government of India has notified the 4 per cent Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation as the target for the period from August 5, 2016 to March 31, 2021 in the Official Gazette. The target is stated with the upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent and the lower tolerance limit of 2 per cent.

The Monetary Policy Framework:

The amendment in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934 provides the Reserve Bank of India a legislative mandate to operate the monetary policy framework of the country. This framework aims to set the policy (repo) rate after the assessment of the current and evolving macroeconomic situation, and modulation of liquidity conditions to anchor money market rates at or around the repo rate.

What is the Composition of the Monetary Policy Committee?

The Central Government has constituted the six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) in September 2016, according to the Section 45ZB of the amended RBI Act, 1934.

The composition of the Monetary Policy Committee is as follows:

1. Governor of the Reserve Bank of India – Chairperson, ex officio: Shri Shaktikanta Das
2. Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, in charge of Monetary Policy– Member, ex officio: Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra
3. One officer of the Reserve Bank of India to be nominated by the Central Board – Member, ex officio: Dr. Janak Raj
4. Dr. Chetan Ghate, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute (ISI): Member
5. Dr. Pami Dua, Director, Delhi School of Economics: Member
6. Dr. Ravindra H. Dholakia, Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad: Member.

Some important instruments of Monetary Policy:

The RBI's Monetary Policy has several direct and indirect instruments which is used for implementing the monetary policy. Some important instruments of Monetary Policy are as follows:

- **Repo Rate:** It is the (fixed) interest rate at which banks can borrow overnight liquidity from the Reserve Bank of India against the collateral of government and other approved securities under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF).

- **Reverse Repo Rate:** It is the (fixed) interest rate at which the Reserve Bank of India can absorb liquidity from banks on an overnight basis, against the collateral of eligible government securities under the LAF.
- **Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF):** The LAF has overnight as well as term repo auctions under it. The term repo helps in the development of the inter-bank term money market. This market sets the benchmarks for pricing of loans and deposits. This helps in improving the transmission of monetary policy. As per the evolving market conditions, the Reserve Bank of India also conducts variable interest rate reverse repo auctions.
- **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF):** MSF is a provision which enables the scheduled commercial banks to borrow additional amount of overnight money from the Reserve Bank of India. Bank can do this by dipping into their Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) portfolio up to a limit at a penal rate of interest. This helps the banks to sustain the unanticipated liquidity shocks faced by them.

Accommodative stance of RBI's Monetary Policy Statement:

Accommodative stance is taken by the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee to expand the overall money supply to boost the economy when the growth is slowing down.

GoI capped Rs 50,000 withdrawal limit on Yes Bank account holder

Government of India has imposed temporary prohibition of the activity of the capital-starved **Yes Bank** and **capped withdrawals** at **Rs 50,000** per account after considering an application made by the Reserve Bank of India. The board of Yes Bank has been superseded with immediate effect by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Above decision has been taken as Yes Bank has been grappling with mounting bad loans. Former **SBI CFO Prashant Kumar** has been appointed as **administrator** of Yes Bank.

The depositors will be allowed to withdraw more than Rs 50,000 under the following conditions:

- In connection with the medical treatment of the depositor or any person actually dependent on him.
- Towards the cost of higher education of the depositor or any person actually dependent on him for education in India or outside India.
- To pay obligatory expenses in connection with marriage or other ceremonies of the depositor or his children or of any other person actually dependent upon him.
- In connection with any other unavoidable emergency.

61st annual Lalit Kala Akademi awards conferred by President Kovind

President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the **61st annual awards** of the **National Lalit Kala Akademi** to 15 artists at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The awardees were honoured with a shawl, plaque and cash prize worth Rs 1 lakh. The National Lalit Kala Akademi awards are conferred to recognize individuals for their outstanding work in the field of art. The final 15 awardees were selected from among 283 artworks.

Below is the complete list of winners of 61st annual National Lalit Kala Akademi Awards:

S. No.	Award Winner	State
1	Anoop Kumar Manzukhi Gopi	Thrissoor, Kerala
2	David Malakar	Kolkata, West Bengal
3	Devendra Kumar Khare	Vadodara, Gujarat
4	Dinesh Pandya	Mumbai, Maharashtra
5	Faruque Ahmed Halder	Kolkata, West Bengal
6	Hari Ram Kumbhawat	Jaipur, Rajasthan
7	Keshari Nandan Prasad	Jaipur, Rajasthan
8	Mohan Kumar T	Bengaluru, Karnataka
9	Ratan Krishna Saha	Mumbai, Maharashtra
10	Sagar Vasant Kamble	Mumbai, Maharashtra
11	Satwinder Kaur	New Delhi
12	Sunil Thiruvayur	Ernakulam, Kerala
13	Tejaswi Narayan Sonawane	Solapur, Maharashtra
14	Yashpal Singh	Delhi
15	Yashwant Singh	Delhi

Byju Raveendran & Gaurav Gupta on WEF's Young Global Leaders list

Byju Classes' founder **Byju Raveendran** and Zomato's co-founder **Gaurav Gupta** are among the five Indians named by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in its new list of 115 Young Global Leaders. Raveendran, who launched Byju's as a learning app in 2015, calls himself a teacher by choice and an entrepreneur by chance. Gupta's Zomato has been a pioneering food technology start-up, which he launched as a table reservation business and then scaled it up across India, the UAE and Australia.

The other three Indians on the list:

- **Tara Singh Vachani** (CEO of Antara Senior Living), Vachani-led Antara Senior Living is focused on improving the lives of seniors and is billed as the first Indian venture creating vibrant residential communities that offer lifestyle with lifecare.
- **Vinati Mutreja** (Managing Director and CEO, Vinati Organics Limited), Mutreja-led Vinati Organics a specialty chemical company where she has applied innovative methods for selecting chemical processes and products that are environmentally attractive.
- **Swapan Mehra** (CEO, Iora Ecological Solutions), Mehra-led Iora Ecological Solutions is into climate action and ecosystem conservation in India.

These five Indians are joined on the 2020 list of Young Global Leaders list by US women's football team co-captain Megan Rapinoe, world-renowned street artist JR, New Zealand's first refugee parliamentarian Golriz Gharhaman, Finland's youngest prime minister Sanna Marin, BBC News's Africa Business Editor Larry Madowo and Xiaomi's international business president Chew Shou Zi. The list also includes Muhammad Hammad Azhar (Federal Minister for Economic Affairs in Pakistan), Ugyen Dorji (Minister of Labour and Human Resources, Bhutan) and Atika Rehman (UK Correspondent for Dawn.com, Pakistan)

What is WEF's Young Global Leaders list?

Geneva-based WEF announcing the list of 'change-makers' from as many as 52 countries are working in areas ranging from revamping of health systems to investigating corruption while using their power of the under 40s to change the world. According to WEF, Under the age of 40, these individuals are among the most promising artists, activists, academics, executives and political leaders and they are "pushing boundaries, achieving firsts, innovating and breaking traditional rules to improve the world.". These 115 individuals join the Forum of Young Global Leaders, whose members have gone on to become Nobel Prize recipients, UN Goodwill Ambassadors and CEOs of Fortune 500 companies.

Times of India Sports Awards 2019 announced

The **4th edition of TOISA (Times of India Sports Awards)** awards honoured the best Indian in 2019 sports in New Delhi, India. The event was powered by BHIM-UPI (Bharat Interface for Money- Unified Payments Interface). **Rohit Sharma** was named as the Cricketer of the year and **PV Sindhu** was named as the Sportsperson of the year as she won gold at the World Championships in Basel, Switzerland.

Below is the complete list of winners of Times of India Awards 2019:

S. No.	Award	Award Winner
1	Sports person of the Year	P.V. Sindhu
2	Cricketer of the year	Rohit Sharma
3	Team of the year	Indian men's Hockey Team
4	Coach of the year	Jaspal Rana
5	Inspiration of the year	Rani Rampal
6	Mentor of the year	Pullela Gopichand
7	Change agent of the year	Odisha
8	Corporate supporter of the year	Reliance Foundation
9	Unbreakable Spirit of Sports	P.V. Sindhu
10	Youth Icon of the year	Vijendra Singh
11	Lifetime Achievement	Bhaichung Bhutia
12	Icon of the year	Balbir Singh

Defending champion Australia wins Women's T20 World Cup title

Defending champions **Australia** wins **Women's T20 World Cup 2020**. Australia bowled India out for 99 runs to clinch the final by 85 runs for a record-extending fifth Women's T20 World Cup title at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), Australia. **Beth Mooney** has been adjudged Player of the Tournament & **Alyssa Healy** has been adjudged the Player of the Match.

The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 was the seventh edition of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup tournament. It was held in Australia from 21 February to 8 March 2020. The final match of the tournament was held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The schedule of the final match of the tournament coincided with the occasion of International Women's Day. The tournament featured 10 teams namely: India, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, South Africa, England, West Indies, Pakistan & Thailand.

Some key statistics of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020:

- Top highest run scorer of the tournament: **Beth Mooney (259)**.
- Top wicket taker of the tournament: **Megan Schutt (13)**.

India plans to launch Chandrayaan-3 by first half of 2021

According to the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, **Jitendra Singh**, a possible schedule for the launch of **Chandrayaan-3** is planned to be implemented in the **first half of 2021**. The preparation of Chandrayaan-3 has been done by taking lessons from the previously launched **Chandrayaan-2**, a Moon mission which was launched in 2019, in which the Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO)'s Vikram Lander lost contact following a hard landing on the Moon's surface.

Chandrayaan-3 will be designed to increase design, capacity with a cost of around **Rs 610 crore**, including **Rs 360 crore** for the launch rocket. ISRO also decided to launch in the same area where Chandrayaan-2 launched, and would have a lander, rover and propulsion module like its predecessor.

Jitendra Singh also mentioned India's manned space mission Gaganyaan project, where 4 biological and 2 physical science experiments related to microgravity have been done

Prime Minister's address to the nation on combating COVID-19

As the whole world is fighting against the **COVID-19 pandemic**, Prime Minister of India **Narendra Modi** addressed his countrymen and made an appeal to all Indians to stay indoors as much as possible to stop the outspread of COVID-19 in India. Here are some key takeaways from his speech:

- He stated a mantra '**Hum Swasth, toh Jag Swasth**' that is the world will be healthy, if we stay healthy. He appealed to the people of India to stay away from crowds and gatherings, to avoid leaving our homes. This is called as '**Social Distancing**' which can play a critical role in these times of the global corona pandemic.

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- He requested all the Indians to not step-out of our homes for the next few weeks, until and unless it is absolutely necessary.
- He also stated a term during his address to the nation i.e. “**People’s curfew**” which means a curfew imposed for the people, by the people, on the people themselves. The “People’s curfew” will be imposed on 22nd March 2020. He also requested the youth of India and the organizations like NCC, NSS, civil society to spread awareness about this people’s curfew over the next 2 days.
- He also announced that the government of India has decided to set up a **COVID-19 Economic Response Task Force**, to be headed by the Finance Minister of India. Formation of Economic Response Task Force will ensure that all measures are being taken to reduce the economic difficulties and are effectively implemented.

RBI to infuse Rs 30,000 crore to boost liquidity

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** will infuse liquidity of **Rs 30,000 crore** to maintain financial stability in the Indian economy. RBI has taken this decision to boost liquidity in order to ensure that all market segments function normally with adequate liquidity and turnover, as certain financial market segments are facing **stress** due to **COVID-19 outbreak**.

The Reserve Bank will infuse liquidity by purchasing of Government securities under **Open Market Operations (OMOs)** for a total amount of Rs 30,000 crores. The amount will be infused in two tranches of Rs 15,000 crores each in the month of March 2020.

RBI lowers single & group borrower exposure limit for UCBs

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has revised the **single borrower** and **group exposure limit** for **Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)**. The exposure limit for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) has been lowered to **reduce the concentration risks** originating from **large loans**. It has been revised in the following manner:

- RBI has lowered the **single borrower exposure limit** for urban cooperative banks (UCBs) to **15% of tier I capital**. This limit was earlier 15% of tier I and tier II capital.
- RBI has lowered the **group of borrowers exposure limit** for urban cooperative banks (UCBs) to **25% of tier I capital**. This limit was earlier 40% of tier I and tier II capital.

According to the RBI, the existing exposures limits for single and group borrowers should be revised by the banks as per the new exposure limits by **31 March 2023**. The new limits will also apply to all fresh loans. RBI also stated that the UCBs should have at least 50% of their aggregate loans and advances of not more than Rs 25 lakh or 0.2% of their tier I capital, whichever is higher, up to a maximum of Rs 1 crore, per borrower. While those UCBs which do not align with above conditions at present should comply with these norms by **31 March 2024**. RBI has decided to increase the **Priority Sector Lending (PSL)** target for UCBs from 40% to **75%** of the **Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC)**, or **Credit Equivalent Amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure (CEOBSE)**. These norms will also have to be fulfilled by 31 March 2024.

India ranked 12th globally in ‘Women On Board 2020’ study

India has been ranked **12th** in the world as per study titled **‘Women On Board 2020’**. The list was **topped** by **Norway** with 40.72% women on board. A study on ‘Women On Board 2020’ has been done jointly by global recruitment tendering platforms **MyHiringClub** and **Sarkari-Naukri**. The 7824 listed companies across 36 countries were considered for the study. From India, 628 listed companies participated in an online study. The study was based on the presence of women in companies’ board globally.

Key results of study on **‘Women On Board 2020’**:

- Norway topped the list with 40.72% women on board
- Around 54% of employees in Asia and 39% in India are women
- India ranked 12th in the world in women member presence on board
- Among 628 listed companies from India, 55% companies were having women directors

WhatsApp launches “WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub”

“WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub” has been launched globally by **WhatsApp** in partnership with the World Health Organization (**WHO**), United Nations Children’s Fund (**UNICEF**), and United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**). The WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub aims to provide simple, actionable guidance for health workers, educators, community leaders, nonprofits, local governments and local businesses that depends on WhatsApp for communication. It will also work to reduce the spread of rumors and connect with accurate health information.

WhatsApp has announced the **donation** of **\$1 million** to the **International Fact-Checking Network** for coronavirus facts alliance. The donation aims to support the fact-checking of the **#CoronaVirusFacts Alliance**, which spans more than 100 local organizations all over the world.

Top tech giants to jointly fight against COVID-19 misinformation

The **top tech giants** of the world will jointly **fight** against the **fake news** and **misinformation** related to **COVID-19** on their platforms. The top giants which have announced a fight against the fake news includes **Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Microsoft, Reddit, Twitter** and **YouTube**. These companies are working closely to have a check on the fake news and misinformation related to COVID-19.

These companies are jointly combating fraud and misinformation about the virus as well as elevating authoritative content on their platforms. They are also focusing on sharing the critical updates in coordination with government healthcare agencies around the world.

All India Complete Lockdown for 21 Days

Indian Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has announced the complete lockdown of the entire nation, as part of government's stringent efforts to tackle coronavirus **disease Covid-19**. **The entire country under lockdown from 25 March 2020**. This lockdown will take place for 21 days. This is the second time in a week when he addressed the country on the fast-spreading disease with flu-like symptoms that has infected more than 3.5 lakh people and killed over 16,000.

Here are some key takeaways from his address to the nation:

- PM Modi has highlighted the threat posed by the Sars-Cov-2 virus, which causes Covid-19 disease, and appealed to people to practice social distancing and work from home.
- This measure was absolutely necessary to stop the transmission of COVID-19 virus.
- The need for maintaining 'social distancing' and appealed to the citizens to stay at home and follow health instructions to break the transmission chain. The coming 21 days are very important to us.
- According to health experts, at least 21 days time is very important to break the coronavirus infection cycle.
- Testing facilities related to corona, Personal Protective Equipments, Isolation Beds, ICU beds, ventilators, and the number of other necessary tools will be increased rapidly.
- The PM assured that the supply of essential commodities will not be disrupted.

21 Days Lockdown in India: List of essential services that will remain operational

In his address to the nation, India **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has announced the lockdown of the whole nation for **21 days with effect from 25th march 2020**. The decision of lock down has been taken by the Government of India as a preventive measure for the containment of **COVID-19 pandemic** in the country. During the lockdown period, population of the country will need some essential commodities as well services to live stable life.

But the question arises, **what are those commodities and services which will be provided to the population of the nation during the 21 days lockdown period?**

To assure people about the services, Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an official notification stating all the measures taken to fulfill the needs of the people during this lockdown period. These measures aims to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

Here is the complete list of "essential services & commodities" available during India's 21 Day lockdown:

- Shops, including shops, dealing with food, groceries, fruits, vegetables, dairy & milk booths, meat & fish, animal fodder as well as their transportation, will be available during the lockdown period.
- Defence, Central Armed Police forces, Police, civil defence, fire and emergency services, home guards, prisons, treasuries, district administration, public utilities (such as petroleum, CNG, LPG, PNG) will be active during the lockdown period.
- Disaster Management, power generation and transmission units, water, sanitation, Post Offices, National Informatics Centre as well as Early Warning Agencies will remain functional.
- Hospitals and all related medical establishments along with their manufacturing and distribution units will be active across the 21 day period.
- Banks, insurance offices, ATMs, print & electronic media, cold storage & warehousing services, private security services will be available during the lockdown period.
- Delivery of essential goods including food, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment will be available through E-commerce.
- Telecommunication, internet, broadcasting and cable services, IT & IT enabled services to facilitate work from home.
- Manufacturing units of essential commodities will remain open.

- Fire, law and order and emergency services will remain active throughout the nation.
- Hotels, lodges & motels accommodating tourists and persons stranded due to lockdown.
- Establishments meant for quarantine facilities will remain operational.
- Congregation of not more than 20 persons will be permitted in the case of funerals.

Here is the complete list of services which are not available during India's 21 Day lockdown:

- Offices of the Government of India/State/Union Territory, its Autonomous/Subordinate Offices and Public relations shall remain closed during the lockdown period.
- Commercial & private establishments shall be closed down.
- Industrial establishments will remain closed.
- All transport services whether air, rail & road will remain suspended.
- All educational, training, research, coaching institutions etc, places of worship will remain closed.
- All social, political, academic, sports, entertainment, cultural, religious functions will remain prohibited.

To implement the above containment measures, Executive Magistrates will be deployed as Incident Commanders in the respective local jurisdictions. Any person violating the above containment measures will be liable to be proceeded against as per the provisions of Section 51-60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 along with the legal action under Section 188 of the IPC.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman announced Economic relief package during Lockdown

Finance minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has announced a mega relief package of **1.7 lakh crore rupees** for the migrant workers and poor people affected by the lockdown amid COVID-19 outbreak. The scheme has been named **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Scheme**. This food security scheme will assist the economically weaker sections to bridge over the added challenge of lockdown and job loss during the worldwide outbreak of coronavirus.

Here are some important takeaways from Finance Minister Speech:

- PM Gareeb Kalyan Scheme will entail **Rs 1.7 lakh crore**. It'll include both cash transfer and food security. This scheme will be targeting **80 crore people**.
- The government provide insurance cover worth **Rs 50 lakh** for sanitation workers, **ASHA workers, doctors, nurses, paramedics just in case they have it as they're on the frontlines of the corona battle.**

- Over and above **5kg of rice/wheat** that's already given, another 5 kg per person are going to be given liberally to around 80 crore people through PDS. Besides, one kg of preferred and region-specific choice of the pulse will also be given.
- The first instalment of **PM Kisan scheme** for farmers of **Rs 2,000** will be given in the 1st week of April. Around 8.69 crore farmers will get immediate benefit out of it.
- The wages of **MGNREGA workers** has been increased from **Rs. 182 to Rs 202 per day**. This will benefit 5 crore families and will result in an additional **Rs 2,000 given per worker**. Social distancing norms must be followed at MGNREGA worksites during this period.
- An additional ex-gratia amount of **Rs 1,000** for old age and widows for next three months available in two instalments. It will benefit **3 crore widows and senior citizens**.
- **Women Jan Dhan account holders** will receive **Rs 500** in their accounts so that they can take care of their households. This will happen for the next 3 months. This will **benefit 20 crore women**.
- **Women Ujjawala scheme beneficiaries** will be given free cylinders for the **next 3 months**. This will benefit **8.3 crore BPL families**.
- **Under the Deen Dayal National Livelihood Mission**, the collateral-free loan will be given to, Women Self Help Groups up to Rs 20 lakh from Rs 10 lakh earlier. Impact on **7 crore holders through 63 lakh SHGs**.
- **Government of India** will pay the **EPF contribution** both of the employer and the employee put together 24% for the next three months. This is for those establishments with up to **100 employees, 90% of them earning less than Rs 15,000**.
- For the organised sector, **EPFO regulation** will be amended so that workers can draw up to **75%** for their contingency expenditure non-refundable advance or three months of wages in advance whichever is less. This will benefit 4.8 cr workers.

- The state government have been directed to use the welfare fund for building & construction labourers which has around Rs **31,000 crore** to help those who are facing economic disruption because of the lockdown.
- Utilise the funds available under the district mineral fund for testing activities, **medical screening, providing health attention needed to fight the coronavirus pandemic.**
- The **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** lobby group, had sought a stimulus of **about 1%** of the GDP or **Rs 2 lakh crore**, has sought a three-month moratorium on all loans and said all repayment obligations should be suspended for this period.

Tokyo Olympics officially postponed until 2021

- The **International Olympic Committee** and **Tokyo Olympic** organizers agreed to move the Tokyo Games to **2021**. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the head of the International Olympic Committee agreed to postpone the Tokyo 2020 Games by a year in an extraordinary move, unprecedented in peacetime, as the world battles the coronavirus pandemic.
- It will mark the first time in history that the start of an Olympics will be delayed to another year. The Opening Ceremony will not be held on July 24 as scheduled, but on an undetermined 2021 date, due to the coronavirus pandemic. The IOC President and the Prime Minister of Japan have concluded that the Games of the XXXII Olympiad in Tokyo must be rescheduled to a date beyond 2020 but not later than summer 2021, to safeguard the health of the athletes, everybody involved in the Olympic Games and the international community.

Reliance sets up India's 1st COVID-19 dedicated hospital in Mumbai

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has set up India's first **COVID-19** dedicated hospital in Mumbai. Reliance Foundation opens this Hospital in collaboration with the **Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)** in Mumbai. This hospital is funded by Reliance Foundation, the COVID-19 facility includes a negative pressure room that helps in preventing cross-contamination and helps control infection.

Important facts of the Hospital:

- All beds are equipped with the required infrastructure, bio-medical equipment such as ventilators, pacemakers, dialysis machine and patient monitoring devices.
- The foundation has also offered to set up special medical facilities to quarantine travellers from notified countries and suspected cases through contact tracing to quickly augment additional facilities for isolation and treatment of infected patients.

- RIL has also built a fully-equipped isolation facility in Lohivali, Maharashtra.
- Reliance Life Sciences is importing additional test kits and consumables for effective testing. Doctors and researchers are also working overtime to find a cure for this deadly virus.
- RIL is also helping authorities and working for effective testing of the virus. RIL has also announced initial support of Rs 5 crores to Maharashtra Chief Minister's Relief Fund to combat coronavirus spread.
- The company has deployed the combined strengths of Reliance Foundation, reliance Retail, Jio, Reliance Life Sciences, Reliance Industries and all 6 lakh members of the Reliance family on the action plan against COVID-19.
- The company is enhancing its production capacities to produce 100,000 face-masks per day and a large number of personal protective equipment for the nation's health workers to equip them further to fight coronavirus.
- Reliance Foundation also promised to provide free meals to people across various cities in partnership with NGOs to offer necessary livelihood relief in the current crisis situation.
- RIL's Jio is collaborating with Microsoft Teams to support social distancing and its groceries will remain open to provide essential items to people.

Banking and Financial Current Affairs

- The State Bank of India has agreed to buy shares worth **Rs 7250 crore** of the cash-strapped Yes Bank. The purchase of the shares will be in accordance with the draft reconstruction scheme put forward by the Reserve Bank of India. SBI will purchase the 725 shares of Yes Bank at a price of Rs 10 per share. After the purchase, the shareholding of the State Bank of India (SBI) in Yes Bank will remain under 49% of the paid-up capital.
- The **State Bank of India** has waived off the minimum balance charges on all savings bank accounts. SBI has waive charges for non-maintenance of Average Monthly Balance (AMB) for all **44.51 crore** savings bank accounts.
- **Paytm Payments Bank Ltd** has partnered with Visa to issue **Visa debit cards**.
- The **State Bank of India** has launched an additional liquidity facility "**Covid-19 Emergency Credit Line (CECL)**". The facility has been launched by India's largest lender State Bank of India to meet any liquidity mismatch for its borrowers in order to tide over the current crisis situation.

- **Karur Vysya Bank** has launched India's 1st pre-paid card **Enkasu (My cash in Tamil)** in Karur, Tamil Nadu under its Quit cash movement. The card functions based on Near Field Communication Technology (NFC) in a semi closed-loop & the customers buying this card can make **'tap & go'** payments for even small purchases to merchants from an amount of Rs. 1 to doing away with the need for cash & small change.
- **Charges on cash withdrawal** from other bank ATMs and penalties for non-maintenance of minimum balance in bank savings accounts are waived for 3 months. This was announced by the minister of finance **Nirmala Sitharaman**. This has been done to make sure that individuals don't visit bank branches to avoid the spread of the coronavirus. Waiver of minimum balance in bank accounts for the subsequent three months. Applicable to all or any banks.
- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has decided to launch a special train **'Swavalamban Express'** on June 05, 2020, to empower budding entrepreneurs under its **mission Swavalamban**. It will construct an inter-connected small enterprise ecosystem that will include business aspirants, mentors, experts and experience at all.
- **ICICI Lombard** a private sector non-life insurance company has launched a 1 year-long **"COVID-19 Protection Cover"**. This policy will pay 100% of the sum insured to the COVID-19 positive individual, irrespective of hospitalization expenses. The insurance policy is in group insurance mode. It will provide value-added benefits such as Health Assistance and CHAT/Virtual assistance, teleconsultation and ambulance assistance, as part of the offering.
- The **Reserve Bank of India** has decided to conduct the variable **rate Repo** auctions as a preventive measure to bridge over any frictional liquidity requirements caused by COVID-19. As per the circular, the Reserve Bank of India will conduct fine-tuning variable rate Repo auctions for **Rs 1,00,000 crores in two tranches**.
- **ICICI Bank** has rolled out the banking services on WhatsApp. The facility will enable the banks' retail customers to undertake a slew of banking requirements from their home.
- **The Punjab National Bank (PNB)** has unveiled a new logo before its merger with the Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) and the United Bank of India (UBI).

Economy Current Affairs

- **Moody's** Investors Service stated that **G-20 countries** are expected to grow by **2.1% in 2020**. Moody's cuts 0.3 percentage points lower than its previous forecast, as the global spread of the coronavirus, is resulting in simultaneous supply and demand shocks. It cautioned that global recession risks have risen.
- **S&P Global Ratings** has reduced **India's** economic **growth** forecast to **5.2%** for financial year **2020**.
- **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has lowered **growth projections** for **India** for financial year **2020** to **5.1%**.
- **Fitch Ratings** has reduced India's GDP growth rate to **5.1% for the fiscal year 2020-21**. Earlier, Fitch Ratings forecasted India's growth outlook at 5.6% which has been reduced now to **5.1%** for the fiscal year **2020-21**.
- **Moody's** Investors Service reduced India's GDP growth in 2020 to **2.5 per cent** from the earlier estimate of **5.3 per cent**. The Coronavirus pandemic will cause unprecedented shock to the global economy.
- **CRISIL** has reduced India's **gross domestic product (GDP)** growth forecast for fiscal 2021 to **3.5 per cent from 5.2 per cent expected earlier**. The cut is due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) has announced that the world has clearly entered a recession due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) will invest 100 million US Dollars in India's infrastructure sector through the government-promoted National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) of India Fund of Funds (FoF).

Business Current Affairs

- **Paytm Insurance Broking**, has received the brokerage licence from the **Insurance Regulatory and Authority of India (IRDAI)** to offer insurance products.
- **Securities and Exchange Board of India** has launched a mobile application **'Sebi SCORES'** for convenience of investors to lodge grievances in Sebi Complaints Redress System (SCORES).
- **Indian MarTech Company, AdGlobal360** has been acquired by Japanese company **Hakuhodo Inc** for an undisclosed sum. Adglobal360 is India's fastest growing MarTech Company headquartered in **Gurugram, Haryana**. The MarTech Company facilitates its customers with end to end digital solutions.

- The World's first Digital Solutions Exchange in the cloud "**GOKADDAL**" has been launched in India. GOKADDAL is a cloud-based solutions exchange platform which focuses on four A's i.e. **Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Analytics and Augmentative Technologies**.
- **Flipkart** has tied up with **Aegon Life Insurance** to sell comprehensive insurance solutions for customers who are seeking instant digital policies with a sum assured of up to **Rs 10 lakh**.

Schemes/Committees

- The Central Government is implementing the flagship programme **Poshan Abhiyan** for improving the nutritional status of Indian citizens. This programme helps children, adolescents, pregnant women, and lactating mothers by leveraging technology.
- The **Union Government of India** has constituted a committee to decide modalities of **Kisan Rail**. This committee has been formed under the **Ministry of Agriculture** and Farmers Welfare along with representatives of the Indian Railways. "**Kisan Rail**" is planned to be set up through the public-private-partnership (PPP) mode and will facilitate a cold supply chain to transport the perishable goods. It was proposed by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her budget speech of 2020-21 to set up a seamless National Cold Supply Chain for perishables like fish, milk and meat.
- **Uttar Pradesh government** has launched three ambitious schemes for skill development and employment generation for youths in the state. The three schemes are **Kaushal Satrang, Yuva Hub and apprenticeship scheme** in Lucknow. UP government also announced to depute "Arogya Mitras" at all primary health centres to inform people about govt health schemes.
- **Manipur** has announced schemes namely 'Chief Minister's Akhannaba Sanaroising gi Tengbang (CMAST)' and **Chief Minister Artist Sing gi Tengbang (CMAT)** scheme for the welfare of **sportspersons and artists** of the State.
- A "**Student Health Card**" scheme has been launched in the Union Territory **Jammu and Kashmir** to check the malnutrition in school going children.
- Apple has launched a new dedicated app and website for users across the US. The app provides accurate and credible information to users about the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** has set up "**Team-11**" comprising of as many inter-departmental committees to fight the coronavirus spread.

- The Government of India has set up 11 empowered groups to deal with **COVID-19**.
- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has introduced the "**Companies Fresh Start Scheme, 2020**". The new scheme has been introduced to provide relief to law abiding companies and the Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) amid COVID-19 pandemic. MCA has also revised "**LLP Settlement Scheme, 2020**"

States Current Affairs

- The celebration of festival "**Chapchar Kut**", the biggest and the most joyful spring festival of Mizos has commenced in the state of **Mizoram**.
- '**Namaste Orchha**' festival begins in Orchha, a town in Niwari district of **Madhya Pradesh**.
- The state government of **Uttarakhand** has announced that "**Gairsain**" will be the summer capital of Uttarakhand.
- **Uttar Pradesh** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 23 development projects worth Rs 2,821 crore at Gautam Buddh Nagar in Noida.
- The **Arunachal Pradesh** Assembly went paperless with the implementation of **e-Vidhan**, a project under the Digital India programme.
- Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla** has launched "**Suposhit Maa Abhiyan**" in his constituency **Kota, Rajasthan**. It aims to provide nutritional support to pregnant women and adolescent girls.
- **Chilli Festival** begins at Kasrawad in Khargone district of **Madhya Pradesh**.
- **Antar Rashtriya Yog Mahotsav** has been inaugurated in **Rishikesh, Uttarakhand** by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- The government of India has declared the **National Chambal Sanctuary** in **Madhya Pradesh** as an **eco-sensitive zone (ESZ)**.

- Chief Secretary of Punjab, **Karan Avtar Singh** has launched a mobile application, **COVA Punjab**. COVA stands for Corona Virus Alert. This app has been developed by the Department of Government Reforms and Public Grievances in consultation with the Health and Family Welfare Department to spread awareness by sharing various travel and preventive care advisories.
- An exclusive department for Self Help Group (SHGs) called "**Mission Shakti**" will be opened in Odisha. With this, Odisha will become the first state to have such kind of department. It aims for the development of women & is dedicated to all the women of Odisha.
- **University of Ranchi** has launched its own Community Radio Station named as **RADIO KHANCHI 90.4 FM Aap Sabka Radio**. The radio was launched on the occasion of **International Women's Day** and would provide help to university students which is spread over a campus of more than 15 kms.
- The traditional '**Fagli**' festival was celebrated in **Yangpa village of Kinnaur district, Himachal Pradesh** to observe the "**victory of good over evil**".
- The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** has launched '**NIGHA**' app to ensure '**clean and healthy**' elections. This would be done by curbing the use of money and alcohol in the upcoming local body elections.
- **Kamal Nath** has **resigned** as the **Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh**.
- The **Kerala** government has launched a mass handwashing campaign named '**break the chain**' to combat **coronavirus**.
- Union Minister of State for Shipping **Mansukh Mandaviya** has launched '**Ropax**' passenger ferry service between **Mumbai** and **Mandwa, Maharashtra**.
- The traditional harvest festival "**Phool Dei**" which is celebrated on the first day of Chaitra or in mid-March (according to Gregorian calendar), was celebrated in **Uttarakhand**.
- **Uttarakhand government** has abolished reservation in **promotion in the state government jobs**.
- The **state government of Punjab** has imposed a curfew across the state with no relaxations. The Punjab government has taken this decision to stop the spread of coronavirus. With this, **Punjab has become the first state in India to impose a curfew across the state**.
- **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** was sworn in as **Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh**. He took oath for the fourth time as Chief Minister. He was sworn in by Governor **Lalji Tandon** at **Raj Bhawan** in **Bhopal**.
- **The Gujarat Police** is now equipped with **taser guns** as a part of their modernization drive to ensure public safety and security. By introducing the taser guns as part of police weapons, Gujarat becomes the first state in India.
- **Telugu New Year day 'Ugadi'** being celebrated today. The festival is being celebrated across the two Telugu states, **Telangana and Andhra Pradesh** to mark the beginning of the Hindu Lunar calendar.
- Odisha's Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** launched **Mo Jeeban programme in Odisha**. The "**Mo Jeeban**" programme was launched for the containment of COVID-19 pandemic.
- India's cleanest city, **Indore** has deployed drones to sanitize city areas against the coronavirus scare. Indore becomes the 1st city in India to use drones to sanitize the city. The Indore Municipal Corporation has hired two drones for that purpose.
- **Odisha government** has planned to set up two of the largest Covid-19 hospitals which will have a combined capacity of 1,000 beds and will be functional within a fortnight. With this, **Odisha** will be the first state in the country to set up such a large-scale hospital exclusively to **treat Covid-19 patients**.
- The **Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Government Hospital in Jaipur** is conducting the series of trials on a **humanoid robot** to provide services to the **COVID-19 patients**. It is aimed to keep the doctors and nursing staff at a safe distance to protect them against the dreaded coronavirus. It has been designed with a tray that can be used for carrying medicines, food and other objects to the assigned patients.
- **Goa** becomes the first Indian state to launch a **self-assessment tool for COVID-19**. The self-assessment tool called **Test Yourself Goa**. This tool helps people identify if they are infected by the virus without visiting a doctor or hospital. The Goa government has partnered with **Innovaccer**, a US-based healthcare data analytics company that developed the self-assessment platform.
- **Andhra Pradesh** State government has set up "**Mobile Hand-wash facilities**" for the benefit of Slum Dwellers amidst lockdown in the state.
- **Rajasthan** police have launched a mobile app "**RajCop citizens app**" to enable individuals and company employees in the state take permission for venturing out in necessary conditions.
- **Jharkhand Government** has launched a mobile app **PRAGYAAM** to issue e-passes. The app was launched by the State Chief Minister **Hemant Soren**.

Appointments/Resignations (National & International)

- The **BCCI's Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC)** has appointed **Sunil Joshi** as the new chairman of the national selection panel.
- **Sanjay Kumar Panda** has been appointed as **India's Ambassador to Turkey**.
- Government of India has appointed the present Revenue Secretary **Ajay Bhushan Pandey** as the new **Finance Secretary**.
- RBI Deputy Governor **N S Vishwanathan** has announced his **resignation** due to health problems.
- **Sudhanshu Pandey** has assumed additional charge as **Chairman and Managing Director** of Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation (MMTC) Ltd.
- **Pekka Lundmark** will succeed **Rajeev Suri** as the new **Chief Executive Officer & President** of **Nokia**.
- **Dr Vijay Laxmi Saxena** has been elected as general president of the **Indian Science Congress, 2021**.
- **Bimal Julka** is appointed as the **Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)** of India. **Sudhir Bhargava** was the former CIC of the country retired on January 11, 2020.
- **Nupur Kulshrestha** becomes the first woman to be promoted as **Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Indian Coast Guard**. She joined Indian Coast Guard in 1999.
- **Lt Gen KJS Dhillon** will assume the charge of **Director-General Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA)** and **Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Intelligence)**.
- **Indian Police Service (IPS)** officer of Haryana cadre **Surjit Singh Deswal** took over the additional charge of Director General (DG) of Border Security Force (BSF).
- Microsoft founder **Bill Gates** stepping down from **Microsoft's board of directors**. He wants to dedicate more time to his philanthropic priorities including global health, development, education, and his increasing engagement in tackling climate change.
- **Arundhati Bhattacharya** has submitted her **resignation from Crisil board** as she was serving as the independent director of the **Crisil**.
- **Ajay Kumar** has been appointed as the next **High Commissioner of India** to the **Republic of Uganda**.
- **Google Cloud India** has appointed **Karan Bajwa** as its new **Managing Director**.
- **Rajiv Bajaj** has been reappointed as **MD & CEO of Bajaj Auto**.
- **Gita Piramal** has been appointed as the **independent director of Bajaj Auto**.

- **Ravinder Singh Dhillon** has been appointed as **Chairman and Managing Director of Power Finance Corporation (PFC)**.
- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has appointed **Hirdesh Kumar** as the **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)** of the Union Territory **Jammu and Kashmir**.
- The Central Government has nominated **Debasish Panda** as a **Director** on the **Central Board of Reserve Bank of India**.
- **Prashant Kumar** has been appointed as **Chief Executive and Managing Director** of the **Yes Bank**.
- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of two Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officers **Krishan Mohan Prasad and Satish Kumar Gupta** as members of the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Board**.

Sports Current Affairs

- The **Sports Authority of India (SAI)** has announced the first edition of the **Khelo India Women's Hockey League Under-21** in association with **Hockey India**.
- Due to **Novel Coronavirus** outbreak in China, the **Badminton Asia Championships** will be held in the capital of **Philippines** i.e. **Manila**.
- **Tasnim Mir and Mansi Singh** of **India** has won the bronze medal each in the girls' singles Badminton event at the **Yonex Dutch Junior International 2020** held in **Haarlem, Netherlands**.
- **All India Police Athletic Championship 2019** has commenced in the **Panchkula District of Haryana**.
- **Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament** which was scheduled to be held in **Ipoh, Malaysia**, has been **postponed** due to novel coronavirus outbreak across the world.
- **Punjab University, Chandigarh** topped the medals tally of the **Khelo India University Games** concluded in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**.
- **Rafael Nadal** defeated Taylor Fritz to win the men's **ATP Mexico Open**.
- **West Indies** skipper **Kieron Pollard** has become the **1st player in the history of T20 (Twenty20) cricket** to feature in 500 matches during the field against Sri Lanka for the first T20I in **Pallekele, Srilanka**.
- Former India opener **Wasim Jaffer** has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. He made his Test and ODI debut for India against **South Africa** in 2006.
- American golfer **Tiger Woods** will be elected in the **World Golf Hall of Fame** as part of the class of 2021.
- **Saurashtra** won their maiden **Ranji Trophy title** after earning a 44-run lead in the first innings against Bengal which eventually ended in a draw in the final in **Rajkot, Gujarat**.

- Former Czechoslovak Olympic javelin champion **Dana Zatopkova** passed away. She was an Olympic javelin champion won gold in the Helsinki Olympics in 1952 and won the Olympic silver in Rome in 1960.
- **Vrinda Rathi** and **Janani Narayanan** have been named in the **International Panel of ICC Development Umpires**.
- The **French Open tennis tournament** has been **postponed** by the French Tennis Federation due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **ATK Football Club (FC)** defeated Chennaiyin FC in the finals by 3-1 to win the **ISL (Indian Super League)** trophy.
- **Viktor Axelsen** of Denmark defeated Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien-chen by 21-13, 21-14 to win the men's singles title of **All England Championship**.
- **Tai Tzu Ying** of Chinese Taipei defeated Chinese Chen Yu Fei by 21-19, 21-15 to win the women's singles title of **All England Championship**.
- Indian paddler **Achanta Sharath Kamal** defeated Marcos Freitas by 4-2 in the final to win the **ITTF Challenger Plus Oman Open**.
- **Indian shot-putter Navin Chikara** was suspended for four years by **World athletics body's** (formerly known as International Association of Athletics Federations-IAAF), Athletics Integrity Unit for failing an out-of-competition dope test in 2018.
- The **Olympic Games Tokyo 2020** have been postponed by one year and will be held from 23 July to 8 August, 2021.

Important Days

- India celebrates **7th of March** every year as **Jan Aushadhi Diwas** to create awareness and providing thrust to the use of generic medicines.
- **National Safety Day** is celebrated on **4 March** to commemorate the foundation of the **National Safety Council** & to raise awareness about the safety measures to prevent mishaps and accidents due to lack of awareness.
- **World Hearing Day** is observed globally on **3rd of March** every year to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care across the world. The **theme** for 2020 is "**Hearing for life. Don't let hearing loss limit you**".
- **World Wildlife Day** is observed globally on **3rd of March** every year to celebrate the beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora present on earth. **Theme** for 2020 is "**Sustaining all life on Earth**".

- **Zero Discrimination Day** is observed globally on **March 1st**. **Theme** for 2020 is "**ZERO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**".
- **International Women's Day** is celebrated on the **8th of March** every year. This day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The theme of International Women's Day 2020 is, **I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights**.
- **World Kidney Day** is observed globally on the second Thursday of March every year. This year World Kidney Day is observed on 12th March 2020. The theme of the 2020 World Kidney day is "**Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere—from Prevention to Detection and Equitable Access to Care**".
- The **Ordnance Factories' Day** is observed on the **18th of March** every year.
- **International Nowruz Day** is being celebrated globally on **21 March** every year.
- **World Poetry Day** is observed globally on **21 March** every year to support linguistic diversity through poetic expression and to offer endangered languages the opportunity to be heard within their communities.
- **World Down Syndrome Day** is observed every year on **21 March**. The **theme** of World Down Syndrome Day 2020 is "**We Decide**".
- The **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** is observed globally on **21 March** every year. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2020 is focused on the midterm review of the "**International Decade for People of African Descent**".
- **International Day of Forests** is celebrated every year on **21 March** to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. The **theme** for International Day of Forests 2020: **Forests and Biodiversity**.

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- **International Day of Happiness** was celebrated on **20th March** with theme 'Happiness For All, Together'.
- **Global Recycling Day** was observed on **18th March** with the theme "Recycling Heroes".
- **India** observes **National Vaccination Day** every year on **16th March**. The day is also known as **National Immunization Day**.
- **World Consumer Rights Day** was celebrated globally on **March 15** with the theme "The Sustainable Consumer".
- **World Water Day** observed globally on **22nd March** every year. This year, World Water Day 2020 theme: "Water and Climate Change".
- **World Meteorological Day** observed globally on **23rd March** every year. This year, World Water Day and World Meteorological Day share the same theme: "Water and Climate Change". The focus is on managing climate and water in a more coordinated and sustainable manner because they are inextricably linked.
- **World Tuberculosis (TB) Day** is observed globally on **24th March** every year. The theme of **World TB Day 2020: 'It's time'**.
- **International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims** is observed annually on **24th March** every year.
- **International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade** is observed annually on **25th March** every year. 2020 Theme: "Confronting Slavery's Legacy of Racism Together".
- The **International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members** is observed annually on **25 March** by the United Nations.
- **World Theatre Day** is observed globally on **27th March** every year. World Theatre Day was initiated in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI), France.

Summits And Conferences

- **Pune** will host the annual session of **108th Indian Science Congress in 2021** with the theme "Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment".
- The 19th edition of **World Productivity Congress (WPC)** will be held in **Bengaluru, Karnataka** with the theme "Industry 4.0: Innovation and Productivity".
- The **5th edition of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit 2020** to be held in **Colombo, Sri Lanka** in the month of September 2020.

- **Ministry of Civil Aviation and Airports Authority of India (AAI)** along with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** is organizing "Wings India 2020" event at Hyderabad, Telangana.
- The **7th World Cities Summit** will be held in **Singapore** with a theme "Livable and Sustainable Cities: Adapting to a Disrupted World".
- Saudi Arabia's King **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud** will chair the Extraordinary **Virtual G20 leaders' Summit**. The extraordinary Virtual Summit of G20 leaders will feature the participation of leaders across the globe including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

National News

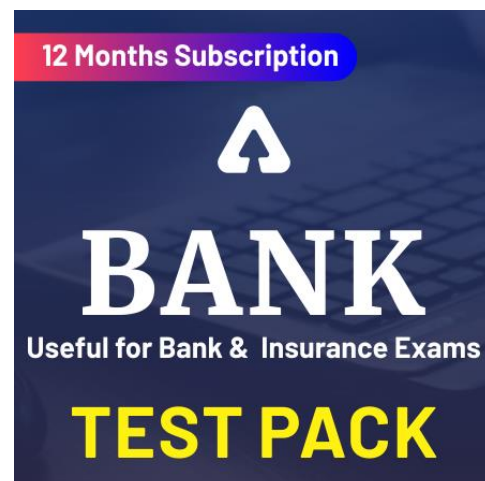
- **Road Transport and Highways Ministry** will replace all level crossings on **National Highways** by **Road Over Bridges** or **Road Under Bridges** under the **Setu Bharatam** scheme.
- **Health Ministry** organized the national level **Training Workshop on COVID-19 Management** for all the states and hospitals in **New Delhi**.
- The **National Water Mission** organized the inaugural session of the workshop on "Increasing Water Use Efficiency in Industries" in **New Delhi**.
- **India Trade Promotion Organisation** has organized the 35th edition of **AAHAR** – the Food and Hospitality fair began in **New Delhi**.
- The **National Security Guard (NSG) Regional Hub campus** was inaugurated at **Kolkata, West Bengal** to provide adequate facilities to the brave NSG jawans.
- The mobile application named '**Fuel Humsafar**' has been launched for **delivery of diesel** at doorsteps of Housing societies, hotels and hospitals in the national capital region.
- The multilingual version of "**Incredible India**" website and mobile app has been launched in three new languages i.e. **Chinese, Arabic and Spanish**.
- **National Handicapped Finance Development Corporation (NHFDC)** has organised "**EKAM Fest**" in **New Delhi** to promote Craftsmanship & Products of Divyang Artisans and Entrepreneurs.
- The '**Pension Adalat**' and **National Pension System (NPS) Awareness and Grievance Redressal Programme** have been inaugurated in **Jammu**.
- **India** has bagged a deal of worth **40 million USD**, to supply 4 indigenously built radars (capable of locating weapons) to **Armenia** in Europe.
- Union Environment Minister **Prakash Javadekar** has stated that **Sanitary napkin** makers will be asked to supply a biodegradable bag with each napkin from **January 2021**.

- Union Minister for Women and Child Development **Smriti Zubin Irani** has inaugurated the “**National Conference on Women in Police and CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces)**”.
- Government of Indian is planning to have at least one **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya JanAushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)** Kendra in each block of India. The above plans are to be executed successfully by the end of year 2020. The above announcement was made during the ‘**Jan Aushadhi Diwas**’ celebrations held in **Kathua, Jammu & Kashmir**.
- The **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** celebrated its **35th Inception Day on 12th March 2020**. On the occasion of inception day of NCRB, Union Minister of State for Home **Shri Nityanand Rai** launched Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) and National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC).
- Indian mountaineer **Bhawna Dehariya** has successfully scaled **Mount Kosciuszko (2,228-metres)**, the highest mountain peak in Australia on the occasion of Holi.
- The **Department of Posts**, Kolkata (West Bengal circle), has launched free digital parcel locker service in 2 post offices **Nabadiganta IT post office of Salt Lake City & post office in New Town’s Action Area**.
- The **government of India** has declared **face masks and hand sanitizers** as essential commodities for the next 100 days. Both masks (2ply & 3 ply surgical masks, N95 masks) and hand sanitisers have been brought under the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955**.
- The **Government of India** has approved the proposal of setting up of **National Technical Textiles Mission** for a period of **4 years** from 2020-21 to 2023-24, with an outlay of **Rs. 1480 crores**.
- Four convicts in **Nirbhaya gangrape and murder case Pawan Gupta, Vinay Sharma, Akshay Kumar and Mukesh Kumar** were **hanged** to death at Tihar jail in Delhi.
- Former Chief Justice of India **Ranjan Gogoi** took oath as a nominated member of **Rajya Sabha**.
- **Indian Navy** has established a **Quarantine Camp at INS Vishwakarma** in Eastern Naval Command (ENC) for Indian nationals being evacuated from COVID-19 affected countries.
- The **Supreme court of India** bench headed by **Justice D Y Chandrachud** has cleared **permanent commission** for women officers in the Indian Navy.
- **Innovate for Accessible India campaign** has been launched jointly by **Microsoft India** and **NASSCOM Foundation** to empower **people with disabilities**.
- **Government of India** pledged **\$10 million** toward a **Covid-19 emergency fund**.
- The Union Cabinet has approved a **4% hike in dearness allowance (DA)** for **central government employees** and **Dearness Relief (DR)** to pensioners with effect from **January 1, 2020**. This is over the existing rate of 17 per cent of the Basic Pay/Pension.
- India celebrates “**Shaheed Diwas**” annually on **23 March** to pay tribute to martyrs **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru**. This day has a very important significance in the Indian freedom struggle.
- The Union Cabinet has approved Production Incentive Scheme for **Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing**. Government will invest **Rs 20 lakh crore in this sector to provide employment to 25 lakh people in next 5 years**. It has also approved financial assistance to the **Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme (EMC2.0)** for development of world class infrastructure through Electronics Manufacturing Clusters.
- The **United Kingdom** has been confirmed as the first co-chair of the **Governing Council of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**.
- “**Mylab PathoDetect COVID-19 Qualitative PCR kit**” has become the first ‘**Made in India**’ COVID19 Test Kit to get the CDSCO approval. Mylab Discovery Solutions Pvt Ltd is a Pune-based molecular diagnostics company which has developed the first made-in-India diagnostic test kit for COVID-19.
- India’s biggest oil firm, **Indian Oil Corporation Limited** has started supplying BS-VI fuel across India. With this, Indian Oil Corporation Limited has become **1st company to begin supply of BS-VI fuel across its 28,000 petrol pumps**.
- The **Election Commission of India** has deferred the **Rajya Sabha elections** amid rising risk of rapidly spreading coronavirus pandemic. Elections to 18 seats of Rajya Sabha were scheduled to be held on **26 March 2020**.
- **Indian Institute of Technology Madras** is organising India’s first **Global Hyperloop Pod Competition** named as ‘**Indian Hyperloop Pod Competition**’ to increase awareness and enthusiasm about Hyperloop in India.
- Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has announced the extension of statutory deadlines related to income tax to 30 June 2020. The Finance Ministry has decided to extend the **Income Tax Return (ITR) filing deadline** for the Fiscal Year 2019 from 31st March 2020 to 30th June 2020. The deadline for the linking of **Aadhaar & Pan** was supposed to end on 31st March 2020. **This deadline has been extended to 30 June 2020**.


- **Election Commission of India** has decided to permit usage of indelible ink on persons for stamping for home quarantine by health authorities insight of **COVID-19**. The Health Ministry may standardise the mark and therefore the location on the body where the mark has got to be applied in the order that it doesn't are available the way of conducting elections. The authorities shall even be instructed to make sure that the ink shall not be used for the other purpose.
- **Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)** has designated 285 beds for isolation wards in handling **Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases**.
- Government of India banned the export of anti-malarial drug **Hydroxychloroquine** and formulations made up of it within the wake of **COVID-19 outbreak**.
- **India's national Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency**, the Invest India has launched "**The Invest India Business Immunity Platform**". The Invest India Business Immunity Platform has been launched to assist businesses and investors in getting real-time updates on India's active response to COVID-19.
- **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** has set up a **COVID-19 Task Force** for mapping of technologies from Research and Development labs, academic institutions, start-ups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The Department of Science & Technology plays a pivotal role in the promotion of science & technology in the country.
- **The Union Ministry for Home Affairs (MHA)** has issued the **Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs)** to maintain the supply of essential goods. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) have been issued by the MHA in order to relieve the difficulties faced by people during the 21-day nationwide lockdown to fight against the Coronavirus outbreak.
- The **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** has set up a **CII COVID Rehabilitation and Relief Fund (CRR) for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** to tackle Covid-19. The CII COVID Rehabilitation and Relief Fund (CRR) will assist small enterprises or MSME in rehabilitation. The setting up of Relief Fund is expected to curtail the impact of Coronavirus on the MSME sector.
- The Government of India's flagship fitness movement "**Fit India**" has teamed up with Bollywood actress and fitness icon **Shilpa Shetty Kundra**. The tie-up will provide free access of the **Shilpa Shetty Kundra's** premium 21-Day Weight Loss Programme during the 21-day lockdown owing to Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Jana Small Finance Bank** has rolled out a **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** QR-based loan installment payment facility along with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) for its customers. Initially the **UPI QR-based** loan installment payment facility will be only available to over **40 lakh customers** of the Jana Small Finance Bank.
- **The Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN)** has launched '**Project Isaac**' to engage students in creative projects during the COVID-19 lockdown. The project aims to enhance the student's skills while they are confined in their homes.
- **The Government of India** has launched a coronavirus risk-tracking app called '**Corona Kavach**.' Jointly developed by the **Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** and the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **All National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs)** have been readied by the Ministry of **Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** as quarantine centres to fight the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

International Current Affairs

- **Janez Jansa** will replace Marjan Sarec as **Prime Minister of Slovenia**.
- **Luxembourg** has become the **1st country** in the world to abolish fares for trains, trams and buses.
- The **World Bank** has announced **12 billion USD** aid to assist countries that are grappling with economic impacts of **coronavirus**.
- Indian-American health policy consultant **Seema Verma** has been appointed as one of the key members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force constituted by US President.
- The **presidency of United Nations Security Council** for March 2020 has been taken over by **China**. The presidency of the council rotates every month among its 15 members.



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- **Asian Development Bank** provide a **USD 4 million** (about ₹29 crores) to help developing countries in Asia and Pacific to fight the outbreak of novel coronavirus.
- **Muhyiddin Yassin** has become the new **Prime Minister of Malaysia**. He has been appointed after the resignation of Mahathir Mohamad.
- **Ukraine** parliament approved **Denys Shmygal** as a new prime minister of Ukraine. He is the nominee of **Volodymyr Zelensky, the President of Ukraine**.
- **Afghanistan** President **Ashraf Ghani** was sworn in for a second term as his rival Abdullah Abdullah held a parallel inauguration that could plunge the country deeper into crisis ahead of peace talks with the Taliban.
- **“COVID-19 Therapeutics Accelerator”** is a new fund which has been launched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, **Wellcome and Mastercard**. The **\$125 Million** fund has been launched to accelerate technologies to fight against the COVID-19 epidemic and has been designed to identify, assess, develop and scale treatments to the COVID-19 disease outbreak.
- The High Court of Bangladesh has declared **‘Joy Bangla’** as the national slogan of Bangladesh. The court has directed the authorities to ensure that teachers and students use the slogan after assembly.
- The **World Health Organization** has officially declared **COVID-19** as a pandemic as it spread freely to more than 100 countries around the world.
- The **Olympic Flame** was handed over to **Tokyo 2020 organizers** after the Greece leg of torch relay suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To ensure sick leave to Americans workers who fall ill from the new coronavirus, US President **Donald Trump** has signed a **\$100-billion** emergency aid package to strengthen the protective measures against the pandemic **caused by COVID-19**.
- **Iraqi** President Barham Salih has appointed **Adnan al-Zurfi** as the country’s new **prime minister**.
- The **United States** has started **phase one** of the clinical **Human trial of an investigational vaccine**, designed to protect against the coronavirus disease.
- The **Phillipines** has become the **first country** of the world to suspend all **financial markets** in response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Niue** has become the **world’s first** whole country recognised as a **‘Dark Sky Place’** by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).
- The world’s largest streaming media service, **Netflix Inc (NFLX.O)** has announced the formation of **\$100 million fund**. The fund has been created to help workers on film and television productions that have been impacted due to the global coronavirus outbreak.
- **Canada** has become the first country in the world to withdraw from **Tokyo 2020 Olympics**. The decision has been taken in view of the coronavirus pandemic. The Canadian Olympic Committee announced that holding the Tokyo 2020 Olympics as per schedule would threaten the health of its athletes.
- Indian footballer **Sunil Chhetri** chosen for **FIFA campaign against Covid-19**. **FIFA and the World Health Organization (WHO)** have teamed up to combat the coronavirus by launching a new awareness campaign led by world-renowned footballers.
- **The International Monetary Fund** has launched a **“Tracker of Policies Governments are Taking in Response to COVID-19”**. The policy tracker outlines the key economic responses taken by the government of various countries in order to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy tracker has the updated data till March 24, 2020.
- The **United Nations Space Force** has launched an **Advanced Extremely High-Frequency satellite (AEHF-6)** for its military communications. With the launch of the satellite, the United States has begun its first National Security Mission. The **Lock Heed Martin AEHF-6 (Advanced Extremely High Frequency) satellite was launched on the Atlas V551 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida**.
- United Nations Secretary-General **António Guterres** launched a \$2 billion coordinated **global humanitarian response plan** to fight COVID-19 in 51 countries across South America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Defence Current Affairs

- A unit of Indian Army has organized a **Self Defence Training demonstration for Women** with a theme of **“Stronger You Stronger Society”** in Nalbari district of Assam.
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has designed a casualty evacuation bag to transport or isolate persons infected with Covid-19. The bag is water and air-proof and treated to deal with biological agents.
- The Indian Army’s International Seminar **“Pragyan Conclave 2020”** was held at Manekshaw Centre, **New Delhi**, organised by Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS).
- **High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune** has organised the National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED-2020) at Pune, **Maharashtra**.

- **RaIDer-X**, an explosive detection device capable of detecting the explosives from a stand-off distance has been jointly developed by IISc, Bangalore and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.
- The **Ministry of Defence** has signed the **capital acquisition contract** of worth **Rs 880 crore** with **Israel Weapons Industries** for the procurement of **Negev 7.62 X 51 mm Light Machine Guns**.
- The **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)** has approved the procurement of **83 advanced Mk1A version of indigenous Tejas fighter aircrafts** for **Indian Air Force**.
- The **Defence Acquisition Council** has approved the acquisition of **indigenous defence equipments** worth **Rs 1,300 crore**.
- **US Marines and UAE Emirati forces** conducted the biennial exercise, named **Native Fury** at Abu Dhabi. The biennial exercise, called Native Fury, shows the close ties between American forces and the United Arab Emirates, a federation of seven sheikhdoms on the Arabian Peninsula home to Abu Dhabi.
- Army Chief Gen **Manoj Mukund Naravane** has launched '**Operation Namaste**' to extend assistance to the govt in containing the spread of coronavirus and insulate the force from the pandemic.

Ranks and Reports

- **BRAC**, an Bangladesh based international development organization has topped the list of **top 500 Global Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)** released by Geneva-based organization **NGO Adviser**.
- **Andhra Pradesh** has been ranked 1st in the country for the overall implementation of Prime Minister's Overreaching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyaan. **Tamil Nadu** has topped the list of the states in terms of the number of **participants in the programme**.
- **Gujarat** has topped the list for domestic **solar rooftop installations with 64%** of domestic solar installations. Nearly 50,915 systems being fixed on domestic rooftops in the State as on March 2, 2020.
- **Google** has shared the data on the most looked-up women on the Internet on the occasion of **International Women's Day i.e. on 8th of March 2020**. Here is the complete list released by Google:
 1. Google's most-searched for woman in Music of 2020: **Taylor Swift**.
 2. Google's most-searched for woman in Sports of 2020: **Serena Williams**.
 3. Google's most-searched for woman in Comedy of 2020: **Awkwafina**.
 4. Google's most-searched for woman in Novelists of 2020: **Toni Morrison**.

Agreement/Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU)

- **Amazon** has partnered with the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)** under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to facilitate e-marketing of products made by Self Help Groups across the nation in urban areas.
- **IIT Mandi & Enabling Women of Kamand (EWOK) Society** has inked a tripartite deal with the National Bank For Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**) to set up 3 Farmer Producer Organization in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh.
- **RBL Bank** has partnered with online food ordering and delivery app **Zomato** to launch co-branded credit cards which will be powered by Mastercard.
- The **Indian Council of Agricultural Research**, New Delhi has signed an **MoU** with the **Patanjali Bio Research Institute, Haridwar** to develop work plans to work on the collaborative research programmes in the areas of national interest related to sustainable agriculture development.
- The **Indian Air Force** and **Savitribai Phule Pune University** has signed an MoU to establish a "**Chair of Excellence**". It will be named as "**Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Chair of Excellence**".
- **Airport Authority of India & Tripura State Government** has signed an MoU for the construction of 6 equipment hiring centres in Manu Block under the Dhalai District, Tripura.
- **Hyderabad Metro Rail Ltd** in partnership with **Paytm** has launched a QR-code-based metro ticketing system at **Rasoolpura metro station Hyderabad, Telangana**.
- PhonePe has tied up with **ICICI Bank** for **UPI transactions**. **PhonePe** earlier partnered with Yes Bank, but after **YES Bank** has been placed under moratorium by Reserve Bank of India due to which UPI transactions at PhonePe got disrupted.
- An Indian low-cost airline, **SpiceJet** has signed a pact with **GMR Hyderabad Aviation SEZ Limited (GHASL)**. According to the pact, SpiceJet will set up warehousing, distribution and trading facility in the aerospace and industrial park of GHASL. "Ready-to-Use" industrial infrastructure is offered by the park with the flexibility of choosing land within SEZ for business purposes.
- **Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **The Gambia**. This MoU is signed for the participation in MEA's (eVBAB) e-VidyaBharati and e-ArogyaBharati Network Project for telemedicine and tele-education in Africa.

- The **Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh** have signed a **US\$80 million loan agreement** with the **World Bank**. The loan agreement aims to enhance water management practices and to improve agricultural productivity in 428 Gram Panchayats of Himachal Pradesh.
- **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority** and **Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium** has signed an MoU the development of **agriculture** and allied sectors as well as its exports for bringing better value to the stakeholders.
- **DBS Bank India** has teamed-up with **Bharti AXA** to launch a complimentary **insurance plan** which will cover all medical conditions, including **Covid-19**.
- **IIT Kanpur** and **L&T Technology Services** have collaborated to carry out joint research in **industrial and infrastructure cybersecurity**.
- **Manikaran Power Ltd** has become the **first member** of India's first gas trading platform which is called the **Indian Gas Exchange (IGX)**.
- The **Central Reserve Police Force** has inked a deal with **Aditya Mehta Foundation** (NGO) to train its troops who lost their limbs in operations, in various skills including cyber operations, artificial intelligence and para-sports.
- **Oil India Limited** has inked the **Crude Oil Sales Agreement (COSA)** with **Numaligarh Refinery** for sale and purchase of crude oil.

Awards & Recognition

- Women Entrepreneurship Platform of the NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) will organize the **Women Transforming India Awards 2019** on the occasion of International Women's Day i.e. on 8 March 2020.
- **Assam's** Environmental activist **Jadav Payeng** who is popularly called the 'Forest Man of India' has been named the winner of 128th **Commonwealth Points of Light Award** for his exceptional voluntary service to environmental conservation.
- Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor **V Praveen Rao** has won the **7th Dr MS Swaminathan Award**. He has won the award for the period 2017-2019.
- **PV Sindhu** has won the inaugural edition of **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year Award for 2019**. BBC has also conferred former Indian sprinter PT Usha with the Lifetime Achievement award.
- **Maharaja Ranjit Singh** has been named as the "**Greatest Leader of All Time**" in a poll conducted by '**BBC World Histories Magazine**'. He was the 19th-century ruler of the Sikh Empire in India.

- **Arfa Khanum Sherwani** of "The Wire" and Bengaluru-based freelancer **Rohini Mohan** have been jointly awarded **Chameli Devi Jain Award for outstanding woman journalist**.
- The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters named **Hillel Furstenberg** from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel and **Gregory Margulis** from Yale University, the USA as winners of the **Abel Prize 2020**. They share the prize & the amount of Norwegian Krone 7.5 Million (USD 8.3400).
- Critically-acclaimed debut novelist **Ruchika Tomar** is the winner of the **2020 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel**, for "A Prayer for Travelers".
- Indian filmmaker **Zoya Akhtar** has been honoured with **IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020** for her outstanding contribution to world tourism through her cinema. She has promoted tourism through her films like 2011 'Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara' which was shot in Spain, and 2015 comedy-drama 'DilDhadakne Do' shot in Turkey. Asia's largest film tourism event, 8th India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC) was held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Science and Technology

- **Google Cloud** announced its plans to open a **Delhi Cloud Region**. This will be the company's second cloud region in India since it launched one in Mumbai.
- The **International Advanced Research for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials (ARCI)**, Hyderabad has developed a fuel cell technology called **Polymer Electrolyte Membrane fuel cells (PEMFC)**.
- **NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)** announced the name of the **5th Mars (red planet) rover** as Perseverance. Previously the rover was known by its codename as Mars 2020.

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- The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi** will establish a **Technology Innovation Hub (TIH)** under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). The Technology Innovation Hub will be established with the help of Rs 7.25 crore sanctioned by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to IIT Mandi.
- A starch-based '**hemostat**' material which concentrates the natural clotting factors in blood that are critical for stopping the blood flow, has been developed by the **Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST)**.
- A team at IIT Bombay has developed a mobile app named '**CORONTINE**'. The '**CORONTINE**' app aims to help the authorities in tracking the asymptomatic carriers and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 disease.
- A **new space capsule from SpaceX** has been picked up by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to ferry cargo and supplies to the agency's planned lunar space station. Hence, with a \$7 billion NASA contract, SpaceX will use its biggest rocket, Falcon Heavy to send spacecraft named as "Dragon XL" to the Lunar Gateway.

Books & Authors

- A book titled "**Chronicles of Change Champions**" is a compilation of 25 innovative initiatives taken at the state and district levels under the Prime Minister's flagship scheme of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao.
- A comic book titled "**The Adventures of the Daredevil Democrat**" has been released by the chief minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik on the occasion of the 104th birth anniversary of former Odisha CM Late Biju Patnaik in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The book titled "**My Encounters in Parliament**" authored by **Bhalchandra Mungekar** was released.
- The book titled "**Invincible: A Tribute to Manohar Parrikar**" has been authored by **Tarun Vijay**.
- The book titled "**An Extraordinary Life: A biography of Manohar Parrikar**" is co-authored by veteran journalists **Sadguru Patil** and **Mayabhusan Nagvenkar**.
- A book entitled '**Messiah Modi: A Great Tale of Expectations**' penned by senior journalist & author **Tavleen Singh** has been released.
- Award-winning businesswoman **Savita Chhabra** has launched her first novel titled '**Legacy of Learning**'. **Savita Chhabra** is the chairperson at **Hygienic Research Institute Private Limited (HRIPL)**.

- Senior Journalist **Chander Suta Dogra** has launched a book titled "**Missing in Action: The Prisoners Who Never Came Back**". It is published by **Harpercollins**. At present, she works as a senior journalist in Outlook & has worked in The Hindu & Indian Express. The book addresses the missing Indian soldiers during the mission of 1965 & 1971 Indo- Pak wars & also attempts to find out what happened to them, hoping to open up a debate on how soldiers are often used as pawns by governments.

Miscellaneous Current Affairs

- An exhibition titled "**Jallianwala Bagh**" is scheduled to be held in New Delhi. "**Jallianwala Bagh**" exhibition will be inaugurated by Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel on the occasion of 130th Foundation Day of National Archives of India (NAI).
- The **International Day of Yoga** event will be organized in the capital of **Ladakh i.e. Leh** on the occasion of International Day of Yoga. The International Day of Yoga is observed globally every year on 21st of June.
- **Google India** has launched a skill programme for women called '**DigiPivot**' which is designed for women who are looking to return to their corporate careers after a break or simply planning to make mid-career shifts to digital marketing.
- A "**Bi-Luminescent Security Ink**" has been discovered by the **CSIR-National Physical Laboratory**. The new ink developed by CSIR-National Physical Laboratory glows in two colours: green and red when illuminated by two different excitation sources at 365 nano meters (nm) and 254 nm.
- **IDFC FIRST Bank** has signed **Amitabh Bachchan** as its brand ambassador. With this, **Amitabh Bachchan** has become the first ever brand ambassador of the bank.
- Facebook India has launched its (corporate social responsibility) CSR initiative, **Facebook "Pragati"** to promote women entrepreneurship in India. Facebook Pragati powered by N/Core (The/Nudge Centre for Social Innovation).
- **Welcomgroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration (WGSHA)** of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) entered the **Limca Book of Records (LBR)** for establishing "India's First Living Culinary Arts Museum" at WGSHA, Manipal, Karnataka.
- **PUMA** has signed bollywood actor **Kareena Kapoor Khan** as its new **brand ambassador**.
- The **District Employment and Counseling Centre** has organized a **Workshop-cum-Awareness Programme** on the Skill Development for Unorganized Workers in **Kulgam, Jammu & Kashmir**.

- The **4th Global Ayurveda Festival** will be held at Kochi, Kerala with the theme "Ayurveda Medical Tourism: Actualizing India's credibility".
- A "**Student Health Card**" scheme has been launched in the Union Territory **Jammu and Kashmir** to check the malnutrition in school going children.
- **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** agency of the Government of India, under the Ministry of Power, has launched **star rating programme** for Light Commercial Air Conditioners (LCAC) and Deep Freezers.
- The historic City Chowk in old Jammu was renamed as '**Bharat Mata Chowk**'.
- The **Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela-2020** was inaugurated in **New Delhi**.
- Indian Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers has organized "**ACREX India 2020**" at India Expo Mart Limited, **Greater Noida**.
- The **Judicial Officers from Supreme Court of Nepal** has started their training programme on "**Case Management and Court Management**" at the National Law University, Jodhpur in **Rajasthan**.
- **Indian Railways** has launched its first "**Restaurant on Wheels**" at the circulating area of Asansol railway station, West Bengal.
- **Indian Railways** has planned to electrify a total of **28,810 km** of broad gauge route by **December 2023**.
- World's first commercial flying car named '**PAL-V Liberty (Personal Air-Land Vehicle)**' will be developed in **Gujarat, India**.
- The **Mumbai Central station** is going to be renamed as **Nana Shankarseth Mumbai Central railway station**.
- **Microsoft's Bing** team has launched a web portal "**bing.com/covid**" to track the spread of **COVID-19** worldwide.
- Actor **Priyanka Chopra** works jointly with the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** to spread awareness over **COVID-19**.
- Indian mountaineer **Satyarup Siddhanta** entered '**Limca Book of Records**' (LBR) for his extraordinary achievements, as the first Indian to climb the highest volcanoes of each of the 7 continents.
- Google-owned video streaming giant "**YouTube**" has decided to reduce streaming quality for users in India until 31st March 2020. In order to reduce strain on Internet networks during the coronavirus pandemic, Youtube has decided to temporarily default High Definition (HD) and ultra-High Definition (HD) streaming to Standard Definition (SD) content. The above changes will be made by keeping the streaming to SD content at bitrates not higher than 480p on mobile networks.
- The **National Book Trust, India** has launched an initiative **#StayHomeIndiaWithBooks** to encourage people to read books during their stay at home. This initiative has been launched as a preventive measure to contain the spread of Covid-19.
- **All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi** will start **Tele-Consultation facility** for the non-Covid19 patients. The decision to start Tele-Consultation facility has been taken by AIIMS for its follow-up patients.
- The **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** has introduced an AI bot called '**Clara**' to help people assess potential symptoms of COVID-19. The CDC has partnered up with **CDC Foundation and Microsoft Azure's Healthcare Bot** service to create Clara, the "coronavirus self-checker" the bot is currently only available in the US on the CDC website.
- **Abbott Laboratories, United States** is unveiling a coronavirus test which will tell if someone is infected within 5 minutes. This test is so small and portable it is often utilized in almost any health-care setting.
- **National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC)** concluded the acquisition of Centre's entire stake in two hydropower generating firms, **Tehri Hydro Power Complex (THDC) India** and **North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO)**, at **Rs 11,500 crore**.
- **National Book Trust** will launch a publishing series titled '**Corona Studies Series**' to document and to provide relevant reading materials for all age-groups for the post-Corona readership needs.
- Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan launched the 24x7 National Teleconsultation Centre to answer **COVID-19 related queries**. The Centre is a telemedicine hub, through which, expert doctors from various clinical domains will be available 24x7 to answer questions related to COVID-19 all.
- The first prototype of hospital isolation coach have been created successfully by the **Northern Railways**.

Obituaries

- Former UN Chief **Javier Perez de Cuellar** has passed away at the age of 100.
- The head of the Bangladesh **Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero** passed away in Dhaka.
- Former India hockey player **Balbir Singh Kullar** passed away.
- Veteran athletics coach and Dronacharya awardee **Joginder Singh Saini** passed away.
- Former Union Law Minister and Congress veteran **Hans Raj Bhardwaj** died after a cardiac arrest. Hans Raj Bhardwaj was 83.
- **Max von Sydow**, the Swedish actor who was nominated for two Oscars during his career passed away. The actor featured in various films and TV series. Max Von Sydow was nominated for Oscars as best actor in 1988 for Pelle the Conqueror.
- Veteran Bengali actor **Santu Mukhopadhyay** passed away. He was popular for his roles in films like 'Sansar Simante' and 'Bhalobasa Bhalobasa'.
- Former world champion **boxer Roger Mayweather** passed away.
- Noted Marathi **Actor Jairam Kulkarani** passed away.
- Bollywood actor **Imtiaz Khan** passed away.
- Veteran **journalist** and former Rajya Sabha member **Patil Puttappa** passed away.
- Veteran **poet** and Malayalam scholar **Puthussery Ramachandran** passed away.
- Veteran director **Meenakshisundaram Ramasamy Viswanthan**, popularly known as Visu in the Tamil film industry has passed away.
- American music singer **Kenny Rogers** who was known around the world for his global hits such as "The Gambler", "Lady", "Lucille" and "Islands in the Stream", has passed away. In his six decade long career, he won three Grammys Awards.
- Legendary Indian **footballer PK Banerjee** passed away. He represented India in 36 official matches and sported the captain's armband in six of them, scored 19 goals for the country.
- Veteran star of 1950s and '60s Hindi movies **Nimmi** passed away. She was born as Nawab Banoo and was later known by her screen name 'Nimmi'.
- The co-creator of the "Asterix and Obelix" comics, **Albert Uderzo** passed away. Albert Uderzo produced Asterix in 1959 along with the fellow Frenchman and writer Rene Goscinny. "Asterix and Obelix" entertained its audience over the past 60 years.
- Veteran photographer & Padma Shri awardee **Nemai Ghosh** passed away.

- Indian-born international chef **Floyd Cardoz** passed away at 59. Cardoz tested positive for Covid-19 in the USA on March 18 and was being treated at the Mountainside Medical Centre in New Jersey.
- Padma Vibhushan award winning artist, architect, sculptor and writer **Satish Gujral** passed away.
- The chief of Brahmakumaris Sansthan, **Rajyogini Dadi Janki** passed away. The Government of India appointed her the brand ambassador of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for her works in the field of maintaining cleanliness.
- Veteran US civil rights leader Joseph Lowery passed away.
- Former Union Minister Beni Prasad Verma passed away.
- Retired Air Vice Marshal Chandan Singh Rathore passed away. He was the recipient of Maha Vir Chakra (MVC).
- Veteran Japanese comedian Ken Shimura passed away due to coronavirus. The actor was set to star in his first feature film "God of Cinema", directed by Yoji Yamada.
- Tamil folk singer and actress Paravai Muniyamma passed away.

Static Takeaways

- Lt. Governors & Administrators Jammu and Kashmir: Girish Chandra Murmu.
- Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas: Dharmendra Pradhan.
- Jagdeep Dhankhar is the governor of West Bengal.
- Mamta Banerjee is the CM of West Bengal.
- India Trade Promotion Organisation(ITPO) Chairman: LC Goyal.
- India Trade Promotion Organisation(ITPO) Headquarters: New Delhi.
- India Trade Promotion Organisation(ITPO) Formed: 1 April 1977.
- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways: Nitin Jairam Gadkari.
- Capital of Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur; Currency of Malaysia: Malaysian Ringgit.
- President of ADB: Masatsugu Asakawa.
- Headquarters of ADB: Manila, Philippines.
- Capital of USA: Washington, D.C.; Currency: US Dollar.
- President of World Bank: David Robert Malpass; Headquarters: Washington DC.
- Prime Minister of Luxembourg: Xavier Bettel; Capital: Luxembourg City.
- President of Slovenia: Borut Pahor; Capital: Ljubljana.

- Headquarters of Punjab National Bank: New Delhi.
- Chief Executive Officers of Punjab National Bank: SS Mallikarjuna Rao
- Headquarters of Canara Bank: Bengaluru
- Chief Executive Officers of Canara Bank: Lingam Venkat Prabhakar
- Headquarters of Indian Bank: Chennai
- Chief Executive Officers of Indian Bank: Padmaja Chundururu
- Headquarters of Union Bank of India: Mumbai
- Chief Executive Officers of Union Bank of India: Rajkiran Rai G
- Headquarter of Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation (MMTC) Ltd: New Delhi.
- Union Minister of Finance: Nirmala Sitharaman.
- President of Turkey: Recep Tayyip Erdogan.
- Capital of Turkey: Ankara; Currency of Turkey: Turkish lira.
- BCCI President: Sourav Ganguly; Headquarter of BCCI: Mumbai.
- CEO of NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) : Amitabh Kant.
- World Confederation of Productivity Science (WCPS) Headquarters: Montreal, Canada.
- Indian Science Congress Association President: K.S.Rangappa.
- Indian Science Congress Association Headquarters: Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Chairman of Airport Authority of India: Arvind Singh.
- Chief of the Air Staff: Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria.
- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and President ICAR: Narendra Singh Tomar.
- Capital of Armenia: Yerevan.
- Currency of Armenia: Armenian dram.
- MD & CEO of RBL Bank: Mr Vishwavir Ahuja.
- CEO of Zomato: Deepinder Goyal; Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana.
- NABARD Formation: July 12, 1982.
- Ministers of State (I/C) for Housing and Urban Affairs: Hardeep Singh Puri.
- Chief Executive Officer of Amazon: Jeff Bezos.
- The parent organization of Paytm: One97 Communications, Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- Chairman of SEBI: Ajay Tyagi; Headquarter: Mumbai.
- Chairman of Defence Research & Development Organisation: G Satheesh Reddy.
- Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh: Shivraj Singh Chauhan; Governor: Lal Ji Tandon.
- Chief Minister of Rajasthan: Ashok Gehlot; Governor: Kalraj Mishra.
- Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh: Pema Khandu; Governor: B.D. Mishra.
- Anandiben Patel is the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh.
- Chief Minister of Uttarakhand : Trivendra Singh Rawat; Governor: Baby Rani Maurya.
- Chief Minister of Mizoram: Pu Zoramthanga; Governor: P.S. Sreedharan Pillai.
- United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- UNAIDS Executive Director: Winnie Byanyima.
- Prime minister of Nepal: KP Sharma Oli; President: Bidhya Devi Bhandari.
- Capital of Nepal: Kathmandu; Currency: Nepalese rupee.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency(BEE) Director-General: Shri Abhay Bakre.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Minister of State (IC) of the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH): Shripad Yesso Naik.
- RBI 25th Governor: Shaktikant Das; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata.
- President of Ukraine: Volodymyr Zelensky.
- Capital of Ukraine: Kyiv.
- Currency of Ukraine: Ukrainian hryvnia.
- Paytm founder: Vijay Shekhar Sharma.
- Paytm Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- Paytm founded: 2010.
- Headquarters of Central Information Commission: New Delhi.
- President of Sri Lanka: Gotabaya Rajapaksa.
- Prime Minister of Sri Lanka: Mahinda Rajapaksa.
- Capital of Sri Lanka: Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte.
- Currency of Sri Lanka: Sri Lankan rupee.
- Secretary General of United Nations: Antonio Guterres.
- United Nations founded: 24 October 1945.
- Headquarters of United Nations: New York, United States.
- Governor of Odisha: Ganeshi Lal.
- Chief Minister of Odisha: Naveen Patnaik.
- Capital of Odisha: Bhubaneswar.
- National Park of Odisha: Bhitarkanika National Park and Simlipal National Park.
- Director-General of Indian Coast Guard: Krishnaswamy Natarajan.

- Headquarters of Indian Coast Guard: New Delhi.
- Chief Minister of Telangana: K Chandrasekhar Rao.
- Governor of Telangana: Tamilsai Soundararajan.
- Capital of Telangana: Hyderabad.
- Union Minister of Railways: Piyush Goyal.
- Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare: Narendra Singh Tomar.
- Union Minister of Finance: Nirmala Sitharaman.
- Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh: Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy.
- Governor of Andhra Pradesh: Biswa Bhushan Harichandan.
- Capital of Andhra Pradesh: Amaravati.
- Sri Venkateswara National Park is located in the Chittoor and Cuddapah districts of the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- Visakhapatnam Port (Opened December 19, 1933) is one of 13 major ports in India and the only major port of Andhra Pradesh. It is India's second-largest port by volume of cargo handled.
- Chief Minister of Gujarat: Vijay Rupani; Governor of Gujarat: Acharya Dev Vrat.
- Gir Forest National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary, also known as Sasan Gir, is a forest and wildlife sanctuary near Talala Gir in Gujarat, India.
- The Sardar Sarovar Dam is a gravity dam on the Narmada river near Navagam, Gujarat.
- Chief Minister of Delhi: Arvind Kejriwal; Lieutenant Governor: Anil Baijal.
- Prakash Javadekar is present Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises.
- Prakash Javadekar is Rajya Sabha MP from Maharashtra.
- Afghan afghani is the currency of Afghanistan.
- Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan.
- Captain Amarinder Singh is Chief Minister of Punjab.
- VP Singh Badnore is Governor of Punjab.
- Moody's Corporation is an American business and financial services company.
- The Headquarters of Moody's is in New York, USA.
- The G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation.
- Poshan Abhiyan is a government mission to ensure the nutrition of children, women, and pregnant mothers in impoverished areas.
- Banwarilal Purohit is the present governor and Edappadi K Palanisamy is Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.
- Headquarters of ISRO: Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Chairman of ISRO: K. Sivan.
- ISRO established: 15 August 1969.
- Headquarters of NASA: Washington D.C., United States.
- Administrator of NASA: Jim Bridenstine.
- Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir: Girish Chandra Murmu.
- Prime Minister of Bangladesh: Sheikh Hasina; Capital: Dhaka; Currency: Taka.
- Headquarters of WHO: Geneva, Switzerland; Director general of WHO: Tedros Adhanom.
- Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh: Jai Ram Thakur.
- Governor of Himachal Pradesh: Bandaru Dattatraya.
- Pin Valley National Park is a beautiful place, located in the Lahaul and Spiti district of the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- CEO of AdGlobal360: Rakesh Yadav.
- President of Hakuodo International: Nobuaki Kondo.
- The parent organization of Phonepe: Flipkart.
- Phonepe founded: December 2015.
- CEO of Phonepe: Sameer Nigam.
- Headquarters location: Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- 28th Chief of Army Staff: General Manoj Mukund Naravane.
- Chief of Defence Staff: Bipin Rawat.
- The motto of Indian Army: "Service Before Self".
- Headquarters of Indian Army: New Delhi.
- Headquarters of World Economic Forum: Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland.
- Founder of World Economic Forum: Klaus Schwab.
- President of World Economic Forum: Borge Brende.
- World Economic Forum founded: January 1971.
- Google CEO: Sundar Pichai; Headquarters: California, United States.
- Union Minister of Civil Aviation: Hardeep Singh Puri.
- BSF formed: 1 December 1965; BSF Headquarters: New Delhi.
- GMR Hyderabad Aviation SEZ Limited (GAHSL) is a fully-owned subsidiary of GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL).
- Chief Executive Officer of GMR Hyderabad Aviation SEZ Limited (GAHSL): Aman Kapoor.
- Chairman and Managing Director of SpiceJet: Ajay Singh.
- Capital of The Gambia: Banjul.
- Currency of The Gambia: Gambian dalasi.
- President of The Gambia: Adama Barrow.
- President of World Bank: David Malpass; Headquarter: Washington DC.

- Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh: Jaiaram Thakur; Governor: Bandaru Dattatraya.
- Chief Executive Officer & MD of Yes Bank: Ravneet Gill; Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Chairperson of SBI: Rajnish Kumar; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 July 1955.
- RBI 25th Governor: Shaktikant Das; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata.
- Chairperson of SBI: Rajnish Kumar; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded : 1 July 1955.
- World Animal Protection founded: 1981.
- World Animal Protection Headquarters: London, United Kingdom.
- Chairman of Animal Protection: Paul Baldwin.
- MD and CEO of IDFC FIRST Bank: V Vaidyanathan; Headquarters: Mumbai.
- IDFC FIRST Bank was founded in 2015.
- CEO of Facebook: Mark Zuckerberg.
- Facebook Headquarters: California, US.
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Microsoft: Satya Nadella.
- Microsoft Founded: April 4, 1975; Headquarters of Microsoft: Washington, United States(US).
- Headquarters of Indian Post: New Delhi.
- Indian Post is a subsidiary of the Ministry of Communications.
- Union Minister of Communications: Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution: Ramvilas Paswan.

