

Current Affairs Of March 2020

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National

Govt approves Indian airlines to provide in-flight wi-fi services to its passengers; Vistara to be first in line

The central government has approved **airlines** companies operating in India to provide **in-flight wi-**



fi services to its passengers upon permission from the pilot-in-command. However, while using Wi-Fi, the passengers' gadgets must be on flight mode. This step has been taken to make domestic flights at par with global airlines while providing convenience to passengers.

Key Points:

- i. Passengers can get the benefit of in-flight WiFi services for smartphones, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, e-readers or a point of sale device (PoS).
- ii. According to the **Vistara** CEO Leslie Thng, the first Boeing 787-9 aircraft would be the first aircraft to provide Wi-Fi during flight in India.
- iii. In 2018, the government announced maritime communications (IFMC) and in-flight WiFi licenses for international and Indian vessels and aeroplanes. It was first proposed by the Indian Telecom Regulator.

India ranked 3rd in trade-related illicit financial flow globally, China tops: GFI Report

In accordance with the report titled "**Trade-Related Illicit Financial Flows in 135 Developing Countries: 2008-2017**" by US-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI), India has the third-highest trade-related illicit financial flow among over 135 countries in 2017 while China has topped the report. As an average of 2008-2017, India ranked fourth among 135 countries and China stood at first.

- In terms of illicit financial flow between 135 developing economies and 36 advanced economies in 2017 and as an average of 2008-2017, India ranked 6th while China remains at 1st

Senior IPS officer S N Shrivastava gets additional charge of Delhi Police Commissioner

Senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer **S N Shrivastava** who was appointed as the Special Commissioner of Delhi Police (Law & Order), is given additional charge of the Delhi Police Commissioner by the Union Home Ministry. He succeeds Amulya Patnaik.

Key Points

- i. On 25th February this year, he was appointed as Special Commissioner amid the communal violence in Northeast Delhi.
- ii. In 1985 he served as a Special Director General (DG) Jammu & Kashmir Zone of CRPF.
- iii. He also has experience of working in different units in Delhi Police including Special Cell & head of the elite anti-terror wing, Special Cell of Delhi Police.

Zomato acquires UberEats India for \$206 million

According to the Uber's recent regulatory filings, **Zomato**, an Indian restaurant aggregator and food delivery startup has



acquired Uber's food delivery business in India, **Uber Eats** for **\$206 million**, where the investment was priced at \$171 million, the balance \$35 million was received as a reimbursement of goods and services tax (GST) receivable from Zomato.

Key Points:

- i. In January 2019, Zomato has acquired Uber's food delivery business in India, Uber Eats in an all-stocks deal for a 9.99% stake in Zomato. However, the two firms had not disclosed the financial terms of the deal.
- ii. Following this acquisition, all of Uber Eats'

customers will be directed to Zomato platform & It will boost Zomato's position in the food delivery market.

It is an ride-hailing company & has started its food delivery service in India around mid-2017.

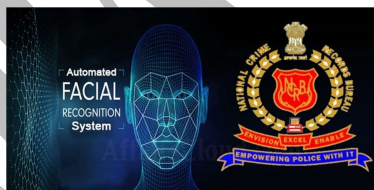
SC allows trade in cryptocurrency by rejecting RBI 2018 circular

Supreme Court (SC) has lifted ban on trading in virtual currency, cryptocurrency and bitcoins by cancelling the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) 2018 circular that barred banks from serving companies dealing in cryptocurrency exchanges. The decision in this regard has been taken by the three-judge Bench headed by **Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman** and 2 other members are Justice Shripathi Ravindra Bhat, and Justice V Ramasubramanian.

- The plea was filed by **Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)** challenging RBI's 2018 circular because the members of IAMAI also include cryptocurrency exchanges.

MHA approved automated facial recognition system (AFRS) for identification of bodies, missing children, criminals

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has approved the world's largest automated facial recognition system (AFRS) by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** for better identification of unrecognized bodies, missing children, persons and criminals without violating the privacy. To provide this information, AFRS will use police records and it can be accessed only by law enforcement agencies. The system compares the



selected facial features of the image from an already existing image database.

India & US signed Rs 1200 crore deal for missile protection suites for new Boeing-777 VVIP planes
India signed **Rs.1,200 crore** deal with the **United States** to procure the missile **protection suites** for two new Boeing-777 VVIP (Very Very Important Person) planes during 2 day visit of US President Donald Trump to India. The missile protection suites will be code named as '**Air Force One**' and it will be expected to arrive India in middle of 2021 to begin VVIP planes.

Key Points:-

- Boeing-777 VVIP planes** acquired for the purpose of President and Prime Minister's Domestic and International visits.
- The features of self-protection suites includes infrared and electronic warfare countermeasures suites, countermeasure dispensing systems, and missile warning sensors.
- The aircraft will be operated by Indian Air Force pilots trained by Air India, which already maintained four Boeing 777 planes earlier.
- India and the United States also signed contracts for the Navy's 24 MH60 Romeo Multirole helicopters and six new Apache attack choppers for the military.

Gairsain will be the summer capital of Uttarakhand

Chief Minister (CM) of Uttarakhand **Trivendra Singh Rawat** announced '**Gairsain**' as the **summer capital** of the state, on the 3rd day of the budget session held in Gairsain, Uttarakhand.



Key Points:

- The announcement fulfils the long-standing demand of hill people and the people who sacrificed themselves for the formation of Uttarakhand state.

ii. Those who spearheaded the movement for statehood to Uttarakhand in 1990 wanted Gairsain in Chamoli district to be made as permanent capital.

About Uttarakhand:

Capital- Gairsain (summer capital), Dehradun (winter capital).

Centre imposed moratorium on Yes Bank; withdrawals restricted to Rs 50,000 per month till April 3, 2020; Prashant Kumar named as its administrator

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (10 of 1949), the Central Government, through the Ministry of Finance has imposed moratorium on Yes Bank Limited w.e.f. 6PM of **March 5, 2020 till April 3, 2020**. The decision has been taken on the recommendations of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under sub-section (1) of section 45.

- During the period of moratorium, withdrawal from Yes Bank is restricted to **Rs 50,000 per account**.

Chandrayaan-3 will be launched in the first half of 2021: Jitendra Singh

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**.



Key Points:

i. 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.

ii. 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.

iii. 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.

iv. 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.

Tahira Kashyap announced a new book titled "The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman"

Tahira Kashyap Khurrana, writer- producer, professor, announced her 4th book titled "**The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman**" on the occasion of Women's Day and the new book will be published by Juggernaut Books, New Delhi.

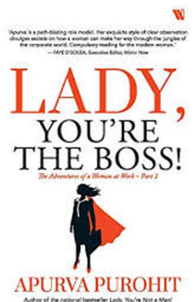
Key Points:

i. **About Tahira Kashyap:** She is married to actor Ayushmann Khurrana and started writing books from the year 2011.

ii. The books authored by her are "I Promise", "Souled Out" and in the year 2015 she co-authored Ayushmann's biography "Cracking the Code: My Journey in Bollywood".

Apurva Purohit, launched her 2nd book – 'Lady, You're the Boss!'

Apurva Purohit the President of the Jagran Group, one of India's largest multi-media conglomerates launched her 2nd book- '**Lady, You're the Boss!**', which aims to address the challenges faced by women climbing the corporate ladder. It is published by Westland Publications (an Amazon company).



Key Points

i. The book is drawn from her personal experiences where she talks about how women minimise themselves, suffer from the imposter syndrome, & settle for less than they are capable of, because of feelings of inadequacy & a desire to feel needed and liked.

ii. Her 1st book, '**Lady, You're Not a Man!**: The Adventures Of A Woman At Work' which turned out to be national best selling book & is published by Rupa Publications Private Limited.

iii. The author is named as one of the Most Powerful Women in Business as per Fortune India in 2018 & 2019 & India Today Group 2016, 2018 & 2019, & also featured in Fortune India's Most Powerful Women in Business list 2018 & 2019

Sikh ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh named as 'Greatest Leader of All Time' in BBC poll

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was named the "Greatest Leader of All Time" in a poll conducted by 'BBC World Histories Magazine', who is the 19th century ruler of the Sikh Empire in India, has beaten competition from around the world. African Independence Fighter Amílcar Cabral spots second, which is followed by Britain's war-time Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Leh to host International Yoga Day event on 21st June, 2020

The **6th International Day of Yoga (IDY)** is to be celebrated on 21st June and a National event organized on this



day is to be held at **Leh, Ladakh** (Union Territory). **Shri Shripad Yesso Naik**, Minister of Ayush announces that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the event held at Leh.

- This day is celebrated to create awareness across the world about the benefits of yoga and to practice yoga on a daily basis.
- Programmes will be organised on IDY by industry bodies Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

LPG scheme PM Ujjwala Yojana closed; only 3 States & 5 UTs become kerosene-free

In accordance with the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum headed by BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) member **Ramesh Bidhuri**, only three States and five Union Territories have become kerosene-free even though in September 2019 the government has met the target of 8 crore LPG (Liquefied petroleum gas) connections under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY).

- The kerosene-free states are Haryana, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh and Union Territories (UTs) are Delhi, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Andaman & Nicobar Island and Puducherry.
- The report points the gap between the continuing use of kerosene and the claim of 97% LPG coverage nationwide.

India post launches India's 1st digital parcel locker service in Kolkata, West Bengal

For the 1st time in India, the Department of Posts (DoP), **Kolkata (West Bengal circle)**, has launched free **digital parcel locker** service in 2

post offices (the Nabadiganta IT post office in Sector 5 of Salt Lake City & at the post office in New Town's Action Area I).

Key Points:

i. Under this service, customers will be able to collect their parcel from the post office according to their convenience. This facility is quite popular in European



countries but is starting for the first time in India.

ii. This service has been done for such people of working-class, who do not have to receive any parcel at home. Such people can take their parcel and letters addressed to them from the kiosks at 24×7.

WCD ministry notifies new POCSO rules 2020 with stringent punishments for sexual offences against children

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 45 of the POCSO Act, 2012, the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD)**, Government of India (GoI), has notified the new **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Rules, 2020** by replacing the earlier 2012 Rules. The new rule will be able to implement the recent amendments to this law, under which the provisions of punishment for sexual exploitation of children have been further made stringent. The new POCSO rules became effective from March 9, 2020.

- The State Government's have been asked to provide information about child helpline services through toll-free number 1098.

Centre invokes 'Epidemic Act 1897' and 'Disaster Management Act 2005' to prevent spread of COVID-19; Karnataka, first state to enact 1897 Act

During the review meeting chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, the centre has decided to invoke **Epidemic Act 1897** to ensure that multiple government advisories issued from time to time by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare/State/UTs on **COVID-19** becomes enforceable. In this regard, all the states and union territories (UTs) of India are advised to invoke the provisions of Section 2 of the Epidemic Disease Act 1897.

SBI Board approved Rs 7,250 cr fund infusion into Yes Bank, Stake remains under 49%

The executive committee of the central board of State Bank of India (SBI) has approved an investment of **Rs**

7,250 crore in Yes Bank Ltd. as a part of RBI formulated rescue plan titled "**Yes Bank Ltd. Reconstruction Scheme, 2020**" for the revival of Yes Bank. The SBI has not specified its shareholding the bank but it will remain under 49% of the paid-up capital of the Yes Bank.

- The investment has been made by purchasing 725 crore equity shares of Yes Bank at a price of Rs 10 per share.

Nita Ambani, Serena Williams & Simone Biles named in Influential Women in Sports list 2020

Sports business network, iSportconnect released the '**Influential Women in Sport**' list for 2020, which named Nita Ambani, Serena Williams & Simone Biles along with 7 other women.

i. **Nita Ambani** led her Mumbai Indians franchise to become the most successful in IPL history & is in many sports projects across different sports in the country.

ii. Tennis player, **Serena Williams's** overall impact both on the court, (the greatest female player of all time), & as a businesswoman.

iii. Gymnast **Simone Biles** is currently one of the greatest athletes in the world & an ever-growing voice for women in sport

iv. Footballer **Megan Rapinoe** is never afraid to speak her mind and talk about social issues and has become a prominent figure in women's sport.

Mumbai Central station to be renamed as Nana Shankarsheth Mumbai Central railway station

The Maharashtra Government has approved to rename the Mumbai Central Station as **Nana Shankarsheth Mumbai Central Railway Station**.

i. The Mumbai Central Station has been re-named to Nana Shankarsheth Central Railway Station as his involvement in the formation of Indian Railway association was pivotal to the country.

ii. The Bombay Central is designed by British architect **Claude Batley**. The first railway in India ran over **21 miles from Bombay to Thane**.

About Nana Shankarsheth:

Jagannath (Nana) Shankarsheth is a Maharashtrian philanthropist and educationist (1803-1865), he contributed a lot for the development of Mumbai. He is the First Indian to be nominated in the Legislative Council of Bombay.

Newly Discovered insect species named after singer Lady Gaga

A newly discovered species of treehopper has been named "**Kaikaia Gaga**" after American singer **Lady Gaga**. The species was named by Brendan Morris, PhD candidate in entomology from University of Illinois, United States (US).



Key Points:

- i. The species were found near the Pacific coast of **Nicaragua** and the species looks beautiful, vibrant as pop diva, have crazy horns with wacky fashion sense.
- ii. The information about the new insect species was published in the **journal Zootaxa** (which focuses on animal taxonomy).
- iii. The treehopper is not the first species to be named after a famous musician. A deep-sea crustacean was named from American heavy metal band Metallica and is now known as *Macrostylis metallicola* in february 2020 and the *Synalpheus pinkfloydi* shrimp was named after the English rock band Pink Floyd.

The government proposed masks & hand sanitizers under Essential Commodities Act 1955

The government amended Essential Commodities (EC) Act, 1955 to declare 2 ply & 3 ply surgical **masks**, N95 masks & **hand sanitizers** as Essential Commodities up to 30th June 2020 to ensure that these products are available in the market at the right price given the outbreak of coronavirus & also has a measure to manage it.

Key Points:

- i. It also issued a consultation under the Legal Metrology (LM) Act, 2009 that under EC law

PM Modi proposed the creation of COVID 19 emergency fund; SAARC: India offers the US \$10 million.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has proposed the formulation of a common strategy to tackle **COVID-19** (Coronavirus) in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region during the video conference with SAARC representatives. PM Modi has proposed the creation of COVID-19 Emergency Fund through voluntary contributions from all SAARC Nations. This fund can be used by any of the partner countries to meet the cost of immediate actions. India has offered the **US \$10 million** for the fund. India is also assembling a **Rapid Response Team** of doctors and specialists, along with testing kits and other equipment, on standby mode, as an aid for other countries, if required

39th GST Council meet on 'Know your Supplier'; GST on mobile phones hiked to 18%

Several decisions have been taken regarding the GST mechanism on particular sections during the 39th GST Council meet in New Delhi headed by Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Union Minister of State for Finance & Corporate Affairs Shri Anurag Thakur also attended the meet.

One of the decisions includes calculation of delayed GST payment on the **net tax liability** w.e.f. 1st July 2017, the day the GST came into force. Net cash tax liability is arrived at after deducting the input tax credits available from gross tax liability.

-Changes in the GST rates; w.e.f April 1, 2020

- GST on mobile phones and specified parts were increased to **18%** from 12%.
- GST on Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) service in respect to aircraft was reduced to **5%** from 18% with full ITC (Input Tax Credit).
- GST on all types of matchsticks has been rationalised to a single GST rate of 12%. Till now, the handmade ones were taxed at 5% and the rest was taxed at 18%.

Permanent commission to women in Indian Navy: SC

Justice DY Chandrachud directed the Centre to grant permanent commission to serving women officers in Navy within three months with increments.



The judgment follows a verdict by the Apex Court in favor of granting permanent for women in the Indian Army. A permanent commission entitles an officer to serve in the Navy till he/she retires unlike Short Service Commission(SSC), which is currently for 10 years and can be extended by four more years, a total of 14 years.

The Supreme Court said women can sail with same efficiency as male officers and there should be no discrimination.

PM Modi participated in the 100th Birth Anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman via Video conference

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken part in the 100th birth anniversary celebrations of Bangladesh's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman through video conferencing. Rahman, who is the first President of Bangladesh, was born on March 17, 1920, in Tungipara village in Faridpur district and also referred to as 'Jatir Pita'. The capital and currency of Bangladesh are Dhaka and Bangladeshi taka respectively.

Odisha's Konark sun temple & Statue of Unity in Gujarat finds place in iconic tourism sites list: Prahlad Singh

According to the Union Minister of State (Independent) for tourism and culture, Prahlad Singh Patel, the central government has included grand **Konark Sun Temple**, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) world heritage site in Odisha & **Statue of Unity** in Gujarat in the Iconic Tourist Sites list, taking the total number of such places from 17 to 19.

Nitin Gadkari presents a copy of 'Invincible – A Tribute to Manohar Parrikar' to the President

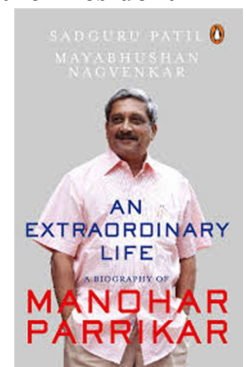
Nitin **Gadkari**, the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, presented the book

'**Invincible – A Tribute to Manohar Parrikar**' to

President **Ram Nath Kovind** at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on the

first death anniversary of Manohar Parrikar.

i.The "Invincible – A Tribute to Manohar Parrikar"



was authored by Tarun Vijay and released by defence minister Rajnath Singh on 16th March 2020.

ii. Manohar Parrikar is a former Chief Minister of Goa and also as a Defence Minister of India who passed away on 17th March 2019.

“My Encounters in Parliament” authored by Bhalchandra Mungekar released

The book titled “My Encounters in Parliament” authored by **Bhalchandra Mungekar** an Indian economist, former member of Rajya Sabha, was released in the presence of former Vice President- Hamid Ansari, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) Chief Sharad Pawar, Communist Party of India (CPI) General Secretary D Raja and CPI (Marxist) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury.

‘Recovery of Damage to Public Properties Ordinance 2020’: UP cabinet

‘Recovery of Damage to Public Properties Ordinance 2020’ for recovery of losses due to damage to public property during violent protests was passed by the Uttar Pradesh cabinet headed by **Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath**.

The ordinance will aim at dealing with **violent acts** at public places, controlling its tenacity and upsurge and providing for recovery of damage to public or private property during hartal, bandh etc.

- Provide effective prevention of loss of public property.
- The damages in the violence shall be recovered from the rioters, as per the ordinance.

- Create “**claims tribunal**” to investigate damages according to the official documentation by the Government.

PM Modi formed COVID-19 Economic Response Task Force headed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared the formulation of COVID-19 Economic Response Task Force, to be led by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Its objective is to tackle the economic challenges arising out of novel coronavirus outbreak.

- In this regard, Sitharaman held a meeting with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Minister **Nitin Gadkari**, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries Minister **Giriraj Singh**, Civil Aviation Minister **Hardeep Singh Puri** and Tourism Minister **Prahlad Singh Patel** to assess the situation.

Duties of task force:

-The task force is mandated to execute measures to reduce the economic difficulties facing by various sectors.

-It should maintain a regular touch with all stakeholders, take their feedback and make decisions accordingly.

Coronavirus-outbreak: Punjab becomes the 1st state to impose curfew after lockdown fails

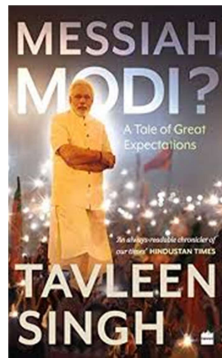
After the lockdown became ineffective, **Punjab** Chief Minister (CM) Captain Amarinder Singh has ordered an indefinite **curfew** across the state. With this, it becomes the 1st state in the country to take drastic

measure to stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

i. After Punjab, the Chandigarh Union Territory (UT) Administration has also imposed curfew in the city to check the spread of virus.

A new book entitled 'Messiah Modi: A Tale of Great expectations' penned by Tavleen Singh released

A new book entitled 'Messiah Modi: A Tale of Great Expectations' written by senior journalist & author **Tavleen Singh** has been released.



Key Points:

- i. The book, published by HarperCollins India, narrates the early support for Modi the candidate by the author, once a great supporter of the government.
- ii. It also talks about helpless dissatisfaction with Narendra Modi the Prime Minister (PM), his cabinet, the story of his first term as a journey from lynchings to demonetization up to Article 370, the most controversial law CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), implementation of National Register of Citizens (NRC) & the promises he made in his first term.
- iii. The author also stated that Modi is the most isolated PM that she has seen in Delhi.

PM Modi announces to observe "Janata Curfew" from 7 am to 9 pm on March 22, 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared 'Janata Curfew' or 'Citizen Curfew' on Sunday



i.e. on March 22, 2020 in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases in India. In this regard, Indian Nationals must stay at home from **7:00 am to 9:00 pm** on Sunday.

Key Points:

- The reason behind this curfew is to halt the expansion of coronavirus as there is no cure for this. So, in order to remain healthy, avoiding crowds and social distancing is necessary.
- People working in emergency and essential services such as police, medical services, media, home delivery, firefighting and serving the nation etc. are excluded from the Janata Curfew.
- It should be noted that coronavirus has affected more countries than World War I and II.

Indore becomes the 1st city in India to use drones to sanitize the city: COVID-19

Indore (Madhya Pradesh), the cleanest city in India becomes the **1st city** in India to use **drones to sanitize** the city against COVID-19 scare.

Key Points

- i. Indore Municipal Corporation has hired 2 drones from a private company to sprinkle chemicals with **sodium hypochlorite** and **bio-clean** in crowded areas like vegetable markets, streets.
- ii. The drones will depart with **16 litres** of chemicals in each flight, spray chemicals in an area spanning 8-10 km & return after 30 minutes.
- iii. Special care is also being taken to ensure that the spray does not harm citizens.

PM Modi declared 21-day (Mar 25-April 14, 2020) lockdown to break COVID-19 infection chain; Rs 15,000 cr allotted for healthcare by Centre

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has declared a **21-day lockdown** for the whole nation starting from March 25, 2020 till April 14, 2020 as an only way to break the chain of COVID-19 infection. It is an emergency protocol mandating people to stay at home and stepping out of the house unless for an essential purpose will be a punishable offence.

- During the lockdown, all essential commodities like groceries, medicines and milk remain available.
- As of now, each state had different rules for lockdown but this national lockdown laid uniform guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for the entire country.
- On March 24, 2020, 564 positive coronavirus cases were reported in India.

Rs 15,000 crore allotted for healthcare to fight coronavirus:

For quick set up health infrastructure to deal with the pandemic, Centre has allocated 15,000 crore for the purchase of personal protection equipment for healthcare workers, increasing the number of beds, testing kits, setting up testing laboratories and quarantine centres, and training of professionals to combat the disease.

Goa becomes the 1st Indian state to launch assessment tool for COVID-19

Goa health minister Vishwajit Rane launched **Test Yourself Goa**, a self-assessment tool for COVID-19 to help people identify if they are infected by the virus without visiting a doctor or hospital.

Goa has partnered with **Innovaccer Inc**, a United States (US)-based healthcare data analytics company, to launch the tool.

Features of the tool

- The online portal enables a person to **check themselves from their home**, by answering questions like; Name, contact number, location, recent travel to high-risk countries, symptoms such as fever, cough, wheezing, and any health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension among others.
- Based on the answers, the tool states whether the individual is likely or not likely the suspect of COVID-19, as per the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s guidelines.
- The tool will then **assist the person** to take further steps by providing information on self-quarantine, helpline numbers to reach out to the concerned authorities.

Difference between lock down, curfew & Section 144:

What is a Lockdown?

It is an emergency tool that prevents people from leaving a given area. This scenario usually allows for essential supplies, grocery stores, pharmacies and banks to continue to serve the people. All non-essential activities remain shut for the entire period. It can be enforced by a Collector or Chief Medical Officer(CMO) under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.

What is section 144?

Section 144 of the IPC (Indian Penal Code) prevents the congregation of 5 or more people within a particular area. Under this, anyone found in violation will be booked under Section 188 of IPC for disobeying a public servant.

What is curfew?

It differs in every country, means keeping people off the streets for pre-decided hours. Any violation is met with a fine or arrest. Curfew includes complete closure essential services in addition to Section 144.

Only administration & police personnel are allowed on the street. The district administration is exempt from action, once the curfew is enforced.

India's first dedicated COVID-19 Centre set up by Reliance in Mumbai, Maharashtra; to produce 1,00,000 face-masks per day

As a measure to curb deadly coronavirus (COVID-19), **Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation Hospital** in collaboration with the **Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)**, has set up India's first 100 bedded centre at Seven Hills Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra for positive COVID 19 patients.

- The Centre fully funded by **Reliance Foundation**, includes a negative pressure room that helps in preventing cross contamination and helps control infection, among necessary infrastructure and bio-medical equipment.

Other Initiatives by Reliance:

-Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has also built a fully-equipped isolation facility in Lodhivali, Maharashtra and handed it over to the district authorities.

-It enhances its production capacities to produce 1,00,000 face-masks per day and a large number of **personal protective equipment (PPE)**, like suits and garments, for Indian health-workers.

-RIL is providing **free fuel** from its petroleum retail outlets for all emergency service vehicles used to transport.

-It also offered an aid of **5 crore** to Maharashtra Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

Make in India: Pune-based Mylab becomes the 1st Indian firm to make diagnostic test kits for coronavirus

The National Institute of Virology (NIV) has given its nod to Pune (Maharashtra) based **Mylab Discovery Solutions Pvt Ltd** to make diagnostic test kits (also known as **Mylab PathoDetect COVID-19 Qualitative PCR kit**) for novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

With this, it becomes the 1st Indian company to develop the first made-in-India test kit for the disease in a period of 6- weeks. Germany-based Altona Diagnostics has also received the approval.

Key Points:

- The above said approval comes 2- days after ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) issued norms for private testing of coronavirus restricting use of only USFDA (US- Food and Drug Administration) or European CE certified tools at private labs & allowing kits manufactured domestically / outside the India, after approval from the NIV.
- The kit RT-PCR (Reverse transcription -Polymerase Chain Reaction) has received commercial production permission from the Indian FDA (Food and Drug Administration) / Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).
- Through the company's kit, 1,000 samples can be tested from a large lab and 200 samples can be tested in a small lab. Mylab has decided to fix the price of these kits at Rs 1,200.
- In the current lab based testing protocols it takes 4 hours for test results, while Mylab PathoDetect kit screens & detects the infection within 2.5 hours.

India among top suppliers of pharma drugs used in trafficking: INCB Report 2019

In accordance with the "**Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2019**", by



International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) released by United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), India is named among the top manufacturers of illicit and licit drugs that are smuggled to other countries.

Highlights of report with reference to India:

–**Non Submission of Form P:** India has not submitted **Form P** of INCB which is used to report annual statistics of substances controlled under the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971.

–**Largest seizure in India:** 1.8 tons of **pseudoephedrine** was confiscated in Noida, Uttar Pradesh in a single seizure on May 11, 2019

Gujarat Police becomes first in India to introduce taser guns

The **Gujarat Police** is equipped with **taser guns** in order to ensure safety and security of the public. By introducing the taser guns as part of police weapons, Gujarat becomes the first state in India.

Key Points:

i. The taser guns were used in agencies such as the UK Metropolitan Police, the Los Angeles Police Department and the New York Police Department.

ii. **About taser guns:** The taser guns have been introduced to find an alternative between “ineffective lathis” and “deadly guns”.

iii. The taser guns (electrical weapon) use compressed nitrogen to fire, by sending electricity through attached wires, which disrupt voluntary control of muscles.

UK becomes 1st co-chair of India-led global climate initiative ‘CDRI’

The Government of **United Kingdom (UK)** has become the first co-chair of the Governing Council on

the India-led global climate initiative ‘**Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**’, which was created by the Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on September 23, 2019 during the UN (United Nations) Climate Summit in New York, US (United States). The secretariat of the Coalition will be in New Delhi.

i. The global Coalition-CDRI is a voluntary international grouping, associating governments, UN (United Nations) bodies, banks, private sector entities, and academia to prepare the world to face the issue of extreme weather events due to climate change.

ii. India will offer financial assistance of Rs 480 crore to the CDRI to help support research projects, establish secretariat and meet the recurring expenditure for a period of 5- years from 2019-20 to 2023-24.

IOC becomes 1st company to begin the supply of BS-VI fuel across country

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation’s biggest oil firm, began the supply of the world’s **cleanest petrol and diesel** across the country. All 28,000 petrol stations of IOC’s across the country are dispensing **BS-VI (Bharat Stage- VI) ultra-low sulphur grade** fuel in order to reduce the pollution from vehicles in the air.

Key Points:

i. India has switched to the cleanest fuel as other fuel retailers such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) are also supplying BS-VI grade fuel.

ii. The Government of India had set April 1, 2020 as the deadline for starting supply of Euro- VI (equivalent to BS-VI grade) fuels in all petrol stations.

iii. **About BS-VI:** The BS-VI has a low sulphur content of **10 ppm** (parts per million) & emission standards are as good as CNG (Compressed Natural Gas).

FinMin provided Rs 1.70 Lakh Cr relief package under PMGaribKalyanYojana for the poor to tackle Corona Virus

The Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has publicized the Rs 1.70 Lakh Crore relief package under **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY)**, during the Press Conference in New Delhi. The motive behind this is to aid and support the Poverty-stricken people to fight a battle against Corona Virus.

- Insurance Cover of Rs 50 Lakh per healthcare worker workers fighting COVID-19 in Govt Hospitals & health centres
- PM Garib Kalyan Ann (अन्न) Yojana; foodgrain entitlement doubled
- Farmers to get the first instalment of Rs 2000 under PM KISAN in April 2020
- Women Jan Dhan account holders to get Rs 500 per month for the next 3 months
- Increase in MNREGA wage to Rs 202 a day from Rs 182 to benefit 13.62 crore families

PM Modi participated in Virtual G20 Leaders' Summit to develop action plan against COVID-19; over USD 5 trillion to be injected

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in an extraordinary **“Virtual Group of 20 (G20) Leaders’ Summit”** which was hosted by Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud through video conference. It was held to discuss the challenges created by the COVID-19 and to develop an action plan for globally coordinated response against it.

- The summit followed the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting and G20 Sherpas Meeting on the COVID-19 pandemic which agreed to develop an action plan.
- It should be noted that 90% of the coronavirus cases and 88% of deaths happened in G20 countries. They share 80%

of world GDP and 60% of the world population.

Odisha to set up the largest COVID-19 hospital in the country

The **Odisha Government** announced that it is readying to set up the **largest Covid-19 hospital** in India due to



the outbreak of the Coronavirus in the country. The state-level hospitals will have 1000 beds in Bhubaneswar, Odisha and will be functional in a fortnight.

Key Points:

- The State Government signed 2 tripartite agreements with KIMS (Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences) and SUM Medical Colleges of Odisha to set up 500-bed hospitals each exclusively for Coronavirus treatment.
- The Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) and the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) will provide the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) fundings for the project.

Indian Army launches Operation Namaste: COVID-19

Indian Army Chief **General Manoj Mukund Naravane** launched **‘Operation Namaste’** initiative to **protect** 1.3 million **strong forces** from **coronavirus** and provide all possible assistance to the government to control the pandemic.



Key Points

- He urged all military personnel to take recommended precautions against the virus & also assured the soldiers and officers stationed at the border with Pakistan and China that special care is being taken for their families amid the virus.
- Under ‘Operation Namaste’, the army has issued a

series of directives to all its bases to protect the force from the coronavirus & the army headquarters issued a number of suggestions to deal with the situation over the past few weeks.

PM Narendra Modi formulated PM-CARES fund to fight coronavirus outbreak

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created assistance and emergency situation relief fund namely **Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM-CARES)** where people can contribute and help in the government's fight against coronavirus. This newly created public charitable trust has PM Narendra Modi as the chairman and defence minister (Rajnath Singh), home minister (Amit Shah) and the finance minister (Nirmala Sitharaman) as its members.

Merger of 10 state-run banks into 4 to come into force from April 1: RBI

The mega bank consolidation plan is all set to come into force from **April 1, 2020**.

The branches of **merging banks** will operate as of the banks in which these have been amalgamated. Also, the customers of merging banks will be treated as customers of the banks in which these banks have been merged with effect from April 1, 2020.



- The government on March 4 had notified the amalgamation schemes for 10 state-owned banks into four as part of its consolidation plan to create bigger size stronger banks in the public sector.
- As per the scheme, Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India will be merged into **Punjab National Bank**; Syndicate Bank into **Canara Bank**; Allahabad Bank into **Indian Bank**; and

Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank into **Union Bank of India**.

COVID-19: IIT Bombay develops two apps "Corontine" and "Safe" to track violations by those in quarantine

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis spreads, IIT (Indian Institute of Technology)-Bombay developed 2 mobile applications called "**Corontine**" and "**Safe**", that can track violations by people supposed to be in quarantine. The proposals of both apps have been sent to officials in the Ministry of Human Resource and Department, Niti Aayog, the Maharashtra government and the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation)

QS World University Ranking 2020 by subject: US's MIT topped, IIT Bombay & IIT Delhi ranked 44th & 47th in Engineering & Technology category

According to the **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2020** by



Subject, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay and IIT Delhi have made it to the top 50 institutes in the world for the category of engineering and technology and ranked 44th and 47th respectively with a score of 81.9 and 81.4.



QS World University Ranking 2020 by subject: IIT Bombay & IIT Delhi find place in top 50 for engineering institutes

Subject, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay and IIT Delhi have made it to the top 50 institutes in the world for the category of engineering and technology and ranked 44th and 47th respectively with a score of 81.9 and 81.4.

While, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, US (United States) ranked at top position in the list of this category with a score of 98.1

Freedom in the world 2020 report: India ranked 83rd among least free democracies; Finland tops

According to the "**Freedom in the World 2020**" report, which analyzes



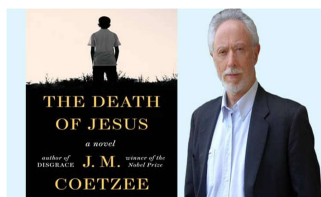
democratic values and people's freedom in 195 countries & 15 territories, released by the Freedom House, a U.S (United States) -based watchdog that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, **India** has ranked **83rd** in the report along with Timor-Leste and Senegal in 'Free' category. While, Finland topped the list as the free democratic country.

India's score fell by 4 points to 71 in the survey results. This is the biggest drop in the 25 largest democracies in the world

International

A book titled The Death of Jesus authored by JM Coetzee

Nobel Laureate **John Maxwell Coetzee**, who authored the book "The Death of Jesus", completed his Jesus trilogy (a group of 3 related novels) with the final



book. The book explores the meaning of a world empty of memory but brimming with questions.

Key Points:

- i.**The book comprises 3 novels: The Childhood of Jesus, The Schooldays of Jesus and the Death of Jesus.
- ii. Publisher:** All the books in the trilogy have been published by Penguin Random House.
- iii. About JM Coetzee:** He is a South-African born novelist, essayist, linguist, translator and recipient of the 2003 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Nasa's named Mars 2020 rover as Perseverance

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. The name was suggested by **Alexander Mather**, 7th standard student and was announced by Nasa's director of science, Thomas Zurbuchen at an event in Lake Braddock Secondary School in Burke, Virginia. **About Perseverance:** The rover has improved wheel design which is used to collect the samples from the martian rocks and helps scientists to determine about the ancient microbial life that existed in red planet.

Key Points:

- i.** Alexander Math will receive an invitation to travel with his family to Cape Canaveral, Florida, US (United States) to witness the rover begin its journey, when it launches between July 17 and August 5, 2020 & will come to land in February 2021.
- ii.** Nasa's naming competition asked children to submit their favoured name for the Mars 2020 rover began in August 2019, comprises 4,700 voluntary judges including teachers and space enthusiasts shortlisted nine names and was asked by the public to vote & select the word through online.
- iii.** The Perseverance rover will be the 5th exploratory vehicle after Sojourner, Spirit, Opportunity and Curiosity.

Luxembourg becomes the world's 1st nation to make all public transport free from Feb 29

In order to reduce traffic pressure on the road, **Luxembourg**, the 7th smallest country in Europe, has been made **public transport free from February**

29, 2020. It became the first country in the world to do so.



However, this free public transport system does not include 1st-class travel tickets on trains and certain night bus services. Commuters can still pay for first class, at a cost of 660 euros a year.

Key Points:

- i.** Earlier, all the standard-class journeys on public transport in the country caused an annual pass worth 440 euros (\$485).
- ii.** The move will benefit people with low incomes or the minimum wage, tourists from neighbouring countries like Germany, Belgium and France.
- iii.** Luxembourg has more than 600,000 inhabitants, and 214,000 cross-border laborers traveling to this country for work every day, which causes heavy traffic jams.
- iv.** It is expected that more than 65 % of people in Luxembourg use their car to go to work in 2025, down from 73% in 2017.

US and Taliban seals historic agreement aimed at ending war in Afghanistan in Doha, Qatar; India addressed for the 1st time

The **US (United States)** and **Taliban militants** have signed historic peace agreement in **Doha, Qatar** to restore peace in Afghanistan. The agreement, signed by the US special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in the presence of Michael Richard Pompeo, United States Secretary of State, would end the 18 years-long American war in Afghanistan.

i. **India's Ambassador to Qatar, P. Kumaran** attend the US-Taliban peace deal in Doha on behalf of India. This is the first time India has officially joined any Taliban related case.

ii. After the agreement, the US will withdraw all forces from Afghanistan within 14 months.

EIU's Inclusive Internet Index 2020: Sweden tops globally; India topped among South Asian Countries & ranked 46th globally

Economist Intelligence Unit (**EIU**) released the 4th iteration of the **Inclusive Internet Index 2020** for 100 countries where India is overall ranked in **46th** place & Sweden in 1st place. The index aims to measure the extent to which the Internet is not only accessible & affordable, but also relevant to all, allowing usage that enables positive social & economic outcomes at the individual & group level. It is commissioned by Facebook

Jack Ma overtakes Mukesh Ambani & becomes Asia's richest man with networth of \$44.8 billion: Bloomberg Billionaires Index

As per Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. Founder Jack Ma has grabbed the title of Asia's richest man with a net worth at **\$44.8 billion** from Mukesh Ambani, Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries. The latter's share has dropped by \$5.8 billion to **\$41.8 billion** due to coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic which led to collapse in oil markets.

- Mukesh Ambani continues to be India's richest man and globally he is ranked at number 19 and Jack Ma at 18th.
- Amazon CEO (Chief Executive Officer) **Jeff Bezos** continues to be the world's richest man even though he lost \$5.6 billion.

Among 5 Indians Byju Raveendran & Zomato's Gaurav Gupta in WEF's Young Global Leaders list 2020

The World Economic Forum (WEF) announced its new list of 115 Young Global Leaders (YGL), where **5 Indians** Byju Raveendran, Gaurav Gupta, Swapan Mehra, Vinati Mutreja & Tara Singh Vachani are named in the list.

WEF stated that the change-makers are using their power of under 40's to change the world, from reforming health systems to investigating corruption in 52 countries.

World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 as pandemic

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared novel

coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic, which means a widespread disease. This is the



first **pandemic** caused by a coronavirus & can be **controlled**. The virus was 1st identified in China.

What is a pandemic? A pandemic describes an infectious disease where we see significant and ongoing person-to-person spread in multiple countries around the world at the same time. The last time a pandemic occurred was in 2009 with **swine flu**, which experts think killed hundreds of thousands of people.

Terms to know:

Outbreak– Refers to the number of cases (disease) that exceeds what would be expected

Endemic– An infection within a geographic location that is existing perpetually

Pandemic– A global endemic.

3rd edition of WION Global Summit 2020 held in Dubai, UAE

WION (World Is One News), the India's first International News Channel, has organized its 3rd edition of **Global summit 2020** based on the theme "**Navigating and negotiating global imperatives**" at The Oberoi, in **Dubai, UAE** (United Arab Emirates).

Key Points:

i. It saw the participation of global leaders to engage in dialogue on a common global agenda to underscore the

critical challenges of climate change, global governance, economic slowdown, and global crisis that threatens to become the new normal.

ii. The Summit focused on 4 key sessions namely- India and the Emerging World focusing on the dynamics, Balancing and Recalibrating Pakistan's Diplomatic Strategy, Climate change & Global Leaders forum.

iii. During the event, Former Pakistan Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri recalled the plan for Sir Creek pact.

WhatsApp launched Coronavirus Information Hub, donated \$1 million to IFCN

Facebook-owned messaging app **WhatsApp** launched the "**WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub**" globally, in partnership with WHO (World Health Organization), UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). WhatsApp also donated **\$1 million dollars** to Poynter Institute's **International Fast-Checking Network** (IFCN) in order to avoid fake information about the disease.



Key Points:

i. **Uses:** The WhatsApp Coronavirus Information Hub will be available at **Whatsapp.com/coronavirus** and provides simple, actionable guidance for health workers, educators, community leaders, nonprofits, local governments & local businesses.

ii. The site also offers general tips and resources for users around the world to reduce the spread of rumours and provides accurate health information.

iii. **IFCN:** The International Fast-Checking Network identifies the spread of health-related fake news on Whatsapp in different formats. The network detects & debunks misinformation on the messaging app.

Saudi Arabia accepts India's Proposal For Virtual G20 Summit

Saudi Arabia has accepted India's proposal to hold a virtual conference of G20 member nations to figure out a coordinated response to tackle the economic implications of COVID-19 during a telephone conversation between Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

India Ranks 144th, Finland tops: UN's World Happiness Report 2020

The United Nations (UN) released the **8th World Happiness Report 2020** to measure the happiness of people of



156 countries where **India**(3.573) ranks in **144th** position & **Finland**(7.809) **tops** the 3rd time.

Key Points:

i. The survey ranks the countries using Gallup World Poll, GDP levels, life expectancy, generosity, social support, freedom & corruption income.

ii. This year's report mainly focuses on **happiness in the environment** especially in social, urban, rural & natural areas and also links happiness & sustainable development

UK scientists discover fossil of the world's oldest known modern bird, call it 'Wonderchicken'

Scientists at the **University of Cambridge** in the United Kingdom (UK) have discovered a fossil of the world's oldest known modern bird skull dating to about 66.8m – 66.7m years ago- means the birds lived alongside dinosaurs for around a million years before the latter died out.

Scientists dubbed the creature as '**Wonderchicken**', which is thought to be a common ancestor of modern

chickens and ducks.

Key Points:

i. Scientists found the fossil in the Romontbos Quarry near fort Eben-Emael in Liège, on the Belgium-Netherlands border.

ii. CT (computed tomography) scanning the fossil helped the scientists discover that the Wonderchicken was a small-bodied, likely ground-dwelling bird which fed along land near the seashore.

iii. The scientific name of the bird is *Asteriornis maastrichtensis*, a reference to the place, where it was found & in recognition of the ancient Greek goddess of falling stars, Asteria.

iv. The findings were published in the journal Nature & lead author of the study was Dr. Daniel Field from Cambridge's Department of Earth Sciences.

25 worshippers killed by ISIS suicide bombers attacking Gurudwara in Kabul, Afghanistan

25 worshippers were killed and eight were injured during the attack by heavily armed four suicide bombers attack at Dharamshala, a Sikh worship place (Gurudwara) located in Kabul, Afghanistan. The responsibility of this deadliest attack on the minority Sikh community is taken by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (**ISIS**) terrorist group by issuing a statement.

- The attack comes after a day when the United States (US) declared **USD 1 billion reductions** in aid to the Afghanistan government due to the latter's inadequate efforts towards a negotiation with the Taliban for maintaining peace.

Indian football captain Sunil Chhetri named in FIFA campaign against Coronavirus

Indian Football Captain **Sunil Chhetri** was selected among 28 members for FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) video campaign against Coronavirus.



FIFA and WHO (World Health Organization) have teamed up to combat the coronavirus by launching 'Pass the message to kick out coronavirus' (awareness campaign) led by world-renowned footballers.

Key Points:

i.About campaign: The 'Pass the message to kick out Coronavirus' campaign promotes 5 key steps such as hand washing, coughing etiquette, not touching your face, physical distance and staying home if feeling unwell and these steps protect the people's health according to WHO guidance.

ii. The 28 players will be involved in the video campaign to be published in 13 languages, which includes some of the best-known players like Argentina Superstar Lionel Messi and World Cup Winners like Philip Lahm, Iker Casillas and Carles Puyol.

After Covid-19 pandemic "Hantavirus" death reported in China

After a deadly Coronavirus, now a death has been reported in China's **Yunnan province** due to Hantavirus infection, a virus spread from rodents. Rodents are a type of small mammal with sharp front teeth which include mouse, squirrel, or beaver, hamster etc. However, this is not a new virus and it does not spread from person to person.

What is Hantavirus?

As per United States' (US) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Hantavirus is spread mainly by rodents and can cause **hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS)**, and **haemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome (HFRS)** to the infected person.

- It is a rare type of virus that can spread to people through dust contaminated by the saliva, urine, and faeces of rodents or a bite from an infected host.
- It has a mortality rate of 38%.
- Its first cases were reported during Korean War (1951-1953).
- Currently, the Hantavirus genus includes more than 21 species.

Hantavirus Symptoms

-Early symptoms of HPS include fatigue, fever, muscle aches, along with headaches, dizziness, chills and abdominal problems. It can also lead to coughing and shortness of breath and can be fatal.

-While the initial symptoms of HFRS are the same as HPS but it can cause low blood pressure, acute shock, vascular leakage, and acute kidney failure.

India ranks 120th, Singapore tops: Economic Freedom Index 2020

The Heritage Foundation published its 26th annual edition of **Economic Freedom Index 2020** to measure the level of economic freedom in **186 countries**. **India** (56.5) ranks in **120th** position & **Singapore** (89.4) **tops** the index for the 1st time.

Key Highlights

i.Hong Kong (89.1) for the 1st time secured 2nd rank since the 1st publication in 1995

ii. India secures **28th** rank among 42 countries in the **Asia-Pacific** region & also has made improvement in its score by 1.3 points from 2019

US launches advanced satellite for communication: AEHF-6

The United States (US) Space Force launched its **1st national security** mission by sending an ultra-secure **military communication satellite** into orbit called **Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF)-**



6 from Cape Canaveral, Florida on the **Atlas V551 rocket**.

Key Points

i. AEHF-6 is the **6th & final** in the Lockheed Martin AEHF constellation and will join the other 5 launched between 2010 & 2019.

ii. It consists of 6 secure military communication satellites which will replace the military's aging Milstar constellation & marks the 83rd flight of Atlas V and is 11th overall in 551 configurations.

iii. It is built at the cost of USD 1.1 billion & is the most powerful configuration with five solid rocket boosters, a 16.5-foot-wide (5 meters) payload fairing and a single-engine Centaur upper stage.

North Macedonia officially joins NATO as its 30th member

The Republic of North Macedonia has inducted officially as the **30th** and newest member of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This membership comes after North Macedonia's 2017 deal with Greece under which the former changed its name from Macedonia (a name same as Greek province). After the name change, Greece agreed to drop objections to its NATO and European Union (EU) membership. North Macedonia was granted a protocol on accession to NATO membership in February 2019.

About NATO:

NATO's purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means.

Headquarter of NATO– Brussels, Belgium

Members– 30

Defence

India 2nd largest arms importer in 2015-19, Saudi Arabia tops; US largest exporter of arms while India at 23rd: SIPRI Report

In accordance with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) annual report titled "**Trends in international arms transfers, 2019**", India is the world's second largest arms importer during 2015-19 with its global share of 9.2% after Saudi Arabia, who has topped the ranking with global share of 12%. On the other hand, India ranked 23rd in terms of world's largest arms exporters with global share of 0.2% and its main clients being Myanmar (46%), Sri Lanka (25%), and Mauritius (14%). United States (US) topped the list in this section with a share of 36%.

- It should be noted that India's arms import declined by 32% since 2015 due to "Make in India" initiative

Bengaluru ranked 9th, Singapore tops in Cities which leads the tech innovation hubs

KPMG's also surveyed which cities in addition to global leader Silicon Valley/San Francisco, will be leading technology innovation hubs over the next 4 years. **Bengaluru ranked 9th & Singapore topped** the position

Pakistan: 750 km range cruise missile Babur II crashes

Pakistan's efforts have suffered a set-back of launching 750 km range ground cruise missile Babur II with the delivery platform crashing to the ground after two minutes or 14 kilometres(km) in flight from the launch point at Sonmiani test range in Balochistan. The capital and currency of Pakistan are Islamabad and Pakistani rupee respectively.

US successfully tested its first nuclear-capable hypersonic missile

In a major development, the United States (US) Navy and Army has successfully tested its **common hypersonic glide body (C-HGB)**, a first unarmed prototype of a hypersonic missile capable of carrying

nuclear warheads. The test was carried out at the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii and was monitored by Missile Defense Agency (MDA) of US Department of Defence i.e. The Pentagon.

- C-HGB flew at five times the speed of sound, or Mach 5 to a designated impact point.
- It should be noted that hypersonic weapons can travel much faster than current nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles at low altitudes.

Key Points:

-Delivering hypersonic weapons is one of the highest technical researches and engineering priorities of The Pentagon and the goal is to deploy hypersonic missile capability by 2023.

-In this regard, a budgetary allocation of **\$3.2 billion** has been requested by The Pentagon for fiscal 2021.

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Centre has named Ajay Bhushan Pandey as the new Finance Secretary of FinMin

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has approved the appointment of Ajay

Bhushan Pandey as the new Finance Secretary in Ministry of Finance. He will succeed current **Rajiv Kumar**, who has retired in February 2020.

- Ajay Bhushan Pandey is a 1984 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Maharashtra cadre who had earlier worked as the chief executive officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
- The new one rupee notes will have his bilingual signature of Finance Secretary.

RBI Deputy Governor N.S. Vishwanathan resigned ahead of retirement

N.S Vishwanathan, one of the Reserve Bank of India's deputy governors, who is due to retire on July 3, 2020, has announced his resignation due to health problems.



Key Points:

- He was first appointed as the Reserve Bank's deputy governor for a three-year term in 2016, following which he was reappointed one year.
- He completed the Master of Economics from Bangalore University, joined RBI in 1981 and his areas of expertise include regulation and supervision of banks, currency management, foreign exchange, non-banking finance companies and cooperative banks and human resources management.

Pekka Lundmark appointed as CEO of Nokia

Nokia appointed **Pekka Lundmark** as CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and he will take charge from

September 1, 2020. He will be the successor of Rajeev



Suri, who was more than a decade in charge of Nokia and Nokia Siemens Networks.

Key Points:

i.About Lundmark: Pekka Lundmark is currently serving as the CEO of Fortum since 2015 and also served as executive positions at Nokia between 1990 & 2000 including Vice President (VP) of strategy & business development at Nokia networks.

ii.Nokia faces intense competition from Sweden's Ericsson & China's Huawei in the race to deliver 5G (5th generation) telecom networks to operators around the world.

About Nokia:

Headquarters- Espoo, Finland.

Chairman- Risto Kalevi Siilasmaa.

Lt Gen KJS Dhillon to take charge as DG DIA, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (DCIDS)

It is announced by the Ministry of Defence that **Lt Gen Kanwal Jeet Singh Dhillon (57)** will be appointed as a Director General, Defence Intelligence Agency, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, under the Chief of Defence staff (CDS) in the Department of Military Affairs, replacing Lt Gen AS Bedi.

- Lt Gen KJS Dhillon of **Indian Military Academy (IMA)** served as XV Corps and handed over the charge to Lt Gen Baggavalli Somashekar Raju. Lt Gen B.S. Raju has taken charge as a XV Corps commander from 1st March 2020 in Srinagar.

About Defence Intelligence Agency(DIA):

Established- 2002

Headquarters- Cabinet Secretariat Raisina Hill, New Delhi

Moto- Service Before Self

Former Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin bin Haji Muhammad Yassin becomes Malaysia's 8th Prime Minister

72 years old Former Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin bin Haji Muhammad Yassin took oath of office as Malaysia's **8th** Prime Minister(PM) at National Palace in Kuala Lumpur. He is from Malaysian United Indigenous Party, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM)**. He succeeds 94-year-old Mahathir bin Mohamad, who abruptly resigned & was in office since the general elections 2018.

Key Points

i.Muhyiddin bin Haji Muhammad Yassin served as 10th Deputy PM under former premier Najib Razak from 2009 to 2015.

ii.He is the co-founder of PPBM with Mahathir & served as its President, joining the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition to win the general election in 2018 but he lost.

Kareena Kapoor Khan signed contract for 2 years as Puma's brand ambassador

Indian film actress **Kareena Kapoor Khan** signed a contract with German sportswear brand **Puma** to be its **brand ambassador** for a period of 2 years. With this association she joins the brand's roster of celebrity faces such as Virat Kohli, Sara Ali Khan, MC Mary Kom and Dutee Chand.

Key Points:

i.Kareena will be the face for Puma's low-intensity training apparel collection targeted at workouts such as yoga, barre and pilates.

ii.The PUMA Group owns the brands Puma, Cobra Golf and stichd. Puma India has a total income of Rs 1413 crore for the financial year 2019.

ITBP chief SS Deswal given additional charge of BSF DG

Director General Indo Tibetan Border

Police(ITBP), **Shri Surjeet Singh Deswal** was given an additional charge by the **Ministry of Home Affairs** to serve as a Director General of Border Security Force(BSF). He will succeed Vivek johri repatriated by Government of India who has now taken over a charge as a Director General of Police at Madhya Pradesh.

- Shri Surjeet Singh Deswal an IPS officer 1984 – batch, Haryana. Vivek johri an IPS officer 1984 – batch, Madhya Pradesh. He is the first senior police officer who moved from Central Paramilitary Force to state.

Mahindra-Ford venture set to name Anurag Mehrotra as Chief Executive

The Managing Director of Ford India, **Anurag Mehrotra** was

appointed as the Chief Executive officer for the New joint venture formed by Mahindra



and Ford with effect from April 1, 2020. This joint venture is formed to develop and sell Ford branded cars in India and other emerging markets. The joint venture created is valued at \$275 million (Rs 1,925 crore).

- Mahindra will own the controlling stakes of **51** per cent, while Ford will own **49** percent stakes in the new company.

IDFC FIRST Bank appointed Amitabh Bachchan as its first-ever brand ambassador

Bollywood actor **Amitabh Bachchan** was appointed as the first-ever ambassador of the **IDFC FIRST Bank**.

IDFC FIRST Bank was founded as a new entity by the

merger of IDFC Bank and Capital First on December 18, 2018.

Realme appointed Salman Khan as its brand ambassador

Smartphone brand realme appointed Bollywood actor Salman Khan as its brand ambassador. Khan will endorse realme 6 & realme 6 Pro. In 2019, realme was the world's fastest-growing smartphone brand.

iQOO named Virat Kohli as its brand ambassador

iQOO (i Quest On and On) named **Indian Cricketer Virat Kohli** as its brand ambassador. The brand's first product in India is iQOO 3, 5G-enabled smartphone. iQOO is a sub-brand of Vivo in China and has entered India as a separate entity & also part of the BBK group. The BBK (Guangdong Bu Bu Gao Electronics Industrial Private Limited) group markets smartphones of 5 brands: Vivo, OnePlus, OPPO, Realme and iQOO (in India).

Prashant Kumar appointed as MD & CEO, Sunil Mehta as Non-Executive Chairman & of YES Bank

Government appointed former Chief Financial Officer & deputy Managing Director(MD) of SBI **Prashant Kumar** as **MD & Chief Financial Officer(CEO)**, the former Punjab National Bank(PNB) MD **Sunil Mehta** as **Non-Executive Chairman**, Mahesh Krishnamurthy & Atul Bheda as non-executive directors of the reconstructed board of Yes Bank.

i.State Bank of India (SBI), which has a 49 % stake in Yes Bank, will nominate 2 directors & Reserve Bank could appoint one or more additional directors.

ii.Any investor other than SBI with 15% voting rights can nominate 1 director. Until an alternate board is constituted board members will have a term of 1 year.

iii.The **moratorium** on Yes Bank to be **lifted by March 18** which means depositors will be able to withdraw an amount without a cap.

iv.On March 5 2020, the RBI put a moratorium on Yes

Bank restricting withdrawals to Rs 50,000 per depositor till April 3.

Justice Bansi Lal Bhat got appointed as officiating chairperson of NCLAT for 3 months

According to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India (GoI), Justice (Retd.) **Bansi Lal Bhat** has been appointed as the officiating **Chairperson** of the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)** for a period of 3 months with effect from March 15, 2020, or until a regular Chairperson is appointed, whichever is earlier. The first Chairperson of NCLAT, Justice SJ Mukhopadhaya has retired on March 13, 2020.

Shardul Thakur appointed as the brand ambassador of Tata Power

Indian cricketer **Shardul Thakur** appointed as the brand ambassador of **Tata Power**, the largest power generation company



in India which aims to provide uninterrupted power supply from its various plants located across India. This is his 1st major commercial endorsement & the campaign featuring him does have a significant presence in digital, radio & outdoors.

About Tata Power:

Headquarters- Mumbai, India
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Managing Director(MD)- Praveer Sinha

Barham Salih President of Iraq designates Adnan al-Zurfi as Prime Minister

Barham Salih, President of Iraq appoints 54- year-old **Adnan al-Zurfi** as Prime Minister(**PM**) of Iraq who has 30 days to form his cabinet in an attempt to resolve a months-long political crisis. He will succeed

Mohammed Allawi, the 1st politician named by the president as PM-designate who withdrew his candidacy for the post.

- i. Adel Abdul Mahdi was an interim PM who withdrew his candidature in December 2019 after heavy protest where 40 people were killed by security forces.
- ii. Adnan al-Zurfi's difficult task is to gain the confidence of parliament.
- iii. He was a former governor of the holy Shia city of Najaf & heads the Nasr parliamentary group of former Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi.

Government nominated former chief justice of India Ranjan Gogoi to Rajya Sabha

The government nominated former **Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan**



Gogoi, 65 years old, to Rajya Sabha. He was nominated by President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind, under the exercise of the powers conferred by sub-clause (a) of clause (1) of **article 80** of the Constitution of India, read with clause (3) of that article to the Council of States and to fill the vacancy caused due to the retirement of one of the nominated members. Ranjan Gogoi will be the successor of **K.T.S Tulsi**.

Key Points:

- i. The notification of this effect was issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ii. **About Ranjan Gogoi:** Gogoi headed a 5-judge bench, who gave the judgement on the sensitive Ayodhya land dispute on November 9, 2019.

iii. He also headed the benches that ruled on matters like the entry of women in Sabarimala temple and Rafale fighter jet deal. He retired on November 17, 2019.

Indian umpires Janani Narayanan and Vrinda Rathi named in International Panel of ICC Development Umpires

Janani Narayanan from Tamil Nadu (TN) and **Vrinda Rathi** from Mumbai were named in the **International Panel of ICC (International Cricket Council) Development Umpires**. After the inclusion of Janani and Vrinda, the count of females from India in ICC panel becomes 3 after the appointment of **GS Lakshmi** as the International Panel of Match Referees.

Key Points:

- i. Janani:** Janani Narayanan has been umpiring in Indian domestic tournaments since 2018.
- ii. Vrinda:** Vrinda Rathi, has also kept scores in international matches and has been umpiring in the Indian domestic cricket from 2018. She also played for Mumbai University as a pace bowler from 2007/08 to 2010/11.
- iii.** The women officials across the ICC panel consists of 12 members.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath resigns



Madhya Pradesh (MP) Chief Minister (CM) Kamal Nath submitted his

resignation letter to MP Governor Lalji Tandon at Raj Bhawan, Bhopal, MP, ahead of the scheduled floor test ordered by the Supreme Court (SC) in the State Assembly.

Key Points:

- i.** The Governor accepted the resignation of INC (Indian National Congress) Government led by Kamal Nath.
- ii.** Kamal Nath will continue as the caretaker of the state till the new CM takes charge.
- iii.** After the resignation of Jyotiraditya Scindia and his associated 22 MLA's (Member of Legislative Assembly) from Congress party. Kamal Nath was unable to prove the majority.
- iv.** The Legislative Assembly of MP has 230 MLAs, of which 24 seats are vacant. A majority of House of 206 MLAs will require the support of 104 MLAs.

Walmart promotes Sameer Aggarwal as CEO of Best Price, Walmart India

Walmart announced that it has promoted **Sameer Aggarwal** as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Best Price, Walmart India** which is effective from April 1, 2020. He will succeed **Krish Iyer** who is to retire on March 31, 2020, from 8 years of full-time management and will get into an advisory role.

Key Points

- i. Sameer Aggarwal joined Walmart India in April 2018 as Executive Vice President & was promoted to Deputy CEO in January 2020.
- ii. Walmart India owns & operates 28 modern wholesale stores under the brand name Best Price in 9 states across the country & also has 2 Fulfillment centres in India.
- iii. Walmart India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of US-based retailer Walmart which came to India in 2007.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan becomes the CM of MP

Shivraj Singh Chouhan(61) took oath as Chief Minister(CM) of Madhya Pradesh(MP) for the **4th time**. He will succeed Kamal Nath who was in power for 15 months.

Key Points:

- i. He was the CM of MP for 13 years since 2005 & resigned in December 2018 after Congress secured a narrow majority which paved way for Kamal Nath to become the CM
- ii. As Kamal Nath resigned before the floor test, Shivraj Singh Chouhan again become the CM. He is the vice president of BJP & is popularly known as 'Mamaji' among his followers.

Govt. set up a committee under Dr V K Paul to prevent & control COVID-19

The government set up a **21 member** high-level technical **committee** of public health experts to guide the people in preventive & control activities

of **COVID-19**.

- i. The committee is headed by NITI Aayog member **V K Paul** & is co-chaired by Union Health Secretary- Preeti Sudan, Director General Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)- Balram Bhargava
- ii. Other members include director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)- Randeep Guleria, director of National Centre for Disease Control(NCDC), Delhi- Sujeet Singh, director of the institute of infectious diseases, Pune- Sanjay Pujari & additional chief secretary of Kerala- Rajan Khobragade.

Justice Bhushan P Dharmadhikari as Chief Justice of Bombay High Court

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari appointed **Justice**

Bhushan P

Dharmadhikari as the Chief Justice of Bombay High Court. He was sworn in at Raj Bhavan. He will succeed **Chief Justice Pradeep Nandrajog**.

- i. President of India, Ram Nath Kovind issued a notification for appointing him as Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.

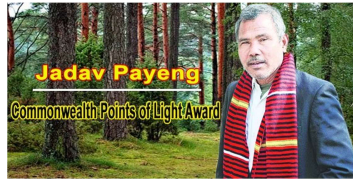
**Honours/ Awards**

Jadav Payeng environmental activist of Assam named as 128th Commonwealth Points of Light Award winner

Jadav Payeng, an environmental activist of Assam also known as the

“Forest man of India”

named as 128th winner of Commonwealth Points of Light Award. He had



spent 30 years of his life for planting trees. He was honored by the Head of Common Wealth the **Queen Elizabeth II** for his exceptional volunteer service in environmental conservation.

- Jadav Payeng ,57 years old had created a sandbar as forest reserve and home to animals ,birds and various species on the bank of river Brahmaputra.The sandbar is a part of **Majuli**, the world’s largest river island.Molai forest also created by Jadav Payeng.
- **Padma Shri Jadav Payeng** also received the Karmayogi Award for 2020 at New Delhi.

Commonwealth Points of Light Award:

The Award was First established by former the U.S. President **George H. W. Bush** in **1990** and it is given to thank inspirational volunteers across the **53** Commonwealth nations.

Ireland Architects Yvonne Farrell & Shelley McNamara wins The Pritzker Architecture prize 2020

Chairman of The Hyatt Foundation Tom Pritzker

announced **Yvonne**

Farrell (69) and Shelley McNamara (68) as the



winner of Pritzker Architecture prize 2020. It is the 1st time an Irish citizen & a female combination won the prize. It is an annual award sponsored by **Hyatt foundation** is regarded as the profession’s highest award.

- They co-founded Grafton Architects in 1978 in dublin
- They gained international fame

PV Sindhu is TOISA Sportsperson of Year 2019, Rohit Sharma named cricketer of the year

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 **Sportsman of the year** as she won gold at the World Championships in Basel, Switzerland.

Key Points:

- TOISA 2019 consists of winners from both men and women categories across 15 sporting disciplines: archery, athletics, badminton, billiards/snooker, boxing, chess, cricket, football, hockey, shooting, squash, table tennis, wrestling, weightlifting and para sports.
- 12 special awards include Sportsman of the Year, Team of the Year, Coach of the Year, Emerging Player of the year, Youth Icon of the year and Lifetime Achievement award.
- Icon of the century:** A special award Icon of the Century was given to 3 time Olympic gold medalist and hockey legend Balbir Singh

Hockey India 3rd annual awards 2019 in New Delhi; Manpreet singh, Rani rampal wins Player of the year awards

Hockey India, the governing body with mandate to conduct all activities for both men and women’s

hockey, has organized its **3rd Annual Awards 2019** at Hotel the Lalit in **New Delhi** to honour the best hockey players and former legends of the game from India. The captain of India men's national field hockey team, Manpreet Singh Pawar (27) & Captain of Indian Women Hockey Team, Rani Rampal (25) have won the Hockey India Dhruv Batra Player of the Year Award 2019 for Men and Women respectively

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal honoured with Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee award for politics : Swarajya Awards 2020

Assam's Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal was honoured with Swarajya Awards 2020 under the category, **Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Award for Politics** at the 6th India Ideas Conclave at Tent City Narmada in Gujarat. The award is instituted by India Foundation & Indic Academy, & presented by External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** and Speaker of People's Majlis of Maldives **Mohamed Nasheed**.

- He received the award for his work in integrating the nation, & to take Mukherjee's vision & philosophy forward

Nupur Kulshrestha becomes Indian Coast Guard's first woman DIG

Nupur Kulshrestha becomes the **1st** woman to be promoted as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Indian Coast Guard. She joined Indian Coast Guard in 1999.



About Indian Coast Guard

On August 18, 1978 ICG was established by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India as an independent Armed force of India & is operated under the Ministry of defence.

Overview of 70th Berlin film festival 2020 awards held in Berlin, Germany; "There Is No Evil" won Golden Bear Award for Best Film

The **70th edition of Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) 2020** was held in **Berlin, Germany** from 20 February–1 March 2020. It was the first under the leadership of new Berlin Film Festival heads, business administration director Mariette Rissenbeek and artistic director Carlo Chatrian. The Opening film of the festival was 'My Salinger Year' & the Closing film was 'There Is No Evil'.

Highlights:

i. Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof's 'There Is No Evil', a film about the death penalty in Iran, has clinched the Golden Bear prize 2020 for the best picture at the Festival.

Telangana State Agricultural University Vice Chancellor Praveen Rao wins Dr MS Swaminathan Award

V Praveen Rao, Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Professor JayaShankar Telangana State Agricultural University (**PJTSAU**), won the 7th edition of **Dr MS Swaminathan Award** for the period 2017- 2019. The award will be conferred on him in June 2020. The award was constituted by Retired Indian Council of Agricultural Research Employees Association (RICAREA) and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited (NSL). **Cash Prize:** The award carries a cash prize of Rs 2 lakh and a citation.

Key Points:

- The Award Selection Committee was held under the Chairmanship of RS Paroda, former Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- The Selection Committee selected Praveen Rao for the award recognising his contributions in the fields of agricultural research, teaching, extension and administration.
- Praveen Rao handled 13 research & 6 consultancy projects on micro irrigation in India, Israel and South

Africa.

TIME Magazine has named Indira Gandhi & Amrit Kaur -“100 women of the year” Project

TIME Magazine created 100 New Covers for the Project ‘100 women of the year’ to recognize selected women or



groups to represent each

year from 1920 to 2019. India’s **Freedom Fighter Amrit Kaur** will be honored as ‘Women of the Year’ for 1947 & **Former prime minister Indira Gandhi** for 1976.

Profiles according to TIME

i.Freedom Fighter Amrit Kaur as ‘Women of the Year’ for 1947

- Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was born in the royal family of Kapurthala.

PV Sindhu named as BBC Indian Sportswoman of the year 2019 and PT Usha won Lifetime Achievement Award

Pusarla Venkata Sindhu, 24 years old, won **BBC** (British Broadcasting Corporation) **Indian Sportswoman of the year award 2019** and former sprinter **Pilavullakandi Thekkeparambil Usha** was awarded with **Lifetime Achievement award**. The BBC award ceremony was held in New Delhi. Union Sports Minister **Shri Kiren Rijiju** was the guest of honour and **Tony Hall**, BBC Director General hosted the awards ceremony event.

Key Points:

i.Nominees of the award: PV Sindhu was selected from the shortlist of 5 players which includes Sprinter **Dutee Chand**, Boxer **Mary Kom**, Wrestler **Vinesh Phogat** and Para-badminton player **Manasi Joshi**. The award was selected through the public vote to

celebrate female athletes across India.

ii.Achievements of PV Sindhu: Sindhu was the first Indian to win badminton World Championship gold in Basel, Switzerland and has 5 World Championships medals.

iii.She is the first Indian badminton player to win a Olympic silver medal. Sindhu, at the age of 17, entered top 20 of the World rankings and has been in the top 10 for the past 4 years.

2019 Airport Service Quality awards-

Kempegowda International Airport adjudged as Best Airport in 2019 ASQ Arrivals Award

Annual Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards recognize and reward the best airports in the world according to ACI’s ‘**ASQ Departure Survey**’ and the ‘**ASQ Arrivals Survey**’. 34 key performance indicators under eight major categories were assessed during the survey & Indian Airports under the Airport Authority of India(AAI) have won many awards under Asia-Pacific region in “**2019 Airport Service Quality (ASQ) awards**”. The award is given by the **Airports Council International (ACI)**.

Dr Jaimanti Bakshi, PGI Professor won Best Citizens of India Gold medal Award

Dr Jaimanti Bakshi, Professor & Unit Head II, Department of Otolaryngology and Head Neck surgery at **PGIMER** (Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research), Chandigarh was awarded with “**Best Citizens of India**”. The award was given by “**GEPR**” (Global Economic Progress and Research Association) during the National Unity conference held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN) .

Key Points:

i.Award Contribution: Dr Bakshi was awarded for her contribution and individual achievements towards the National Development by her services to the people suffering from many ENT (Ear Nose Throat) diseases, head and neck cancer.

ii. GEPR functions under Government of India (GOI).

Chameli Devi Jain Award 2019 for outstanding Women media persons.

Indian journalists **Arfa Khanum Sherwani**, senior editor of the news website 'The Wire' and Bengaluru-based freelancer **Rohini**



Mohan jointly won the "Chameli Devi Jain Award 2019" for outstanding Women media persons. The honourable mention was received by Rukmini S, an independent data-journalist from Chennai.

Zoya Akhter honoured with IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020 held in Mumbai, Maharashtra

Zoya Akhter honoured with IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020 during the 8th India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC) held in Mumbai, Maharashtra on March 5-7, 2020. The award was presented by **Naheed Nenshi** – Mayor of Calgary, Alberta (Canada) in recognition of 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.

Hillel Furstenberg & Gregory Margulis won Abel Prize Laureates 2020

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters named Israeli-American **Hillel Furstenberg** from

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel and Russian-American **Gregory Margulis** from Yale University, USA as winners of the **Abel Prize 2020**. They share the prize & the amount of Norwegian Krone (NOK) 7.5 Million (USD 8.3400).

Key Points:

- i. They are awarded for their "pioneering use of methods from probability & dynamics in group theory, number theory and combinatorics".
- ii. They used probabilistic methods & random walks techniques to solve deep problems in diverse areas of mathematics

Mirza Waheed and Santanu Das win The Hindu Prize 2019

The **Hindu prize** (annual) 2019 is awarded to **Mirza Waheed's** Tell Her Everything (Fiction)-2019 and **Santanu Das's** India, Empire, and First World War Culture: Writings, Images and Songs (Non-Fiction)-2018.

Key Points

- i. Mirza Waheed's novel talks about human ethics, noble love & the corrosive nature of companionship & is published by Westland Publications Limited (Context).
- ii. He also has written 2 other novels namely: The Collaborator(2012), The Book of Gold Leaves(2014) & also is a journalist.
- iii. Santanu Das' book retrieves the intellectual worlds of militants, non-combatants and civilians from India, who were not divided in World War I, is published by Cambridge University Press.
- iv. He also has written Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature(2006).

Indian mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta enters 'Limca Book of Records'

Indian mountaineer **Satyarup Siddhanta** hails from Kolkata, West Bengal, 37 years old,

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**. He also holds the record as the youngest mountaineer in the world to climb both 7 peaks and 7 volcanic summits.

Key Points:

i. Satyarup Siddhanta completed his 7 summits & 7 Volcanic summits in January 2019 and was recognized by LBR.

ii. Records of Satyarup Siddhanta: Satyarup Siddhanta holds Guinness Book of World Records, Asia book of records, India book of Records, Champion Book of Records, British Book of Records etc.,

Sports

Mumbai to host 2023 International Olympic Committee (IOC) session

Mumbai will host the **International Olympic Committee (IOC) session 2023** as recommended by IOC Executive Board and the decision will be approved at the 136th IOC session in Tokyo in July 2020. The IOC session was held in 1983 in New Delhi and the session is going to be held in India after 40 years.

Key Points:

i. The Evaluation Commission had visited Mumbai in October 2019 to study the feasibility of hosting the session & the board selected Mumbai due to the quality of the facilities at the Jio World Centre, Mumbai, Maharashtra.

ii. The year 2023 will be significant for India as it coincides with the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence.

iii. The event will encourage and support the National Olympic Committee of India and all the National Federations to promote & strengthen Olympics sports in the country.

West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard becomes first player to play 500 T20s

West Indies skipper **Kieron Pollard** has become the first 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. Dwayne Bravo is second in the list followed by Chris Gayle.

Former Indian opener Wasim Jaffer announces retirement from all forms of cricket .

Wasim Jaffer (42) a former Indian opening batsman and a domestic cricket giant has



announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. He hails from Mumbai, Maharashtra.

He is the fifth-highest run-scorer in Indian first-class cricket with 10 Ranji trophy titles.

ICC women's T20I Rankings 2020: Shafali verma creates history by becoming world's No.1 batsman at the age of 16

According to the International Cricket Council (ICC) T20I (Twenty-twenty International) rankings 2020 for Women players, the 16-year-old Indian opener **Shafali Verma** climbed 19 places to reach the **top** with 761 points. She replaced New Zealand's Suzie Bates down a notch, who now have 750 points.

Here's the list of top & Indian players in ICC T20 ranking 2020:

Rank	Team Ranking	Batting	Bowling	All-rounder
1	Australia with rating 290	Shafali Verma (India)	Sophie Ecclestone (England)	Sophie Frances Monique Devine (New Zealand)

Rank of Indian players

India with rating 266 – ranked 4 th	Smriti Shrinivas – Mandhana-6 ^h Jemimah Rodrigues-9 th	Deepti Bhagwan Sharma-5 th Radha Prakash Yadav-7 th Poonam yadav-8 th	Deepti Bhagwan Sharma-7 th
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Australia won ICC Women's T20 World cup 2020 by defeating India in Australia

ICC (International Cricket Council) Women's T20 World Cup 2020, the 7th ICC Women's T20 World Cup tournament was held in **Australia** from February 21- March 8, 2020.

The final match, which was played at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on International Women's Day (8 March), **Australia** women's cricket team defeated the Indian women's cricket team by 85 runs and won the title for the 5th time

Overview of 2020 Mexican open held in Acapulco, Mexico from Feb 24-29

The 2020 Mexican Open officially known as **Abierto Mexicano Telcel (AMT) presentado por HSBC** (Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking



Corporation), a lawn tennis tournament was held at Acapulco Princess Mundo Imperial Hard, Acapulco, Mexico between 24 and 29 February 2020. It was played on **Outdoor Hard Court** Surface. It was the **27th** edition of men's Mexican Open and 20th for the women with a prize money of ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) \$1,789,445 (USD) & WTA (Women's Tennis Association) \$ 250,000 (USD).

2020 Mexican Open Winners

Category	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Rafael Nadal Parera (Spain)	Taylor Harry Fritz (America)
Women's Singles	Heather Miriam Watson (United Kingdom)	Leylah Annie Fernandez (Canada)

Overview of 1st Khelo India University Games 2020 held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha;Panjab

University (PB) topped the medal tally

The 1st edition of the **2020 Khelo India University Games (KIUG)** was held from February 22 – March 1, 2020 at KIIT University (Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology University)

in **Bhubaneswar,Odisha.**

The tournament, inaugurated by Prime Minister(PM) Narendra Modi, held with the official mascots of ‘Jay and Bijay’.

Panjab University (PB) emerged as the winner of Khelo India University Games 2020 with 45 medals (17 Gold,18 Silver,10 Bronze).... **Khelo**

India University Games (KIUG) 2020 Medal Tally

by states:

Rank State

Rank	State	Gold	Silver	Bronze
1	Panjab University (PB)	17	18	10
2	Savitribai Phule Pune University, MS	17	11	9
3	Punjabi University, Patiala (PB)	12	6	14

Indian Hockey men’s team ranked 4th for the 1st time, Belgium topped & Women’s team ranked 9th, Netherlands topped : FIH World Rankings 2020

Fédération Internationale de Hockey or International Hockey Federation (FIH) World Rankings 2020, ranks Indian Hockey **men’s** team in **4th place** for the first time with 2064.14 points & **Women’s** team is ranked **9th** with 1543 points. The men’s list is topped by Belgium for the first time with 2481.34 & women’s list is topped by Netherlands with 2626.03 points.

i.Indian Men’s team’s excellent performance in the 1st 3 rounds of the 2nd edition of FIH Hockey Pro League paved the way

New Zealand won the test series against India held in New Zealand

The Indian men’s cricket team Played 2-test matches against New Zealand as part of the India Tour of New

Zealand 2020 from February 21- March 2, 2020.

The matches were held in Basin Reserve, Wellington (1st test) and Hagley Oval, Christchurch (2nd test) in New Zealand.

New Zealand made a clean sweep with 2–0 scores in the two-match Test series after beating India by 7 wickets in the second and final Test.

The highlights of the match are as follows:

i.**Ross Taylor** became the 1st New Zealand male cricketer to play **100 matches in all three formats** of cricket. Taylor made his Test debut in 2007.

ii.Playing his first series, New Zealand bowler Kyle Jamieson was voted man of the match. He took 5 wickets in the first innings, and came in ninth order and scored a crucial 49 runs with the bat.while Tim Southee, who took the most 14 wickets in the series,

was adjudged Man of the Series.

iii.With this victory, the **New Zealand team reached the 2nd position in the ICC (International Cricket Council) Test team rankings.** While the **Indian team remains in first place** with 116 rating points.

Highlights of Asian/Oceanian Olympic qualifying event 2020 held in Amman, Jordan

The **Asian/Oceanian Boxing Olympic Qualifiers event 2020** was held at the Prince Hamzah Hall in **Amman, Jordan** from march 3- 11, 2020. A total of **9 Indian boxers** qualified in this event for Tokyo 2020 Olympics, which is to be held at New National Stadium in Tokyo, Japan from 24 July 2020 – 9 August 2020.

Medal tally: China emerged as top of the medals standings with 6 medals (4 gold,2 bronze) in this event, while India ranked 9th with 8 medals (2 Silver, 6 Bronze)...Click here to Read More

Jaydev Unadkat led Saurashtra Cricket team won Ranji Trophy title 2019-20

Jaydev Dipakbhai Unadkat, 28 years old, led

Saurashtra team and won the maiden Ranji Trophy title, on the basis of earning 44 runs in the first innings defeating Bengal team at the



Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium, Rajkot, Gujarat.

Key Points:

- i. The final of the Ranji trophy is headed towards a draw, then the winner Saurashtra is decided on the basis of a first-innings lead, as per the rule.
- ii. Saurashtra team has ended as runners-up three times in the last seven Ranji seasons.
- iii. **Fact:** Previous teams of Saurashtra were Nawanagar & Western India. Nawanagar won the Ranji trophy in 1936-37, while Western India won the trophy in 1943-44.

About Ranji Trophy:

- The **Ranji Trophy** is a domestic first-class cricket championship played in India between multiple teams representing regional & state cricket associations.
- The most successful champion of Ranji trophy was Mumbai (41 times).

Table tennis star Sharath kamal wins men's singles title at ITTF challenger plus Oman Open 2020 held in Muscat

Achanta Sharath Kamal (37), a professional table tennis player from Tamil Nadu (TN) has ended the title wait of a decade by winning the **ITTF (International Table Tennis Federation) Challenger Plus Oman Open 2020** men's singles title by defeating Portugal's top seed Marcos Freitas with 4-2 scores in the final played at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Muscat, Oman.

Key Points:

- i. Sharath won his last title at the **2010 Egypt Open**. He then reached the semi-finals twice at the 2011 Morocco Open and the 2017 India Open but failed to win the trophy.
- ii. Sharath made a stunning comeback after trailing in two games to win the semi-final by defeating **Kirill Skachkov** of Russia.

ATK FC won ISL trophy for the 3rd time by defeating Chennaiyin FC

ATK FC (Football Club) won the **ISL (Indian Super League) trophy** for the 3rd time following a 3-1 win against **Chennaiyin FC** in the final match held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Margao, Goa.

Key Points:

- i. Javier Hernandez and Edu Garcia were the goal scorers for ATK FC in the final match.
- ii. **About ATK FC:** ATK (previously known as Atlético de Kolkata) is an Indian professional football club based in Kolkata, West Bengal, that plays in the Indian Super League (ISL) under licence from the All India Football Federation (**AIFF**).
- iii. The Hero I-League, formerly known as National Football League, is one among the two co-existing premier football leagues in India together with Indian Super League (ISL).
- iv. Mohun Bagan Athletic Club has won the Hero I-League Champions 2019-20 by defeating Aizawl FC at Kalyani Stadium, West Bengal. Bagan Club lifted the title for the second time, even when four rounds are still to go in the season.

Covid-19 pandemic: Tokyo 2020 Olympics postponed to 2021; First time in 124 years

Japan's Prime Minister (PM) **Shinzo Abe** and the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) **Thomas Bach** have agreed to postpone the **Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games** for a year due to the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. Now the Tokyo

Olympics, which is scheduled on July 24 – August 9, 2020 will take place in **2021** and the new dates will be announced later.

Key Points:

i. This is the first time in the Olympics' 124-year history that it has been postponed due to virus, because earlier the Olympic Games have been canceled only because of world war.

ii. Even though the games will be held in 2021, it will remain known as the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

iii. Earlier, the Olympic flame arrived in Japan after a torch lighting ceremony in ancient Olympia, Greece. Canada & Australia have announced to withdraw from Tokyo Olympics 2020 due to the spread of Coronavirus disease rapidly across the world.

iv. Background: The Olympic Games have faced political boycott (Moscow 1980) and terrorism (Munich 1972) but the Games have been canceled due to war only.

The Olympic Games Berlin 1916, Tokyo 1940 and London 1944 forced to be scrapped due to the global conflicts.

Canada becomes 1st country to back out of Tokyo Olympics 2020

The Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Committee jointly announced that it would not send any of its athletes to participate in the **Tokyo Olympics 2020** which is scheduled on July 24, 2020 in Japan, due to the spread of Coronavirus disease rapidly



across the world. Thus, Canada becomes the first country to back out of Tokyo Olympics 2020.

Key Points:

i. Canada joins the league of the countries, including Norway, Slovenia and Brazil, that have urged the International Olympic Committee to postpone the event to the next year (2021).

ii. Canada sent 314 athletes to the Rio Olympics in 2016, who brought 22 medals to the country and some of the most notable athletes included the swimmer Penny Oleksiak & the sprinter, Andre De Grasse.

Obituaries

Former Chairman & CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch passed away

John Francis Welch Jr., former chairman & CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of General Electric (GE) Company passed away at the age of 84,



in New York, US (United States). He was born on March 19, 1935 in Massachusetts, US. He grew **General Electric company** during the 1980s & 1990s into the most valuable public company in the US.

Key Points:

- i.About Jack Welch:** He was also known as “**Neutron Jack**” & under his guidance the GE’s market value grew from \$12 billion to \$410 billion.
- ii.**In 1999, Fortune named him the “Manager of the Century” and the Financial Times named him “One of the 3 most admired business leaders in the world”.

DMK party general secretary K Anbazhagan passed away at 97

Kalyanasundaram Anbazhagan, DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) party **General Secretary** for 43 years, passed away at the age of 97 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). He was born as Ramaih on December 19, 1922 Kattoor, Thiruvavur district, TN.

Key Points:

i.About Anbazhagan: He was a sound academician and served general secretary of DMK party for 9 times from 1977.

ii.9 times MLA & 1 term Lok Sabha MP: He also served as MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for 9 times and a Lok Sabha MP (Member of Parliament).

Former Law Minister and former governor of Karnataka & Kerala H. R. Bhardwaj passed away

Hansraj Bhardwaj, former Union Law Minister and former governor of Karnataka & Kerala, Senior Congress leader passed away at the age of 83 in New Delhi, India. He was born in Garhi Sampla village in Rohtak district, Haryana. He also holds the record of India’s **second** longest serving Law Minister.



Key Points:

- i.About H.R. Bhardwaj:** He served as Rajya Sabha member for 5 terms from April 1982 to May 2009.
- ii.Law Minister:** He served as the Minister of State for Law and Justice in the governments led by Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and P.V. Narasimha Rao and also served as the Cabinet Minister of Law and Justice holding the portfolio between 2004 to 2009 in the Manmohan Singh Ministry.
- iii.**Bhardwaj also introduced the concept of rural courts (gram nyayalayas) during his period.

Former world champion boxer Roger Mayweather passes away

The former world champion boxer and trainer, **Roger Mayweather** passed away at the age of 58 due to health-related illness. Roger Mayweather won the world champion boxer title in two weight classes.

Key Points:

- i.**He won his first 17 career fights and captured the world title in World Boxing Association junior **lightweight** and earned the World Boxing Council junior **welterweight** title in 1987.
- ii.**He was born on April 24, 1961 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, US. The United States named him Black Mamba, who is trainer and uncle of Floyd Mayweather’s.

Indian football legend P.K. Banerjee passed away at 83

Indian football player **Pradip Kumar**

Banerjee passed away at the age of 83 in Kolkata, West Bengal. He was born on June 23, 1936, in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal.



Key Points:

i. P.K Banerjee scored 65 international goals in 84 appearances for the national team.

ii. **Banerjee** led India in the 1960 Rome Olympics and also represented India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

iii. **Awards & honours:** He was one of the first recipients of Arjuna Award when the awards were instituted in 1961. He was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri in 1990 and was named Indian Footballer of the 20th century by International Federation of Football History & Statistics (IFFHS).

Country music icon & 3 times grammy winner

Kenny Rogers passed away at 81

Kenneth Ray Rogers, longtime star of country music, passed away at the age of 81 in Colbert, Georgia, US (United States). He was born on August 21, 1938, in Houston, Texas, US.

Key Points:

i. **About Kenny Rogers:** He was inducted to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2013, for his “distinctive & husky voice”.

ii. **Awards:** Kenneth Rogers was a six-times Country Music Awards (CMA) winner and 3 times Grammy award winner.

Famous Bollywood actress Nimmi passed away at 87

Nawab Banoo, famous Bollywood actress passed away at the age of 87 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. She was also known as **Nimmi**, who was popular in the early 1950s & 1960s of Hindi films. She was born on February 18, 1933 in Agra, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

Key Points:

i. **About Nimmi:** She made her debut with legendary actor- director, Raj Kapoor’s “Barsaat” in 1949, who had given her the screen name of Nimmi and her last screen appearance was in Love and God (1986).

ii. **Popular films:** Some of the memorable movies of Nimmi includes Mehboob Khan’s Aan (1952), Daag (1952), Amar (1954), Uran Khatola (1955), Basant Bahar (1956) & Mere Mehboob (1963).

Padma Vibhushan awardee Satish Gujral passed away at 94

Renowned artist and architect **Satish Gujral** passed away at the age of 94 in New Delhi, India. He was born on December 25, 1925, in Jhelum, Punjab and studied art in Mumbai and Lahore.

Key Points:

i. **About Satish Gujral:** Satish Gujral was the younger brother of India’s former Prime Minister (PM) Inder Kumar Gujral between 1997 to 1998.

ii. He Lost his hearing at the age of nine when he knew only Punjabi & could read a little Urdu. Gujral regained his hearing in 1998 after surgery.

iii. **Awards:** Satish Gujral received the second-highest civilian award of India “Padma Vibhushan” in 1999 for his contributions to art.

iv. **Works:** He has designed the building of the Belgium Embassy in New Delhi and the alphabet mural on the outside wall of Delhi High Court.

Brahmakumaris chief Dadi Janki passed away at 104

Rajyogini Dadi Janki, the chief of **Brahmakumaris Sansthan** (world's largest spiritual organization run by women) passed away at the age of 104 in Mount Abu, Rajasthan. She was born on January 1, 1916 in Hyderabad city located in Sindh province now in Pakistan.

Key Points:

- i. About Rajyogini Dadi Janki:** In the 1970s, she moved to western countries to establish Indian Philosophy, Raj Yoga and human values.
- ii.** She was also served as the brand ambassador of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) by the government for her work in the field of maintaining cleanliness.

German Minister Thomas Schaefer passed away at 54

Thomas Schaefer, Finance Minister of Hesse (Germany), 54 years old, has committed suicide apparently after becoming "deeply worried" over how to cope with the economic fallout from the Coronavirus. He was born on February 22, 1966, in Hemer, North Rhine-Westphalia, West Germany.



Key Points:

- i. About Thomas Schaefer:** Thomas served as Finance Minister of Hesse for 10 years (2010-20). He was a lawyer & belonged to the CDU (Christian Democratic Union of Germany) party. He was the possible successor of Volker Bouffier.
- ii. Fact:** Hesse is home to Germany's financial capital Frankfurt, where major lenders like Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank have their headquarters. The European Central bank is also located in Frankfurt.

Important Days with theme

World wildlife day celebrated on 3 March 2020

On **March 3, 2020**, The **World Wildlife Day (WWD)** has been celebrated based on the **theme**

"Sustaining all life on Earth". The day aims to celebrate the beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora & raises awareness for conservation of wildlife.

i. The main objective of this day is to familiarize the common people with the diverse forms of wildlife and flora. At the same time people have to create awareness about the many benefits for their conservation.



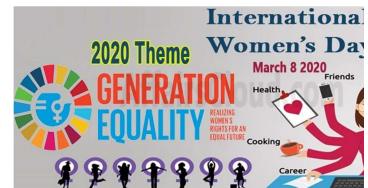
International Women's Day (IWD) 2020 observed on March 8

Since 1977, the United Nations (UN) Women is organizing International Women's Day (IWD) all over the world on March

8 to recognize women for their efforts in changing the individual lives as well as of nations. The day celebrates women's achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political.

The 2020 theme for IWD was **"I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights"**.

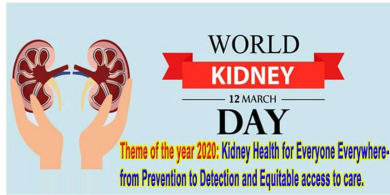
PM Modi launched "She Inspires Us" campaign; 7 women took over PM's twitter account



World Kidney Day was observed on March 12, 2020

The **World Kidney Day** is observed on **March 12, 2020**, to raise

awareness on the importance of kidneys to our health and also reduce the impact of



kidney diseases, its associated health problems. This year marks the **15th Observance of World Kidney Day** which is observed globally on the second Thursday of March every year since 2006.

The theme of the year 2020: Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere- from **Prevention to Detection** and **Equitable access** to care.

World Sleep Day was observed on March 13, 2020

The **World Sleep Day** was observed on March 13, 2020. The day creates awareness about the importance of healthy sleep, to lessen the burden of sleep problems on society through better prevention and management of sleep disorders.

The theme of the year 2020: “Better Sleep, Better Life, Better Planet”.

Key Points:

- i. The day is celebrated annually since 2008 and the event is organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society, formerly known as the World Association of Sleep Medicine (WASM).
- ii. World Sleep Day will be held on Friday annually before **Spring Vernal Equinox** of each year.

World Consumer Day 2020

The **World Consumer Day 2020** was observed on March 15, 2020. The day is celebrated every year on March 15 to spread awareness about consumer



rights and needs since 1983. It is an initiative by **Consumer International** which is a membership organisation for consumer groups around the world.

Theme of the year 2020: ‘**The Sustainable Consumer.**’

Key Points:

- i. **About Consumer rights:** According to the Consumer rights each customer has the “rights to have information about different aspects of a good or service such as its quality, quantity, potency, purity, price & standard”.
- ii. In 2019, the Government has enacted the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** replacing the old 1986 Act to protect the consumers and timely settlement of disputes.

National Vaccination Day 2020 is observed on March 16

National Vaccination Day is observed every year on **16th March 2020**.

This day is celebrated throughout India to create awareness and the importance of getting timely vaccinations.



Key Points:

- i. This day was first observed in **1995** and the first dose of Oral Polio Vaccine was given in India. Vaccination protects children from serious illness and complications of vaccine-preventable diseases.
- ii. If children are not vaccinated they can spread diseases to the other children who are yet to be vaccinated and to people with weak immune systems. In order to prevent such issues, polio vaccination is provided.
- iii. On **March 27, 2014**, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared India a **polio-free country**.

World Sparrow Day 2020: March 20

World Sparrow Day (2020) is observed every year on **March 20** and was first celebrated in 2010 initiated by the Nature Forever Society (NFS). This day is celebrated globally to spread awareness about the importance of sparrows and their major functional conservation values.

**Key Points:**

- i. The theme of the World Sparrow Day is **I LOVE Sparrows**. The theme aims to highlight the love that people have for sparrows.
- ii. This day is also celebrated to use it as a platform for conserving sparrows and urban biodiversity. House sparrow was declared the **state bird of Delhi** in 2012.

International Day of Happiness 2020: March 20

On March 20th of every year, the United Nations declares “**International Day of Happiness**” to be celebrated worldwide.

The day creates awareness of the importance of

happiness in everyone’s life around the world.

Theme of the year 2020: “Happiness For All Together”.

The theme also conveys to promote and advance worldwide solidarity & unity, in winning the global fight against COVID 19 (Coronavirus disease).

**International Day of Forests 2020: March 21**

The **International Day of Forests (IDF)** is observed annually on March 21 to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests.



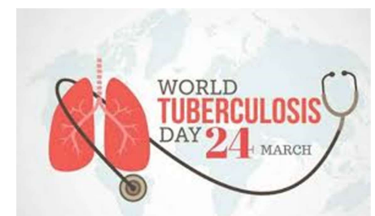
Theme of the year 2020: “Forests and Biodiversity”.

Key Points:

- i. The UN (United Nations) General Assembly proclaimed March 21 as the International Day of Forests (IDF) in 2012 and the day has been observed since 2013.
- ii. The IDF was organized by the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in association with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations in the field.
- iii. On this day, the countries are encouraged to undertake local, national and international efforts to organize activities such as tree planting campaigns, symposiums, wildlife education.

World Tuberculosis Day 2020: March 24**World Tuberculosis**

Day is being observed on March 24 globally to raise awareness of Tuberculosis (TB)



disease and the efforts made to eliminate the disease. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that

causes TB. World TB Day is one of the 8 official global health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Theme of the year 2020: 'It's time'.

The theme aims to take urgent steps to save lives. "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign" is also held to prevent TB.

World Meteorological Day 2020: March 23

The World Meteorological

Day (WMD 2020) is

observed every year

on **March 23** organized by

the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in the year 1950. The theme of WMD 2020 is "**Climate and Water**".



i. It is celebrated globally to showcase the efforts of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to the safety and wellbeing of society.

ii. This day also commemorates the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization in 1950.

World Water Day 2020: March 22

The World Water Day is observed globally

on **March 22** every year, to highlight the importance of freshwater.

Theme of the year

2020: "Water and Climate Change".

The theme highlights the urgent importance of strengthening water security & establishing sustainable water supply in the face of changing climate



conditions worldwide.

Key Points:

i. World Water Day celebrates water & raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water and the main purpose of the day is to achieve Sustainable Development Goal which includes **water and sanitation for all** by 2030.

ii. The World Water Day was formally proposed in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

World Theatre Day 2020: March 27

World Theatre Day (WTD) is celebrated every year on 27th March by ITI (International Theatre Institute) centers and International Theatre Community. The day promotes the values of arts and its forms across the world. The day was initiated by ITI in 1961.

Key Points:

i. Every year, various national and international events are organized on this day and ITI selects an outstanding theatre personality to write the message for World Theatre Day.

ii. The messages given by renowned theatre artists focus on the theme of "Theatre and a Culture of Peace".

iii. The first World Theatre Day International message was written by Jean Cocteau in 1962.