

# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

## CURRENT AFFAIRS - APRIL 2020

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## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched “Lifeline Udan” flights for domestic and overseas movement of essential cargo.
  - The objective is to ensure unhindered supply of medical products across the country.
- ❖ An Indian Air Force (IAF) C-130J transport aircraft recently delivered 6.2 tonne of essential medicines and hospital consumables to Maldives under Operation Sanjeevani.
- ❖ National Cadet Corps (NCC) has offered a helping hand to civilian authorities in the country’s fight against COVID-19 by extending the services of cadets under ‘Exercise NCC Yogdan’.
- ❖ The flying car-maker PAL-V of The Netherlands pans to set up a flying car manufacturing unit at Gujarat in India. PAL-V stands for Personal Air Land Vehicle.
- ❖ Virologist Minal Dakhve Bhosale managed to provide India's first coronavirus testing kit for evaluation. She is the research and development chief of Mylab Discovery in Pune.
- ❖ North Macedonia officially became the 30th member of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military alliance. In June 2018, Macedonia and Greece agreed to rename Macedonia as Republic of North Macedonia.
- ❖ Nupur Kulshrestha becomes the first woman to be promoted as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Indian Coast Guard.
- ❖ Aurangabad Airport in Maharashtra was renamed to Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Airport.
  - Sambhaji was the second ruler of the Maratha kingdom.
  - He was the eldest son of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire and his first wife Saibai.
- ❖ On 23rd March, the Punjab Government imposed full curfew across Punjab without any relaxation, become first State to impose full curfew in India due to Covid 19 breakout.
- ❖ State Bank of India set up a mobile ATM in Vellore for its customer’s convenience.
- ❖ The Odisha Government recently launched “Mo Prativa” programme in collaboration with UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Funds).
- ❖ IIT Roorkee has developed low cost portable ventilator called “Prana Vayu”.
- ❖ The Food Corporation of India has set a new record by moving about 1.93 lakh tonnes of food grains in a single day on April 3, 2020.
- ❖ Spain plans Universal Basic Income to Fix Coronavirus Economic Crisis.
  - It will be the first European Nation to do so.

- ❖ The Municipalities are now using the Integrated Command and Control Centres built under “Smart Cities” mission as war rooms of COVID-19.
- ❖ On April 7, 2020, the world’s third largest economy, Japan declared emergency to combat the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Japan is known for its higher old age population.
- ❖ The SAFE scheme is SIDBI Assistance to Facilitate Emergency Response (SAFE) against Corona Virus.
  - Under this, the SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) bank will provide emergency working capital of Rs 1 crore to small and medium enterprises.
- ❖ The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India in collaboration with UNICEF has launched Digital Communication Strategy for the Tribal Gatherers to work safely.
  - The programme highlights the importance of social distancing.
- ❖ The Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced Operation Shield in the containment zones of National Capital Region.
  - SHIELD stands for Sealing, Home quarantine, isolation and tracing, essential supply, local sanitation and door-to-door checks.
- ❖ The Punjab government said it was extending the COVID-19 lockdown in the state till May 1, becoming the second state to do after Odisha.
  - Punjab too has said it may allow relief to farmers in some districts from the lockdown to harvest the winter-spring crop.
- ❖ The Dhaaga initiative of TATA Power has so far manufactured and supplied 1.2 lakh masks in the states of Maharashtra and Jharkhand.
  - This is the biggest mask distribution of any corporate in India.
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs, exempted fishing and aquaculture industries from Lock Down.
  - Earlier, the agricultural activities were exempted.
- ❖ The European Union (EU) has unveiled a grand €500bn corona rescue deal to cushion the impact of the coronavirus pandemic across Europe.
  - The Governments can apply for access to a total of €240 billion being made available under ESM (European Stability Mechanism), the bailout fund created during the eurozone debt crisis.
- ❖ India has three strategic petroleum reserves at Vizag (1.3 million tonnes), Padur (2.5 million tonnes) and Mangalore (1.5 million tonnes).
- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resources Development has launched a week long campaign called “Bharat Padhe Online Campaign”.
  - The campaign aims to improve online education in India.

- ❖ The Madras High Court retired judge V. Kanagaraj has been appointed as the State Election Commissioner (SEC) of Andhra Pradesh following the overnight expulsion of N. Ramesh Kumar through the ordinance route.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government on 7th April issued a Government Order (GO) formally notifying the formation of the State's 38th district with Mayiladuthurai as its headquarters.
  - The new district has been created after the bifurcation of Nagapattinam district.
- ❖ Under National Rural Livelihood Mission, there are more than 690 lakh Self Help Groups working all over the country.
- ❖ The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has clarified that the contributions to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund or the State relief fund will not qualify as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure, while any donation to the PM CARES Fund will qualify.
- ❖ The Khadi and Village Industries Commission has developed double layered Khadi masks.
  - The masks are made only from cotton and wool that are procured from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has directed the states and union territories to take welfare measures for migrants in the country.
  - The Inter-State Migrant Workers Act, 1979 aims to safeguard migrants in the country.
- ❖ Thrissur Pooram has been cancelled for the first time on account of the COVID-19 outbreak.
  - It is called the 'mother of all festivals' in Kerala.
- ❖ The Delhi Government launched "Assess Koro Na" application to conduct door to door survey.
  - The application has been launched in COVID-19 containment zones.
- ❖ The Government of India launched the "Krishi Rath" application to help farmers to transport their agriculture produce to the mandis.
  - The traders can learn farm produce from the application and can consolidate loads posted by different farmers.
- ❖ The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is to finance 500 million USD projects in India to help the country improve its health care systems.
  - The Asian Development Bank recently announced to support India with 2.2 billion USD of funds.
- ❖ The National Conference on Kharif crops fixed the target of food grains for the year 2020-21 at 298 million tonnes.
  - The target was 291 million tonnes for the year 2019-20.



- ❖ The Indian Army is to extend its support to the Narela Quarantine Centre.
  - It is the largest quarantine centre in the country and was established by the Delhi Government.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh became the first state to geo tag community kitchens.
  - It joined hands with Google to geo tag community kitchens in the state.
- ❖ US President Donald Trump appointed Indian-American Sudarsanam Babu as the member of National Science Board of USA.
- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has introduced two new helpline numbers in its control room to help needy amid the coronavirus crisis.
  - The helpline numbers are 1930 (all India toll-free number) and 1944 (dedicated to the Northeast).
- ❖ India's oldest National Park Jim Corbett National Park, situated in Uttarakhand, has built isolation wards for animals.
  - It is India's first quarantine facility for animals.
- ❖ India's third-largest motorbike manufacturer TVS Motor has sealed a \$20 million deal to buy British brand Norton Motorcycles.
  - It is the latest swoop by an Asian company on an iconic British brand, after Jaguar Land Rover became part of Tata Motors.
- ❖ The IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva 10 named former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan and 11 others to her external advisory group.
  - It is to provide perspectives from around the globe on key developments and policy issues including responses to Covid 19.
- ❖ After Goa, Manipur becomes COVID-19 free.
  - It is the second state in India.
- ❖ The Tata Group has contributed about 40,000 PCR kits worth about ₹8 crore to the Tamil Nadu government to help in the testing of COVID-19 cases in the State.
- ❖ The daily wage of the workers of the Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme has been enhanced by rupees 27 to 256 from 229 in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ Seven leading IITs (IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras and IIT Roorkee) have decided not to participate in Times Higher Education (THE) world rankings.
  - They doubt the transparency of the THE rankings.
- ❖ The Gujarat government has given its the green signal for the third edition "Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan".
  - It is a conservation plan to deepen water bodies in the state before monsoon.

- ❖ Saiyam is a mobile application developed by the Pune Municipal Corporation under Smart Cities Mission.
  - It is developed to effectively track the home-quarantined citizens and ensure that they are staying in the home.
- ❖ VIDYADAAN 2.0 is a national program for inviting e-learning Content contributions.
  - It was launched by Union Human Resource Development Ministry.
- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resources and Development has released an alternative academic calendar for the primary and upper primary classes (Upto 8th).
- ❖ The State Government of Karnataka has launched “Apthamitra” mobile application and helpline to fight COVID-19.
- ❖ The government has approved reconstitution of the National Shipping Board to be headed by former Director General of Shipping Malini Shankar.
  - It is the highest advisory body on matters related to Indian shipping.
- ❖ Sikkim is the only Indian state that has remained COVID-19 free from the start of the outbreak.
  - Tripura become the third Corona Free State in India after Goa and Manipur
- ❖ The Former State Election Commissioner of Tamilnadu Cho Iyer IAS has been appointed as the Chairman for the Welfare Board of the Denotified Community.
- ❖ Khongjom Day is celebrated in Manipur every year on April 23 to pay tribute to the war heroes of Anglo-Manipuri War 1891.
  - They had sacrificed their lives fighting at the Kheba hills of Khongjom in Manipur against the British to protect freedom of Manipur.
- ❖ The Supreme Court of India pronounced that it is the quantity of the banned drug mixture that will decide the punishment of the offender and not the purity.
  - The clarification was given by the apex court under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985.
- ❖ The retired IAS officer Sanjay Kothari was sworn in as the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
  - He was sworn in by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- ❖ NASA has developed new ventilator tailored specifically to treat COVID-19 patients.
  - The device is called VITAL - Ventilator Intervention Technology Accessible Locally.

- ❖ Five of the eight north east states namely Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh have become COVID-19 free.
  - The other three states namely Meghalaya, Assam and Mizoram have not reported new cases.
- ❖ Saudi Arabia has abolished flogging as a death penalty punishment for crime on Juveniles.
  - Now judges will have to choose between fines, jail sentences and non-custodial alternatives such as jail sentences.
- ❖ Unified Geologic Map of the Moon (1:5,000,000 scale) was released virtually by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) and the Lunar Planetary Institute.
  - It is the first ever digital, unified, global, geological map of the moon.
- ❖ The Pune-based Vaccine Company Serum Institute of India said it plans to start production of the Covid-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University.
  - Already it has collaborated with Oxford University, one of the seven global institutions manufacturing the vaccine, for a malaria vaccine project in the past.

## **TAMIL NADU**

### **Hilly Areas Rules, 2020**

- ❖ The Tamilnadu State government has decided to regularise unapproved layouts and plots certain urban and rural areas, including hill areas.
- ❖ It has notified the Tamil Nadu Regularisation of Unapproved Layouts and Plots in Hilly Areas Rules, 2020.
- ❖ A large number of unapproved layouts have come up in hill areas, which were under the purview of the Hill Area Conservation Authority (HACA).
- ❖ A Government Order issued by the Housing and Urban Development Department on March 30 said most plots in such layouts have been bought by “poor and innocent people”.
- ❖ These layouts can’t be put back to their original use.
- ❖ However, the G.O. covers only unapproved layouts in areas which do not fall under the elephant corridor and certain other parts.
- ❖ The order was only to benefit residential constructions and not commercial establishments
- ❖ The state government is yet to notify all the elephant corridors and announce the buffer zones around sanctuaries



### Disinfection tunnel at Thennampalayam

- ❖ In India, a first of its kind disinfection tunnel has been set up at the Thennampalayam market in Tirupur, Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The system is a brainchild of D Venkatesh who owns a water treatment company in Tirupur.



### Tamilnadu CM's recent announcements

- ❖ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami announced that the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department will launch a TV channel Thirukkivil.
- ❖ A traditional paddy variety protection center will be started in Needamangalam in Thiruvavur District.
- ❖ The campus of the Tamil Nadu State Council for Higher Education will be named as Dr. J. Jayalalithaa campus to honour her contribution to enrolment of students in higher education in the State.
- ❖ A statue of Jayalalithaa will also be installed on the campus.
- ❖ The CM also said that a statue of Vellaiya Thevan, the lieutenant of Veerpandiaya Kattabomman will be installed at the mani mandapam in Vallanadu, Thoothukudi district.
- ❖ The CM said a pharmaceutical park will be created at the industrial park in Cheyyaru in Tiruvannamalai district.
- ❖ The CM said thuppuravu panialargal (conservancy workers) will hereafter be called thoymai panialargal (cleanliness workers), the long pending demand of the workforce.
- ❖ He said that the Miyawaki method of afforestation, a Japanese technique, would be used to expand the green cover in unused open spaces in urban areas.

## **Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939**

- ❖ Under this Act, the entire Tamilnadu state has been declared as the Corona Prone Zone.
- ❖ Places such as government and private buildings and hospitals, apartments, and firms should have sufficient numbers of taps and wash basins, and provide liquid hand wash or soaps for visitors.
- ❖ Visitors should be allowed to enter and leave the premises only after washing their hands.
- ❖ In case of any information on COVID-19 cases, laboratories, hospitals and doctors should inform the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine within 24 hours in writing.
- ❖ Government and private hospitals should maintain their premises by taking up frequent disinfection measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ The Tamilnadu State government has declared COVID-19 a notified disease under the Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939.
- ❖ The regulations were prescribed under the Epidemics Diseases Act, 1897.
- ❖ Those who fail to adhere to the instructions would face action under the provisions of the above said two Acts.
- ❖ In addition, the violators would face six months' imprisonment or fine or both under section 188 of Indian Penal Code (IPC).
- ❖ The following Laws are in favour of taking preventive measures during epidemic and pandemic crisis.
  - Sections 260 and 270 (Negligent or malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) of IPC
  - Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939,
  - Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897
  - Disaster Management Act, 2005.

## **Fund at Doorsteps**

- ❖ For customers who cannot afford to go out due to the curfew, Indian Postal Payments Bank (IPPB) has introduced Fund at Doorsteps with the help of Aadhar.
- ❖ Under this one can withdraw up to 10000 rupees.
- ❖ Under this one can withdraw money from any of the bank account which has been linked with Aadhar through Aadhar Enabled Payment System.
- ❖ The customer has to place his or her finger on the biometric device with the postman to authenticate the identity
- ❖ IPPB is a 100% government owned Public Sector Bank, operating with the Department of Posts under Ministry of Communications.

- ❖ On 19 August 2015 India Post got licence to run a payments bank from Reserve Bank of India.
- ❖ The pilot project of IPPB was inaugurated on 30 January 2017 at Raipur and Ranchi.
- ❖ It rolled out the Aadhaar enabled payment system services in September 2019.

### **New Chairman of TNPSC**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has appointed senior IAS officer Ka. Balachandran as the chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC).
  - The Current Chairperson is Arulmozhi.

### **Reverse vaccinology**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University has developed a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 through reverse vaccinology.
- ❖ Using 'reverse vaccinology', vaccinations were developed for meningococcal and staphylococcal infections all through the world.
- ❖ In the first phase, the university has developed a synthetic polypeptide that could bind the viral genome, and is all set to move to the next phase of research.
- ❖ The university is yet to name the polypeptide.
- ❖ Its Vice-Chancellor is Sudha Seshayyan.

### **Arogyam thittam**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu State government has started the project called "Arogyam".
- ❖ Under this it has started distributing a powder mix of Kabasura Kudineer and Nilavembu Kudineer - a siddha medicine.
- ❖ This is not the treatment process for COVID -19 but only to boost immunity.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Invoking of Indian Penal Code (IPC)**

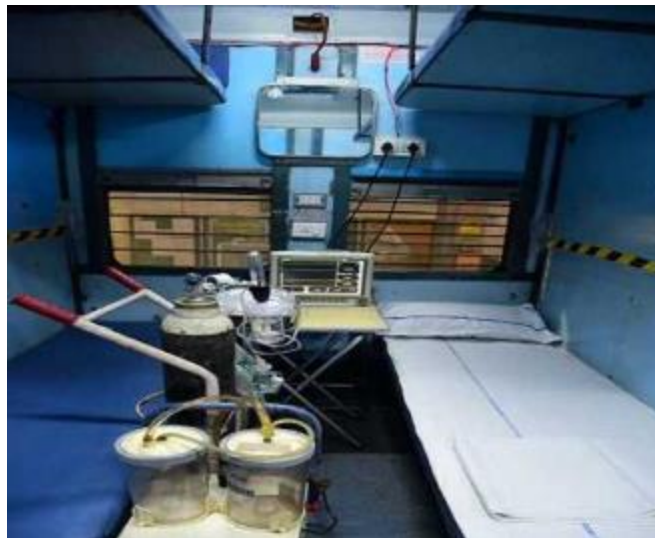
- ❖ Sections 269 & 270 IPC are being invoked against persons who malignantly do any act which is likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life.
- ❖ While Section 269 provides for a jail term of six months and/or fine, Section 270 provides for a jail term of two years and/or fine.



- ❖ In Section 270, the word ‘malignantly’ indicates a deliberate intention on the part of the accused.

### **Railway’s isolation beds**

- ❖ The Indian Railways until 31 March, 2020 has modified 20,000 coaches to accommodate 3.2 lakh people.
- ❖ The Indian Railway coaches have been converted into isolation wards to fulfil the isolated quarantine requirements to treat COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ One single coach is expected to support 16 beds of isolation.
- ❖ The coaches will also have nurses cabins.
- ❖ Only non-AC coaches are being converted into quarantine coaches.
- ❖ There are around 18 railway zones in the country.



### **Stranded in India**

- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism had launched “Stranded in India”, a portal aimed to support foreign tourists.
- ❖ The portal aims to disseminate information to the foreign tourists stuck far away from their homeland amidst COVID-19 threats and Lock Down.

### **Community Forest Resources**

- ❖ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs recently commissioned a study about Community Forest resource Rights.
- ❖ According to the study, broad guidelines are needed to implement Community Forest Rights.
- ❖ The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, also called the FRA act defines the Community Forest resource Rights.

- ❖ It also says that a village shall get its traditionally held forest land.
- ❖ It empowers the Gram Sabhas the right to protect, conserve and regenerate.
- ❖ The 73rd amendment of the constitution also empowers the Gram Sabhas to govern community forests.
- ❖ However, there are no guidelines to implement Community Forest Rights.
- ❖ The State Governments should create guidelines according to the local condition and their tradition.

### What is a Community Forest?



### Ordinance on PM Cares Fund

- ❖ The Government of India passed an ordinance to allow 100% exemption of Tax on donations made on PM Cares Funds.
- ❖ The ordinance has also extended the time limit of direct and indirect tax filings to June 30, 2020.

### Medical devices as drugs

- ❖ The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) revised the ceiling price of 883 scheduled formulations.
- ❖ The NPPA has notified 24 classes of medical devices as drugs under Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.
- ❖ The devices are to be monitored and treated as drug for quality control and price monitoring.

### International painting competition on COVID-19

- ❖ The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) launched global painting competition.
- ❖ The Title is "United against CORONA-Express through Art".
- ❖ The Indian Council for Cultural Relations was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was the first Education minister of India.

### **Arogya Sethu**

- ❖ The National Informatics Center operating under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has developed an application “Arogya Sethu”.
- ❖ The app alerts the person whenever he comes in contact within six feet of COVID-19 infected person.
- ❖ While the app searches for information about COVID-19 patient, it does not disturb the privacy of the patient.

### **National Monitoring Dashboard on COVID-19.**

- ❖ The Minister of State for Personnel and Public Grievances Dr Jitendra Singh launched the National Monitoring Dashboard on COVID-19.
- ❖ The dashboard is to be developed and implemented by DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances).
- ❖ The main objective of the dashboard is quick and timely implementations of COVID-19 response and containment activities.

### **New Features of e-Nam**

- ❖ The Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched new features of e-NAM platform.
- ❖ They will strengthen agriculture marketing & reduce the need for cultivators to physically come to the mandis to sell their produce.
- ❖ E-NAM (Electronic National Agriculture Market) is an online trading platform for agriculture produce aiming to help farmers, traders, and buyers with online trading and getting a better price by smooth marketing.
- ❖ It was launched by the Centre in 2015.
- ❖ Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- ❖ According to the Agricultural Ministry, currently there are 585 mandis operating in 16 states have been integrated with the e-NAM portal.

### **Geo-fencing**

- ❖ It is a location-based service in which an app or other software uses GPS, RFID, Wi-Fi or cellular data.
- ❖ It works to trigger a pre-programmed action when a mobile device or RFID tag enters or exits a virtual boundary set up around a geographical location, known as a geofence.

- ❖ The “geo-fencing” is accurate by up to 300 meter.
- ❖ The States have been asked to seek the approval of their Home Secretaries under the provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- ❖ It is for the specified mobile phone numbers to request the Department of Telecom to provide information by email or SMS in case of violation of “geo-fencing”.



## 5 research projects

- ❖ The Government of India launched 5 research projects in order to control the spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ The projects neither focus on vaccines nor on medicines.
- ❖ The projects are to be supervised by the Department of Science and Technology.
- ❖ The first project aims to search the metabolite biomarker signature for the virus.
- ❖ The second project is to develop viricidal coatings that shall be used in surgical mask.
- ❖ The third project is to develop antiviral surface coatings to help prevent the spread of infections.
- ❖ The fourth project is to develop a material which when applied over surfaces will remove viruses and bacteria.
- ❖ The fifth project is to develop antibody-based capture of COVID-19 and inactivate it using lipid based gel.

## CARUNA

- ❖ The associations of civil servants formed an initiative called CARUNA.
- ❖ CARUNA is Civil Services Associations Reach to Support Natural Disasters.
- ❖ CARUNA is a collaborative platform.
- ❖ It includes IAS and IPS officers.

- ❖ The platform is to be represented by NGO, industry leaders, IT professionals along with the civil servants.
- ❖ The initiative is being launched to support government efforts to fight Corona Virus.
- ❖ It will help in generating data base of information about migration, medical equipment, essential supplies, ventilators and masks.
- ❖ The initiative will help address shortages at district level.



### UberMEDic Service

- ❖ The National Health Authority has partnered with Uber India to provide dedicated transport services to the health care workers that are involved in treating COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ The facility is being launched under the name “UberMEDic Service”.
- ❖ The NHA is the apex body that implements ayushman Bharat.



### Hack the Crisis – India

- ❖ The Minister of electronics and IT & HRD Sanjay Dhotre launched “Hack the Crisis- India”.
- ❖ It is an online hackathon that aims to work on solutions for COVID-19.
- ❖ The initiative is being organized by “FICCI Ladies Organization” and “Hack a Cause-India”.
- ❖ The Hackathon is a part of Global initiative.



- ❖ The main objective of the hackathon is to find non-medical solutions that will help contain COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ The “Hack the Crisis” began in Estonia.



### **Science and Technology Empowered Committee**

- ❖ The Government of India has constituted a Science and Technology Empowered Committee to make speedy decisions on research and development of COVID-19.
- ❖ The Committee is to be chaired by Niti Aayog member Vinod Paul and K Vijay Raghavan.
- ❖ Raghavan is the principal scientific advisor to the Government of India.

### **Amitabh Kant Committee**

- ❖ The Government of India constituted an empowered group under the chairmanship of NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.
- ❖ The group will coordinate with NGOs, private sector and international organizations for COVID-19 related response activities.
- ❖ The Group consists of three branches of stakeholder.
- ❖ In the first group, the stakeholders are from UN Agencies, Asian Development Bank and World Bank.
- ❖ The second group is from civil society organizations and the third group is from FICCI, CII, NASSCOM, ASSOCHAM, etc.

### **Containment Plan for Large Outbreaks**

- ❖ The Union Health Ministry launched the “Containment Plan for Large Outbreaks”.
- ❖ The plan is similar to “Bhilwara Model” of Rajasthan.

## Medical Oxygen

- ❖ The Central Government has asked the states to maintain the supply of medical oxygen smooth and hassle-free.
- ❖ Medical Oxygen is included in national list of essential medicines and also in the WHO list of essential medicines.
- ❖ Medical Oxygen is pure oxygen.
- ❖ It contains 99.5% of pure oxygen.
- ❖ Generally, the air we breathe contains 21% of oxygen.
- ❖ When the impurities in the atmosphere increase, the concentration of oxygen decreases.
- ❖ The National List of Essential medicines (NLEM) is a model of WHO List of Essential Medicines.
- ❖ The essential medicines are those medicines that satisfy priority health needs of the population.
- ❖ Tanzania was the first country in the world to compose a list of Essential Medicines in 1970.
- ❖ The WHO published essential medicines in 1977.
- ❖ The first NLEM of India was released in 1996.
- ❖ In 2018, the list was updated to 851 medicines.



## List of Iconic Tourist sites

- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism has identified 19 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites.
- ❖ Recently, it has included the world famous Kaziranga among 19 'Iconic Tourist Sites'.

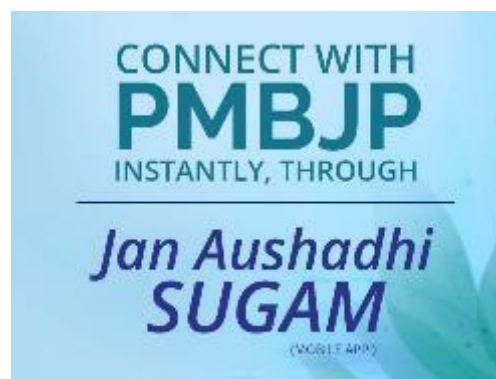
- ❖ Kaziranga National Park is home to more than 2200 Indian one-horned rhinoceros, approximately 2/3rd of their total world population.
- ❖ Furthermore, it has added the grand Konark Sun Temple, the UNESCO world heritage site in Odisha and Statue of Unity (Gujarat) into the list.

**The other recognized places**

- Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh)
- Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra)
- Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort & Qutub Minar (Delhi)
- Colva (Goa)
- Ajmer Fort (Rajasthan)
- Somnath and Dholavira (Gujarat)
- Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh)
- Hampi (Karnataka)
- Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu)
- Kumarakom (Kerala)
- Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar)

**Jan Aushadhi Sugam App**

- ❖ The Pharmacists of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra established under the Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJAP) are delivering essential medicines at the doorsteps of elderly and other patients.
- ❖ The PMBJAP was launched with the intension of providing affordable medicines to the citizens of the country.
- ❖ It is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemical and Fertilisers.
- ❖ The Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementing agency of PMBJP.
- ❖ The BPPI (Bureau of Pharma Public Sector Undertakings of India) has been established under the Department of Pharmaceuticals.



## Aahar 2020

- ❖ The 35th edition of the Food and Hospitality fair AAHAR recently commenced in New Delhi.
- ❖ It was organized by India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) in association with the Agriculture and Processed Food Products Development Authority (APEDA) under the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries.



## COVID -19 Task Force

- ❖ The Union government has set up a 'COVID-19 Task Force' for mapping the COVID-19 related technology capabilities in start-ups, academia, research and development labs and industry.
- ❖ The capacity mapping group consists of representatives from
  - Department of Science and Technology (DST)
  - Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
  - Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)
  - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEIT)
  - Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
  - Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)
  - Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)
  - Start-up India
  - All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

## Samadhan

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resource Development launched "Samadhan", a challenge to address COVID-19 in the country.
- ❖ This online challenge was launched by the Innovative Cell of Ministry of Human Resources Development and AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) along with Forge.
- ❖ It aims to motivate the students to make new discoveries and perform new experiments and come up with solutions that will help fight COVID-19.

## Supreme Court on Covid 19

- ❖ The Supreme Court has ordered private medical labs (4500 Rupees) across the country to not charge patients for testing for Covid 19.
- ❖ The court added that coronavirus tests must be carried out in NABL-accredited labs (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) or any agencies approved by the WHO or ICMR.
- ❖ The bench suggested that the Centre should ensure that private laboratories do not charge high amount and government should create a mechanism for reimbursement of the fees charges for the tests.

## iGOT

- ❖ The Department of Personnel and Training launched online training platform-iGOT in the fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ The platform is called iGOT — Integrated Government Online Training.
- ❖ The portal will look after the training needs of the frontline workers.
- ❖ It has been launched on DIKSHA platform of Ministry of Human Resources Development.



## Global Indian Physician COVID-19

- ❖ The doctors of Indian origin spread all over the world have come together under an initiative called “Global Indian Physician COVID-19”.
- ❖ The initiative aims to foster cross system learning.
- ❖ The initiative will work on early warning algorithm, vaccination, antiviral therapy and plasma therapy of COVID-19.





### **DigiLocker**

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resource Development has designated DigiLocker as the sole National Academic Depository (NAD).
- ❖ The ministry has directed the University Grants Commission to implement NAD as a permanent scheme within DigiLocker.
- ❖ NAD will be implemented as a permanent scheme without the levy of any user charges by DigiLocker through the Ministry of Electronics and IT.
- ❖ DigiLocker is primarily a cloud-based safe online storage service under its Digital India initiative.
- ❖ It allows users to store electronic versions of important documents like Aadhaar card, birth certificates, voter's ID cards, PAN cards, driving license, property documents and provides access to these on the go.
- ❖ It was launched by the Prime Minister on July 2015.



### **Red, Orange and Green Zones**

- ❖ It has now been concluded that India will enter into “smart Lockdown”.
- ❖ Under the smart lock down, India is to be demarcated into red, orange and green zones.

- ❖ The red zones are regions that were declared as hotspots.
- ❖ Here no economic activity is to be allowed.
- ❖ The orange zones are regions where limited public transport is to be allowed.
- ❖ In these regions harvesting of farm products will also be allowed.
- ❖ In the green zones, along with farm activities, MSME industries will also begin to function.
- ❖ These industries will provide in-house lodging facilities for employees along with social distancing facilities.

### **YUKTI portal**

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resource and Development has launched the YUKTI portal to monitor initiatives.



- ❖ YUKTI is Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation.
- ❖ The portal will record, cover and monitor initiatives of Ministry of HRD and other educational institutes in the country.

### **CollabCAD initiative**

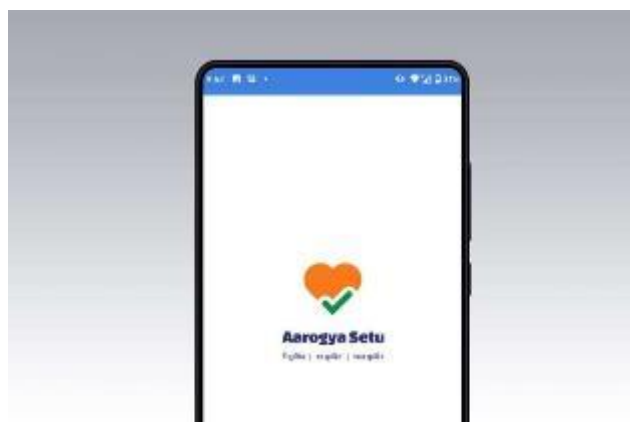
- ❖ The NITI Aayog, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and National Informatics Centre jointly launched CollabCAD initiative.
- ❖ The initiative aims to provide a platform to find solutions in terms of 2D drafting and 3D product design.
- ❖ The initiative aims to provide platform for the students of Atal Tinkering Labs to create and modify 3D designs.

### Lockdown extension

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched “Saptapdi” to fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ Saptapadi is seven mantras to fight against the virus.
- ❖ The States such as Tamilnadu, Punjab, Telangana, Odisha, West Bengal and Karnataka extended their lock down to April 30, 2020.
- ❖ On the other hand, the centre has extended the lock down till May 3, 2020.
- ❖ The law and order of the public is a state subject and lies with the State Government.
- ❖ Thus, the state governments have announced different date.
- ❖ However, the centre has ordered lock down under Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ❖ In order to do so, the centre declared COVID-19 as “notified disaster”.

### Fastest App

- ❖ NITI Aayog announced that Arogya Setu became the first mobile application in the world to reach more than 50 million downloads in short span of time (Just 19 days).
- ❖ With this, the mobile app has overtaken the record set by Nintendo’s popular “Pokemon GO” application on Google Play.
- ❖ The application was used for contact tracing.
- ❖ It is a COVID-19 tracking mobile application developed by the National Informatics Centre that comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
- ❖ Singapore Government had launched similar application called “Trace Together”.



### **“Dekho Apna Desh”.**

- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism launched “Dekho Apna Desh”.
- ❖ It is a webinar that caters in-depth information about tourist destinations in the country.
- ❖ It also provides details about culture and heritage of India.
- ❖ The first webinar series is to explain long history of Delhi.
- ❖ It has been titled as “City of cities-Delhi’s Personal Diary”.
- ❖ The second series has been named “Calcutta-A Confluences of Culture”.

### **Guidelines for lock down 2.0**

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs launched revised guidelines for lock down 2.0.
- ❖ Under the smart lock down the public transport services, cinema halls, shopping complexes, educational institutions are all to remain closed.
- ❖ Not more than 20 shall be allowed to participate in funerals.
- ❖ The guidelines make the use of face masks at work places compulsory.
- ❖ Also, health care measures such as fines for spitting, provisions of sanitizers and thermal screening have been made compulsory.
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has made spitting in the public offensive under National Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ❖ The industrial establishments operating in Special Economic Zones and Industrial Estates have been permitted.
- ❖ Coal mining and oil production are permitted.

### **Color coding**

- ❖ The Colour coding of the country (such as Red, Orange, and Green) was done by the Ministry of Health and Family welfare to help for the management of COVID-19 pandemic effectively.
- ❖ It has decided to divide all districts across the country into hotspots (Red Zone), non-hotspots (white zone/orange zone) and green zones.
- ❖ It has identified 170 hotspot districts (Red Zone), 207 non-hotspot districts (White Zone) and 353 other districts (green zone) across the country.
- ❖ Districts witnessing high number of cases or high growth rate of infections are being marked as hotspots; districts where some cases have been found as non-hotspots; and those which have reported no cases as green zones.
- ❖ The Red Zone districts have been further classified as areas with large outbreaks or with cluster outbreaks.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu, with 22 of its 27 districts, is the state with the highest number of districts designated as hotspots in the country.

- ❖ It is followed by Maharashtra with 14, Uttar Pradesh with 13, Rajasthan with 12, Andhra Pradesh with 11, Delhi with 10.
- ❖ These numbers will increase or decrease based on fresh cases of novel coronavirus infection on a weekly basis.
- ❖ The health ministry used two criteria to classify the districts as hotspots — the absolute number of cases and the speed of growth in cases.
- ❖ The hotspots are those districts where large number of COVID-19 case are being largely reported and the reported cases are growing day by day.
- ❖ Non-hotspots are those districts where the large number of COVID-19 cases and there are no new cases.
- ❖ The green zones are those districts where there are limited or no COVID-19 cases.
- ❖ If no new case is reported from a Red Zone district in 14 days, it would be moved to the Orange Zone and if no new cases are recorded in 28 days, it will be shifted to the Green Zone.
- ❖ The technical definition followed to classify the districts is any district reporting more than six cases would be classified as hotspot district or red zone.
- ❖ Any hotspot district with more than 15 cases would be treated as a district witnessing outbreak.
- ❖ The Hotspots are to be given the highest priority.

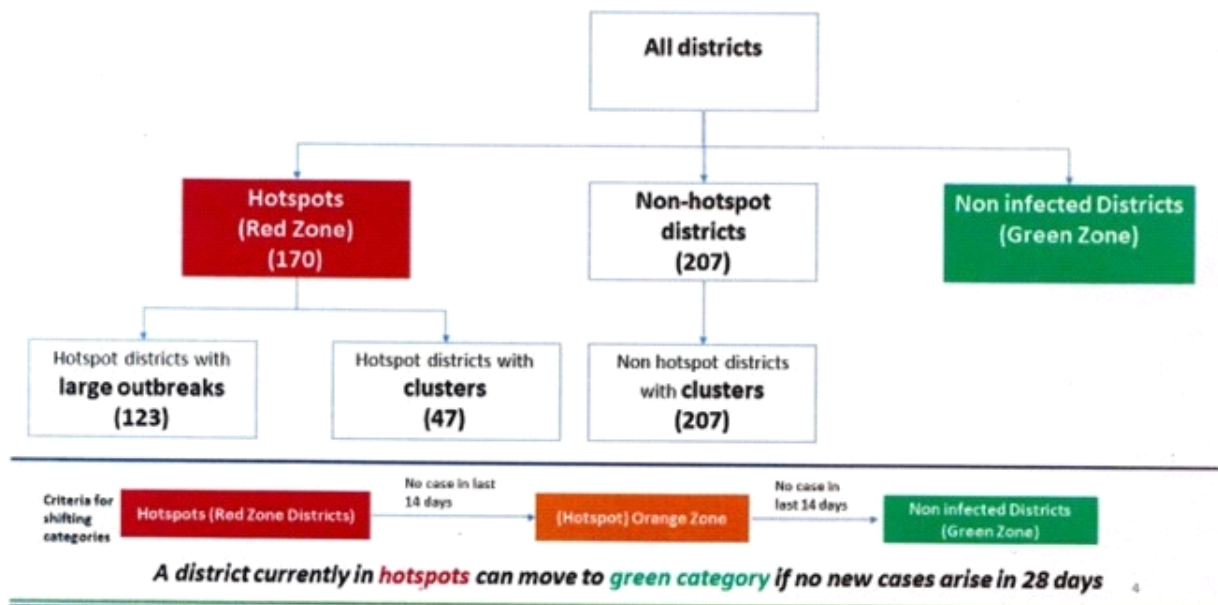
#### Hotspot criteria

- ❖ Highest caseload contributing to over 80% cases in India or
- ❖ Districts contributing to 80% cases for each state or
- ❖ Districts with a doubling rate in less than 4 days
- ❖ For green zones: No new confirmed cases for the last 28 days

#### Definitions of zones

- ❖ A zone with positive cases or a cluster with positive cases is marked as the epicentre of the containment zone.
- ❖ A buffer zone is marked where people with severe and acute respiratory illnesses (SARI) are checked and monitored.
- ❖ Containment zones are created to map the local transmission of the disease and prevent the contagion from spreading.





## Zoom App

- ❖ The Home Ministry has red flagged the Zoom application citing Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In).
- ❖ The Cyber Coordination Centre (CyCord) operating under Ministry of Home Affairs gave warnings for the use of Zoom application.
- ❖ Zoom Application is a web-based video conferencing tool that allows users to meet through video, voices.
- ❖ The Home Ministry has stressed that the government officials should not use the application for official purposes.
- ❖ The Cycord was launched in 2018.
- ❖ It was launched as a one-stop platform for cyber related crimes such as finding solutions, experience sharing, research findings, finding solutions to deal with cybercrimes, etc.



### **Fit India Active Day Programme**

- ❖ The Government of India launched Fit India Active Day Programme under the flagship initiative called “Fit India”.
- ❖ The Ministry of AYUSH has issued guidelines to implement the Fit India Active Day Programme.
- ❖ The programme is launched to make sure children practice fitness even when they stay home.
- ❖ The Fit India Movement was launched to make sure the citizens stay healthy through sports and physical activities.
- ❖ The movement was launched during National Sports Day, 2019 (August 29).
- ❖ The day is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of the legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand.



### **Sahyog**

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology launched Integrated Geospatial Platform to complement Arogya Setu and integrate data from several other initiatives.
- ❖ The platform will receive data from SAHYOG mobile application and from web portal India maps.
- ❖ The Survey of India has launched a mobile application called “Sahyog” to collect information about COVID-19 specific data sets through community engagement.

### **National Polio Surveillance Network**

- ❖ India joined hands with World Health Organization to implement National Polio Surveillance Network to contain COVID-19.
- ❖ Along with COVID-19, the team will also be involved to support elimination of tuberculosis and other diseases.
- ❖ With National Polio Surveillance Project, India eliminated polio in 2014.

- ❖ The Project was launched in 1997.
- ❖ It was collaboration between Indian Government and WHO.
- ❖ The project aimed to cover 100% of immunization in the country.

### **Supreme Court on Floor test**

- ❖ The Supreme Court has upheld Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon's March month decision asking the then Kamal Nath led-Congress government to prove majority by holding a floor test in the Legislative Assembly after the resignation of 22 Congress MLAs.
- ❖ A Governor's power to call for a floor test is not restricted only before the inception of a State government immediately after elections, but continues throughout its term.
- ❖ While directing a trust vote, the Governor should not favour a particular political party.
- ❖ A Governor need not wait for the Speaker's decision on the resignation of rebel MLAs before calling for a trust vote.

### **Oil Seeds and Pulses procurement**

- ❖ The Food Corporation of India (FCI) and NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing of India) have procured oil seeds and pulses from farmers directly at Minimum Support Prices.
- ❖ Currently, the Price Support Scheme for the Rabi season has been launched in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Maharashtra.
- ❖ NAFED is the apex organization for all marketing cooperatives of agricultural produce in the country.
- ❖ Apart from agricultural produce, NAFED also procures forest resources.
- ❖ It was established as a nodal agency for price stabilization in the country under "Operation Greens".
- ❖ Operation Greens was introduced in the Union Budget 2018-19.
- ❖ The project aims to stabilize the supply of tomatoes, onion and potatoes in the country.



**'OPERATION GREENS'**

- ❖ On the lines of "Operation Flood"; to address price volatility of perishable commodities like potato, tomato and onion
- ❖ Will promote Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs), agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management

**Greys in Greens**

**Operation Green—**  
**₹500 cr**  
allocated to ensure steady supply of three politically & price sensitive vegetables - onions, potatoes and tomatoes

**POTATOES, OFFICIALS** say, is less of a problem because it can last up to eight months in cold storage

**ONION, WHICH IS GROWN** largely in western India, can be stored in ventilated storages for about four to six months but then there are not many such spaces

**Thought being given to have protected areas for tomato cultivation around high-demand urban centres**

### **National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.**

- ❖ The Ministry of Culture has launched the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India.
- ❖ It is an attempt to recognize the diversity of Indian culture embedded in its intangible heritage.
- ❖ The initiative is a part of Vision 2024 of Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ The list includes 13 elements that are already included in UNESCO Representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- ❖ ICH involves non-physical intellectual property such as beliefs, folklore, traditions, customs and language.
- ❖ According to UNESCO's Convention for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), there are 5 broad categories in the list.
- ❖ They are performing arts, rituals and festive events, social practices, knowledge and practices concerned with nature and traditional craftsmanship.

#### India's ICH list

- Tradition of Vedic chanting.
- Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana.
- Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre.

- Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas.
- Mudi yettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala.
- Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan.
- Chhau dance.
- Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir.
- Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur.
- Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab.
- Yoga
- Nawrouz (Persian New year)
- Kumbha Mela

**NEWSICLE**  
**KNOW YOUR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

In a recent interview, UNESCO director general Irina Bokova said that yoga is in the list of elements to be considered by the Intangible Heritage Committee for inscription on UNESCO's register. Following are the Indian elements that are already present on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

<b>Kutiyattam »</b> A form of Sanskrit theatre traditionally performed in Kerala 2001 Year proclaimed 2008 Year inscribed	<b>Ramman »</b> A religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal region 2009 Year proclaimed 2009 Year inscribed	<b>Kalbelia »</b> Folk songs and dances performed in Rajasthan 2010 Year inscribed	 <p><b>Chhau »</b> A traditional dance from eastern India 2010 Year inscribed</p>
<b>Vedic chanting »</b> The oral tradition of recitation of the Vedas 2003 Year proclaimed 2008 Year inscribed	<b>Mudi yett »</b> A ritual theatre of Kerala 2010 Year inscribed	<b>Buddhist chanting of Ladakh »</b> Recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu & Kashmir 2010 Year inscribed	
 <p><b>Ramila »</b> A theatrical performance of the Ramayana 2005 Year proclaimed 2008 Year inscribed</p>	<b>Navroz »</b> The name of the Iranian new year. Observed by Parsis in India 2009 Year inscribed		

### Ordinance by Union Government

- ❖ The Government of India brought in ordinance to end violence against doctors and health care workers.
- ❖ According to the ordinance, persons attacking health personnel are to be sentenced to jail for 6 months to 7 years.
- ❖ The ordinance will make amendment to the Epidemic Disease Act, 1897.
- ❖ Also it made the Epidemic Act as a concurrent Act.
- ❖ This allows the state governments to take actions as well.



### **No 100% quota for tribal teachers**

- ❖ A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court held that it is unconstitutional to provide 100% reservation for tribal teachers in schools located in Scheduled Areas across the country.
- ❖ The court held that 100% reservation is discriminatory and impermissible.
- ❖ The opportunity of public employment is not the prerogative of few.
- ❖ A 100% reservation to the Scheduled Tribes has deprived Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes also of their due representation.
- ❖ The court referred to the Indira Sawhney judgment, which caps reservation at 50%.
- ❖ The case rose from a legal challenge to January 10, 2000 order issued by the High Court Bench.
- ❖ Earlier, the erstwhile State of Andhra Pradesh issued an order in 2000 for the 100% reservation to the Scheduled Tribe candidates, out of whom 33.1/3% shall be women, for the post of teachers in schools located in the Scheduled Areas of the State.

### **Covid measures at Odisha**

- ❖ Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik announced the following measures.
- ❖ All health workers including doctors who will die while fighting covid-19 will be given "martyrs" status and provide them state funeral.
- ❖ He also said that their families will get a compensation of Rs 50 lakhs each.
- ❖ He also warned that action will be taken under the National Security Act against those who are attacking doctors and support staff.

### **Covid measures at Tamilnadu**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami announced an increase in the solatium for front-line staff if they died fighting COVID-19, from the existing ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh.
- ❖ The solatium was applicable to health, police and local administration departments.
- ❖ A family member of the deceased would be given a government job.
- ❖ The Centre has announced medical insurance of ₹50 lakh for health workers, involved in the fight against COVID-19.

### **Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) production**

- ❖ India is a leading player across the globe in the manufacturing of HCQ.

- ❖ The Ipca laboratories, Zydus Cadila and Wallace Pharmaceuticals are the top pharma companies in India to produce this.
- ❖ Ipca is the top manufacturer of this drug globally.
- ❖ Presently, the country's production capacity is 20 crore tablets every month.
- ❖ As much as 70 per cent of all the APIs (active pharmaceutical ingredient) needed by India to manufacture drugs come from China.
- ❖ India manufactures 70% of the world's supply of hydroxychloroquine.
- ❖ India is the largest exporter of the drug.
- ❖ India also needs around 24 million of this tablet per year for the three indications --- malaria, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis.
- ❖ At present, India is in the process of supplying HCQ to 55 corona virus-hit countries.
- ❖ This anti-malarial drug was held as 'game-changer' in the fight against COVID-19 by the US President.
- ❖ The drug is not manufactured in developed nations such as the US because of non-existent malaria.
- ❖ The Brazilian PM Jair Bolsonaro likened the supply of HCQ from India to Hanuman bringing the 'holy medicine' or Sanjeevani in the 'Ramayana'.
- ❖ Bolsonaro was the chief guest at the 70th Republic Day celebrations this year.



### Corona Model Districts

- ❖ Recently, the Centre showcased the contact tracing and containment model of Kerala's Kasaragod.
- ❖ It is one of the success stories of the containment exercise.
- ❖ The other successful model of containment includes Agra (Uttar Pradesh), Bhilwara (Rajasthan) and Pathanamthitta (Kerala).

### **World Wide Help (WWH)**

- ❖ IIT Bombay has developed software that can greatly help with the demands of physical distancing necessitated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- ❖ The software is named World Wide Help (WWH) which can be used to connect people seeking medical help with helpers, such as doctors.

### **COVID India Seva**

- ❖ The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched “COVID India Seva” platform.
- ❖ The platform is an interactive medium established to provide a channel of communication between the citizens and the Government.

### **Swamitva Yojana (Ownership Scheme)**

- ❖ On the occasion of Panchayat Raj Day in April 24th, the PM of India launched this scheme.
- ❖ It was launched to map residential land ownership in the villages
- ❖ These will be measured using drones to create a non-disputable record.
- ❖ Property card for every property in the village will be prepared by states.
- ❖ The scheme aims to revolutionize property record maintenance in India.
- ❖ It helps to map rural inhabited lands using drones and latest survey methods.
- ❖ The scheme is developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- ❖ The scheme was launched in 6 states namely Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh.

### **e-Gram Swaraj Portal and Mobile App**

- ❖ It was launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- ❖ It will provide the Gram Panchayats with a single interface to prepare and implement their Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).

### **Plasma therapy**

- ❖ The King George Medical University in Uttar Pradesh became the first government hospital to launch plasma therapy to treat COVID-19.
- ❖ In India, the plasma therapy had been used to treat diseases such as mumps, measles, polio and flu.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### Exercise Red Flag

- ❖ The U.S. Air Force has cancelled Phase-I of its flagship multilateral air exercise, Red Flag, scheduled in Alaska from April 30.
- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) was to take part in the exercise with its Sukhoi Su-30 fighter jets.
- ❖ Only countries considered friendly towards the United States take part in Red Flag exercises.

### Nuclear Restrictions

- ❖ The USA renewed four nuclear restrictions imposed on Iran.
- ❖ The restrictions were imposed to prevent Iran from building its nuclear programme.
- ❖ Sanctions and hinderances to trade in Iran will affect India's oil imports greatly.
- ❖ It also affects India's plan to reach Central Asia thorough Iran by developing Iran's Chabhar Port.
- ❖ The USA and Iran signed Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that aimed at curbing nuclear programme of Iran in 2015.
- ❖ Under the deal, most of Iran's Uranium were shipped out of the country.
- ❖ Several operational nuclear operations of Iran were brought under international inspection.



### Nationalization of Hospitals

- ❖ The Spanish government has nationalised all its private hospitals and healthcare providers in the country to fight the spread of Coronavirus.
- ❖ The move comes after the World Health Organisation warned that the pandemic is a "defining global health crisis of our time" and urged the countries to "test, test, test".

### **Covid 19 and World Bank**

- ❖ The World Bank announced that it is to offer 1 billion USD to Government of India to implement Covid-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems preparedness project.
- ❖ It will strengthen the national system and keep up public health preparedness in the country.

### **World Bank poverty findings**

- ❖ The World Bank announced that around 11 million are to enter poverty in Pacific and East Asia due to the spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ According to the World Bank, around 35 million people in Pacific and Asia will escape poverty.
- ❖ This includes 25 million in China alone.

### **70th Anniversary**

- ❖ India and China observed the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations.
- ❖ India established diplomatic relations with the PRC on 1 April 1950
- ❖ India was the first non-communist country in Asia to establish diplomatic relations with People's Republic of China (PRC).



### **United Nations Security Council Meet**

- ❖ The current president of United Nations Security Council, Dominican Republic announced that the UNSC is to meet over COVID-19.
- ❖ The rotating presidency of the 15-member council was taken by the Caribbean country from the previous president China.
- ❖ The primary responsibility of the council is to deal with Geo-political peace and security.
- ❖ The public health security is not under the mandate of the Council.





### **Resolution 2518**

- ❖ The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2518 to ensure safety and security of peacekeepers.
- ❖ This is the first time; a resolution is being passed for the safety of the peacekeepers.
- ❖ The resolution was initiated and sponsored by China.
- ❖ The resolution of safety of peacekeepers comes in a time when the United Nations is marking 75th anniversary.
- ❖ This is a crucial year for the organization to implement “Action for Peace”.
- ❖ The Action for Peace initiative was launched by the United Nations to help countries address challenges such as elusive political issues, protracted conflicts, dangerous environments, broad and complex mandates, etc.

### **BCG vaccine and COVID-19**

- ❖ BCG, or bacille Calmette-Guerin, is a vaccine for tuberculosis (TB) disease.
- ❖ The BCG vaccine is known to confer a strong immune response and a significant degree of protection against leprosy and non-invasive bladder cancers.
- ❖ According to a recent study those countries where the elderly were likely to have had a BCG shot in their childhood were likely to be better protected against coronavirus.
- ❖ Because COVID-19 was particularly lethal to the elderly people.
- ❖ Countries like Spain, France, the United States, Italy and the Netherlands don't have universal BCG policies and have seen many deaths from COVID-19.
- ❖ Italy, where the COVID-19 mortality is very high, never implemented universal BCG vaccination.

- ❖ It is reported that India has a consistent TB vaccination policy since 1948
- ❖ Japan has a BCG policy since 1947.
- ❖ It had one of the early cases of COVID-19 but it has maintained a low mortality rate despite not implementing the strictest forms of social isolation.
- ❖ Iran began implementing its BCG vaccination policy only in 1984 and therefore anyone over 36 was vulnerable.



### **UN resolution**

- ❖ On April 3, 2020, the United Nations approved the resolution that called upon international cooperation to fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ The resolution also calls for its member nations to adopt multilateralism.

#### Resolution in silence mode

- ❖ There was no meeting held to pass the resolution.
- ❖ The resolution was adopted in silent mode.
- ❖ The UNGA has announced that the draft resolution is to stay open till April 2 for the member countries to object.
- ❖ If not objected, the organization will circulate a confirmation letter among its member countries.

### **Singapore Convention on Mediation**

- ❖ The Singapore Convention on Mediation is a United Nations (UN) treaty named after the country, will come into force on September this year.
- ❖ It is also known as the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation.
- ❖ Qatar has ratified the international treaty.
- ❖ It is the third country to do so, following Singapore and Fiji.

- ❖ The convention makes it easier for commercial parties in a dispute to seek enforcement of international mediated settlement agreements by applying directly to the courts of countries that have ratified the treaty.



### **Spring Shield Operation**

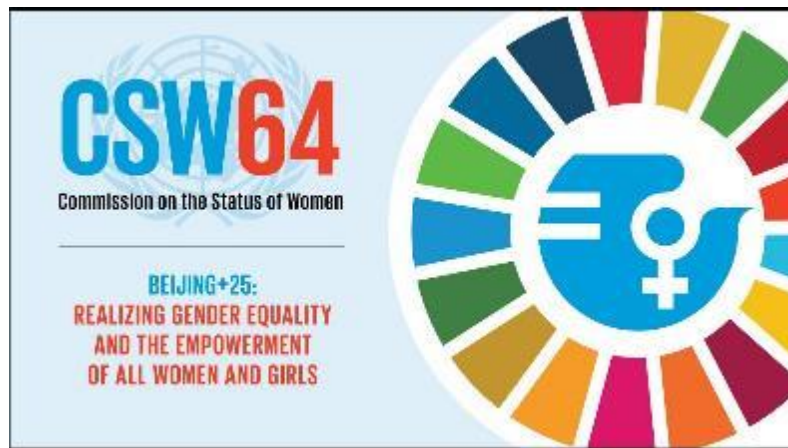
- ❖ It was a cross-border military operation conducted by the Turkish Armed Forces against the Syrian Armed Forces in the Idlib District of northwest Syria.
- ❖ In particular, Hezbollah has incurred losses that have not been seen in years of fighting on behalf of the Syrian government.
- ❖ It is a Shia Islamist political party and militant group based in Lebanon.



### **Political declaration on women's rights**

- ❖ The Political Declaration adopted is the outcome of the 64th Commission on the Status of Women held at New York in USA.
- ❖ It is the largest annual gathering on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the UN.
- ❖ A UN declaration on women is approved every five years.

- ❖ It is commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995.
- ❖ The declaration itself noted that 25 years after the Beijing summit, "no country has fully achieved gender equality."
- ❖ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 seeks to promote women's emancipation and advancement around the world.
- ❖ It is considered the most visionary blueprint on women's rights.



### **Inclusive Internet Index 2020**

- ❖ India secured 46th rank in the Inclusive Internet Index 2020 released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- ❖ This list includes 100 countries of the world.
- ❖ In this index, Sweden ranks first, New Zealand is second and America is third.
- ❖ The worst countries are Burundi (100), Liberia (99), Madagascar (98), Malawi (97) and Burkina Faso (96).



### **Economic freedom index**

- ❖ Singapore overtook Hong Kong as the world's freest economy for the first time since 1995.
- ❖ The Index was first published in 1995 and Hong Kong has topped the charts ever since.
- ❖ Created by the Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal, the annual index measures the degree of economic freedom in the world's nations.

- ❖ The World Index of Economic Freedom covers 12 freedoms including property rights, financial freedom, government integrity, labour freedom, trade freedom, investment freedom and business freedom.
- ❖ Altogether the study encompasses 186 countries.
- ❖ India is ranked in 120th position in the study.

### **Foreign Aid to India on Covid 19**

- ❖ The United States has announced 2.9 million USD aid under its American Global Response Package for India to fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ China has donated more than 1,70,000 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to India at free of cost.

### **Purple notice**

- ❖ The International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) has warned member countries that cybercriminals were attempting to target major hospitals and other institutions on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19 with ransomware.
- ❖ In this regard, the Interpol has also issued a 'Purple Notice'.



- ❖ The International Criminal Police Organisation, or Interpol, is a 194-member intergovernmental organisation.
- ❖ Headquartered in Lyon, France, it was formed in 1923 as the International Criminal Police Commission, and started calling itself Interpol in 1956.
- ❖ India joined the organisation in 1949.



### **Shadow Pandemic**

- ❖ The UN Women has urged member-states to include prevention of violence against women in their action plans on COVID-19.
- ❖ It has also called the rise in gender-based violence a “shadow pandemic”.
- ❖ As per data compiled by the U.N. body, France has seen a 30% increase in domestic violence since the lockdown on March 17.
- ❖ In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

### **Suspension of Blue Helmets**

- ❖ The United Nations announced that the organization is suspending its peace keeping forces till June 30.
- ❖ This is being done to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ The United Nations Peace Keeping was founded in 1945.
- ❖ The force is sometimes addressed as Blue Berets or Blue Helmets.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the UNSC to maintain international peace and security.



### **COVID-19 and world of work**

- ❖ The International Labour Organization released its report, “COVID-19 and world of work”.
- ❖ According to the report, around 400 million people are to enter poverty in India.
- ❖ The reductions of jobs are to be more in Arab countries and in Asia and Pacific.

### **Ceasefire in Yemen**

- ❖ The Saudi Arabia led coalition declares cease fire in Yemen.
- ❖ The Intervention of the Coalition in Yemen is said to be in compliance with Article 2 of the United Nations Charter.
- ❖ The Coalition intervened Yemen in the code name “Operation Decisive Storm”.

- ❖ The Coalition includes Saudi Arabia, Sudan, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Senegal.
- ❖ The coalition was supported by US as well.
- ❖ Yemen was devastated by a conflict that began in 2015.
- ❖ The Houthis that are backed by the Iran military took much of the control in west of the country.
- ❖ The coup led by the Houthis forced President Mansour Hadi to flee abroad.
- ❖ The rise of the group alarmed Saudi Arabia and eight other Arab states to lead a military campaign restoring Hadi's Government.

### **UNSC meeting on COVID-19**

- ❖ The United Nations Security Council met for the first time to discuss COVID-19 pandemic on April 9, 2020.
- ❖ The virtual meeting, hosted by the current chair Dominican Republic, took place after nine of the council's ten non-permanent members requested for a meeting to discuss the current crisis.
- ❖ China urged UNSC to reject any acts of stigmatization and politicization.
- ❖ This follows statements by US President Donald Trump, who had labeled the coronavirus the "Chinese virus" last month.
- ❖ The UN Security Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security.
- ❖ However, its member states disagreed on whether the COVID-19 pandemic comes under the UNSC mandate or not.
- ❖ While Germany described the pandemic as an "international peace and security issue," several other nations such as China, Russia and South Africa stated that health matters were not part of the Security Council's brief.
- ❖ China, which was the chair of the UNSC in March 2020, had blocked all discussion on COVID-19 pandemic stating that it didn't come under the mandate of the body.

### **State of the World's Nursing**

- ❖ The WHO, along with the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the Nursing Now campaign, has released a report titled, "State of the World's Nursing".
- ❖ Globally, there are roughly 36.9 nurses per 10,000 people
- ❖ There are almost 10 times more nurses in the Americas than in the African region.
- ❖ The largest shortfall in absolute numbers is in the South-East Asian region.

- ❖ In the Americas and Europe, the problem is different since they are facing an ageing nursing workforce.
- ❖ An overwhelming majority of the nurses are women — 88 per cent in India.

## STATE OF THE WORLD'S NURSING 2020



### **Bernie Sanders - USA**

- ❖ Bernie Sanders Drops Out of 2020 Race for President Election from the Democratic party.
- ❖ Now Joe Biden from the Democratic party will be the official nominee for the 2020 President Election.
- ❖ He will contest against the Republican party nomination of Donald Trump.
- ❖ Joe served as the 47th vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017.

### **Wuhan in China**

- ❖ Wuhan has lifted its 76-day lockdown measures.
- ❖ It is the Chinese city where the first coronavirus case was recorded last December.
- ❖ It is the capital city of Hubei province in the People's Republic of China.

### **World Food Program (WFP) report**

- ❖ The WFP released its new report "COVID-19: Potential impact on the world's poorest people: A WFP analysis of the economic and food security implications of the pandemic".
- ❖ It said that the rapidly-spreading coronavirus pandemic is so far having little impact on the global food supply chain.
- ❖ But that could be changed into the worse soon - if anxiety-driven panic by major food importers takes hold.

- ❖ WFP is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- ❖ Its headquarters is in Rome.
- ❖ It is a member of the United Nations Development Group.



### **World Health Organization – Governance**

- ❖ US President Donald Trump is planning to put a hold on America's funding to the World Health Organization.
- ❖ If Trump does decide to block the US' contribution, the WHO can suspend the country's voting rights and deny access to its services.
- ❖ The World Health Assembly (delegations from all member countries) determines the policies of the organisation.

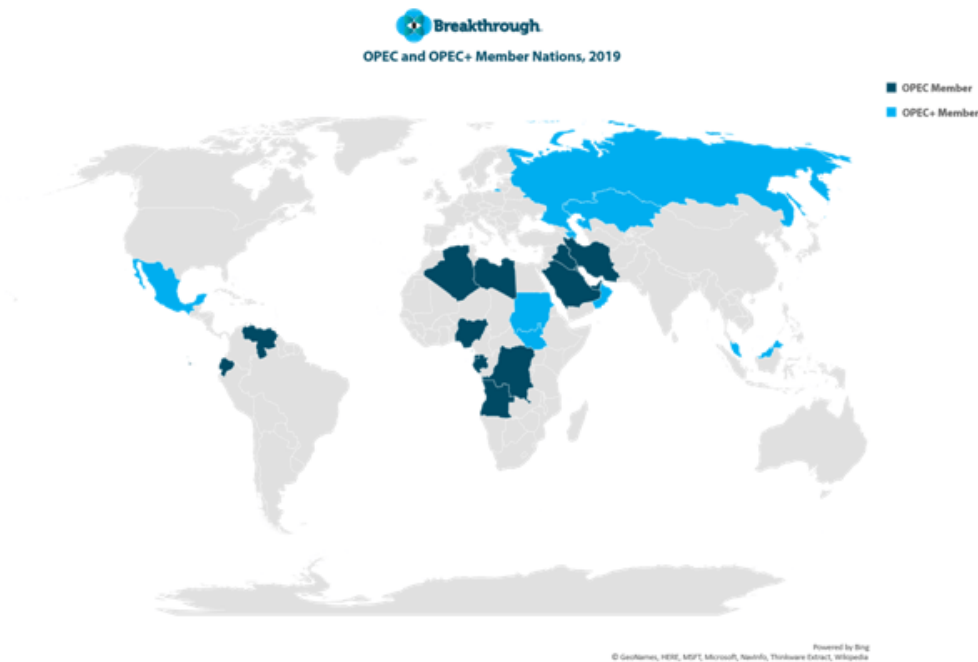
#### **About WHO**

- ❖ WHO came into existence on 7 April, 1948 – a date which is now celebrated every year as World Health Day.
- ❖ Its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ The United States is currently the WHO's biggest contributor.
- ❖ It is followed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- ❖ The third biggest contributor is the GAVI Vaccine Alliance.
- ❖ India makes up 0.48 per cent of total contributions, and China 0.21 per cent.

### **Cut in Oil Productions**

- ❖ It is the new OPEC deal between Saudi Arabia and Russia.
- ❖ The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia have come together to cut oil output by 10%.
- ❖ This is being done to control the falling oil prices amidst lock down all over the world due to COVID-19.
- ❖ The Russian Government earlier refuted to sign the deal when Saudi Arabia initiated production cuts.
- ❖ The OPEC asked Russia to cut its production by 300,000 barrels per day.

- ❖ Though the new deal has made the biggest cuts, it will not cause major changes to price changes as the demand is unpredictably low.
- ❖ The deal was brokered by the US President and also by G20.
- ❖ Opec+ refers to the alliance of crude producers, who have been undertaking corrections in supply in the oil markets since 2017.
- ❖ OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.



## WHO Funding

- ❖ The United States stopped its funding towards World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❖ The United States provides 400-500 million USD to the organization annually.
- ❖ There are four major kinds of contributions that make up the funds of WHO.
- ❖ It includes assessed contribution, voluntary contribution, core voluntary contributions and PIP contributions.
- ❖ The Assessed contributions are the amounts that are expected to be paid by member states.
- ❖ The Voluntary contributions are funds provided by countries through private organizations.
- ❖ The core voluntary contributions are those funds that require immediate financing.
- ❖ The PIP contributions are Pandemic Influenza Preparedness that were begun in 2011 to strengthen access of vaccines by developing countries.
- ❖ Among all the contributions, voluntary contributions make up most of the funding.



### **Missile Sales to India**

- ❖ The United States approved missiles sales to India.
- ❖ They are the Torpedoes lightweight missiles and Harpoon air-launched missiles.
- ❖ The lightweight Torpedoes will be used to in anti-submarine warfare missions.
- ❖ The Harpoon is an anti-ship missile used to attack an enemy boat or ship.
- ❖ The torpedoes is an underwater missile that can be launched below or above the water.

### **Training for SAARC countries**

- ❖ The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) announced a training programme for the health care professionals from SAARC countries.
- ❖ The programme is to be conducted by the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ❖ Earlier India also proposed creation of SAARC COVID-19 Emergency funds.
- ❖ India contributed 10 million USD towards the funds.
- ❖ The ITEC programme was established in 1964.
- ❖ The ITEC is both bilateral and multilateral in nature.
- ❖ The programme is completely funded by the Government of India.
- ❖ It offers training and also allows foreign students to continue their higher studies.

### **South Korea Elections**

- ❖ The ruling democratic party President Moon Jae won the election of South Korea.
- ❖ South Korea was the first country to hold national election among the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ This election was the first time that the 18 year olds were allowed to vote.

### **Google Journalism Emergency Relief Fund**

- ❖ Google is planning to launch this emergency fund to help local news outlets struggling to maintain operations in the face of the coronavirus pandemic
- ❖ This financial support is for local newsrooms hit by the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of its Google News Initiative.

## Commercial Crew Programme

- ❖ NASA announced that it will launch its flight of astronauts.
- ❖ This is the first flight of NASA in 9 years.
- ❖ The mission is to use Falcon-9 rocket.
- ❖ The mission is to be launched by SpaceX.
- ❖ It is the first crewed launch of the Elon Musk space company.
- ❖ Currently, SpaceX and Boeing are the space taxi providers of NASA.
- ❖ Under the programme, the private vendors will operate crew vehicles to carry astronauts to the International Space Station.



## USA Immigration ban

- ❖ The USA has imposed ban on migration into the country.
- ❖ It would last for 60 days and apply to those seeking “green cards” for permanent residency.
- ❖ A green card is known officially as a Permanent Resident Card.
- ❖ Green card holders are statutorily entitled to apply for U.S. citizenship.

## G20 Agricultural Ministers Meet

- ❖ The Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar attended the G20 Agriculture Ministers Meet through video conferencing.
- ❖ The meet was chaired by Saudi Arabia.
- ❖ The G20 AMIS (Agricultural Market Information System) will help for the coordinating of policy responses.

## Global Annual Report

- ❖ The World Food Programme of the United Nations recently released its fourth annual report on Food Crisis.

- ❖ According to the report, the food crisis has grown by 10% in the World.
- ❖ The report was presented by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization and World Food Programme to the United Nations Security Council.

### **World Press Freedom Index 2020**

- ❖ It has been released by Reporters Without Borders.
- ❖ It is a Paris based non-profit organisation.
- ❖ Around 180 countries were ranked in the index.
- ❖ Norway ranks first for the fourth consecutive year and Finland and Denmark in second and third place.
- ❖ India is ranked at 142nd dropped two places from 2018 (140).
- ❖ It says no murder of journalists in India in 2019 as compared to 2018 (6 murders).
- ❖ China, Iran and Iraq are criticised for censoring coverage of the coronavirus outbreak.
- ❖ According to the index, South Asia performed the least as compared to all the other regions.
- ❖ North Korea was at 180th and China ranked 177th.



### **Nur (Light) satellite**

- ❖ Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) says it has successfully launched a military satellite into orbit for the first time.
- ❖ The satellite is named Nur (Light).



### **India and Malaysia**

- ❖ Recently India added Malaysia into the list of Hydroxychloroquine Drug exporting countries.
- ❖ India is the world's biggest palm oil buyer and a major market for Malaysia,
- ❖ Malaysia is the second-largest producer of Palm oil in the World after Indonesia.
- ❖ India buys more than 9 million tonnes of palm oil annually, mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia.
- ❖ Thus India is the largest imported of the Palm Oil and The vegetable oil in the World.
- ❖ The share of palm oil is more than 60 per cent of the country's total vegetable oil imports.

### **Backdrop**

- ❖ In March, the new Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin took over the charge at Malaysia.
- ❖ Earlier in February, Mahathir Mohamad resigned the post of PM in Malaysia.

### **Lawsuit against China**

- ❖ The US state of Missouri has filed a lawsuit against China.
- ❖ It is alleging that China's actions to suppress information, arrest whistleblowers and denying the contagious nature of coronavirus led to "irreparable damage" to countries.

### **History of Pandemics**

- ❖ The COVID-19 has killed thousands and has indented a bad and deep history of economic crisis.
- ❖ It has locked down almost every super economic power in the world.

- ❖ There were several other Pandemics in the history that created equal impacts.
- ❖ They are Justinian Plague, Black Death and Spanish Flu.
- ❖ The Justinian Plague was the deadliest pandemic that broke in 6th century.
- ❖ It had spread from Egypt to Constantinople.
- ❖ The Black Death killed more than 200 million.
- ❖ It struck China, Syria, India and Egypt.
- ❖ The disease arrived in Europe in 1347.
- ❖ The Spanish Flu broke during the last phase of World War I.
- ❖ It was recorded in Europe and later spread to Asia and America.
- ❖ The disease weakened German units in the First World War and was still considered as one of the reasons for the fall of Germany in the war.

### **Milk tea Alliance**

- ❖ The Milk tea Alliance is a pro-democratic front formed by thousands of internet users from Thailand, Taiwan and Hong Kong in social networks against the authoritarianism of the Chinese Government and its supporters.
- ❖ The informal movement began by defending itself against the insults of pro-Chinese twitter users against Thailand.



### **Consensus Resolution by UN**

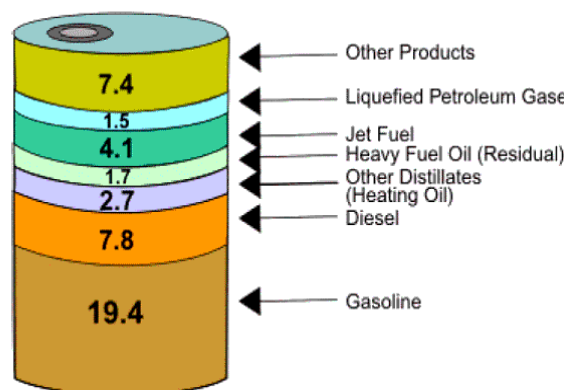
- ❖ The United Nations adopted a consensus resolution.
- ❖ The resolution called for equitable, efficient and timely access to future vaccines developed to fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ The resolution was drafted by Mexico and is supported by the US.
- ❖ In order to pass this resolution, the United Nations required a simple majority. (More than 50% of all votes).



- ❖ When the issue considered for voting is of great importance, and then two-third majority is required.

## USA Crude Oil

- ❖ West Texas intermediate (WTI), also known as Texas light sweet, is a grade of crude oil used as a benchmark in oil pricing in the USA.
- ❖ It is the best quality of crude oil in the world.
- ❖ This grade is described as light crude oil because of its relatively low density, and sweet because of its low sulfur content.
- ❖ US oil markets created history when prices of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) fell to “minus” \$40.32 a barrel in New York on April 20th.
- ❖ This is the lowest crude oil price ever known.
- ❖ The previous lowest was immediately after World War II.
- ❖ It is one of the main three benchmarks in oil pricing, along with Brent crude (from North Sea) and Dubai Crude.
- ❖ The Indian crude oil basket does not comprise WTI.
- ❖ India bought only from the Brent and some of the Gulf countries — so there is no direct impact.
- ❖ One barrel is 157 litres.
- ❖ But after processing it comes to 166 litres.



## Indian flag at Alps Mountain

- ❖ Indian Tricolour of more than 1,000 meters in size was projected on Matterhorn Mountain, Zermatt, Switzerland to express solidarity to all Indians in the fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ Swiss light artist Gerry Hofsetter has been displaying the flags of different countries since March end.
- ❖ Matterhorn (4478 meter) is a mountain of the Alps.
- ❖ It is lying between Switzerland and Italy

- ❖ Sometimes referred to as the Mountain of Mountains, the Matterhorn has become an iconic emblem of the Alps in general.

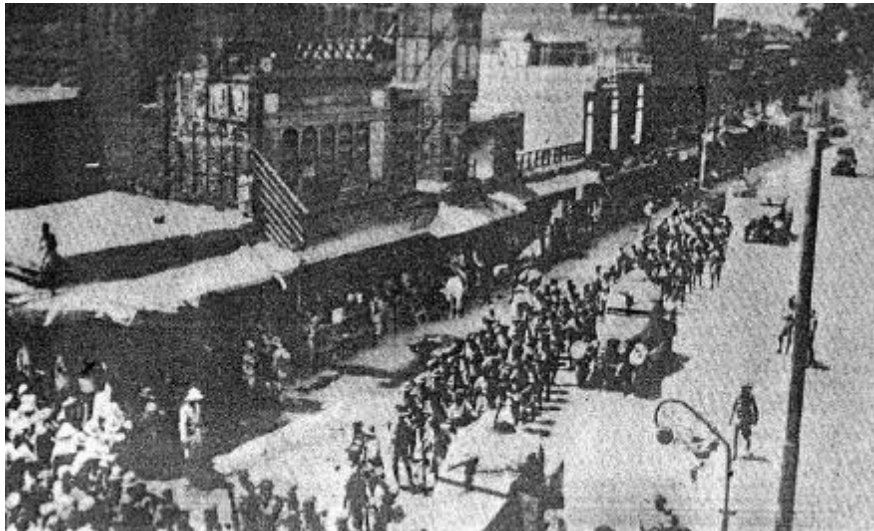


### **China to WHO**

- ❖ China announced to donate USD 30 million more to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❖ Earlier, China had donated USD 20 million.
- ❖ Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is an Ethiopian microbiologist and internationally recognized malaria researcher.
- ❖ Since 2017, he is the Director-General of the World Health Organization.
- ❖ Tedros is the first non-physician and first African in the role.
- ❖ On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a "pandemic".

### **Peshawar's Qissa Khwani Bazaar massacre**

- ❖ The massacre was perpetrated by British soldiers against non-violent protesters of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement on April 23, 1930.
- ❖ It is the 90th year anniversary for this massacre.
- ❖ The Khudai Khidmatgar was a non-violent movement against British occupation of the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ It was led by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a Pashtun freedom fighter, in the North-West Frontier Province.



### **Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019 report**

- ❖ The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released its report on military spending of different countries in the world.
- ❖ US, China and India are the three top most military spenders in 2019.
- ❖ In 2019, India has spent 71.1 billion USD over its military.
- ❖ In 2019, the US had spent 732 billion USD for military.
- ❖ The United States, Russia, France, Germany and China continue to be the world's largest arms exporters.
- ❖ This is the first time that India and China have featured among the top three military spenders.



### **Lebanon - Marijuana**

- ❖ Lebanon became the first Arab country to legalize marijuana cultivation.

- ❖ The cannabis plant has been farmed illegally in Lebanon in the fertile Bekaa Valley.
- ❖ According to the United Nations, Lebanon is the third largest supplier of cannabis resin in the world after Morocco and Afghanistan.
- ❖ Apart from Lebanon, Golden Triangle and the Golden Crescent also involved in this opium production.
- ❖ The Golden Crescent includes three countries namely Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- ❖ Together they form a crescent in the map and hence the name Crescent.
- ❖ The Golden Triangle includes Thailand, Myanmar and Laos.
- ❖ The regions meet at the confluence of Ruak and Mekong River and hence forming a golden triangle.



### **International Financial Services Centre Authority**

- ❖ The Government of India has established this Authority.
- ❖ The headquarters of the authority is to be established in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- ❖ The main function of the authority is to regulate financial products such as contracts of insurance, deposits, and securities of the financial institutions.
- ❖ The authority consists of 9 members that are appointed by the Government of India.
- ❖ The members are to have a term of three years.
- ❖ The members include Chairperson, two members from Ministry of Finance, one each from RBI, SEBI, IRDAI and PFRDA and two members based on the recommendation of search committee.

### **Exercise Pitch Black**

- ❖ The biennial warfare exercise hosted by Royal Australian Air Force was cancelled due to COVID-19 threats.
- ❖ The main aim of the exercise is to practice Defensive Counter Air combat and Offensive Counter Air Combat.
- ❖ In 2018, India participated in the exercise for the first time.



## **ECONOMY**

### **The COVID-19 Shock to Developing Countries**

- ❖ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) made this new analysis.
- ❖ The world economy is to go into recession in 2020-21 in spite of the G20 countries infusing 5 trillion USD.
- ❖ The report also says that India and china are to stay out of these global recessions.





## Small Savings Interest Rate

- ❖ The Government of India lowered interest rates of several small savings scheme for the first quarter of 2020/21
- ❖ The interest rates of the schemes like Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, Kisan Vikas Patra, National Savings Certificate and Public Provident Funds were reduced.

**Subject: Revision of interest rates for Small Savings Schemes - reg.**

In exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 9(1) of the Government Saving Promotion General Rules, 2018, the rates of interest on various Small Savings Schemes for the first quarter of financial year 2020-21 starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020 and ending on 30th June, 2020 have been revised as indicated below:

Instruments	Rate of interest from 01.01.2020 to 31.03.2020	Rate of interest from 01.04.2020 to 30.06.2020	Compounding frequency*
Savings Deposit	4.0	4.0	Annually
1 Year Time Deposit	6.9	5.5	Quarterly
2 Year Time Deposit	6.9	5.5	Quarterly
3 Year Time Deposit	6.9	5.5	Quarterly
5 Year Time Deposit	7.7	6.7	Quarterly
5 Year Recurring Deposit	7.2	5.8	Quarterly
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8.6	7.4	Quarterly and paid
Monthly Income Account	7.6	6.6	Monthly and paid
National Savings Certificate	7.9	6.8	Annually
Public Provident Fund Scheme	7.9	7.1	Annually
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.6 (will mature in 113 months)	6.9 (will mature in 124 months)	Annually
Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme	8.4	7.6	Annually

2. This has the approval of Finance Minister.

  
(Rajesh Panwar)  
Dy. Director (Budget)

## Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

- ❖ The Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Ministry announced Rs 1.70 Lakh Crore relief package under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana for the poor to help them fight the battle against Corona Virus.
- ❖ Insurance scheme for health workers fighting COVID-19 in Government Hospitals and Health Care Centres.
- ❖ Safai karamcharis, ward-boys, nurses, ASHA workers, paramedics, technicians, doctors and specialists and other health workers would be covered by a Special insurance Scheme.
- ❖ Any health professional, who while treating Covid-19 patients, meet with some accident, then he/she would be compensated with an amount of Rs 50 lakh under the scheme.
- ❖ Farmers will be receiving the first instalment payment of Rs 2,000 due in April, from their Rs 6,000 annual income support for 2020-21.
- ❖ The payment of Rs 2,000 to 8.7 crore farmers was done under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi.

## **SEZ during Lockdown**

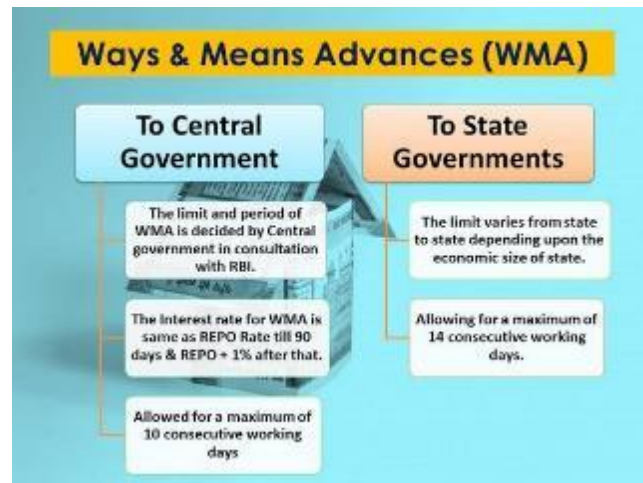
- ❖ Around 280 SEZ (Special Economic Zones) that are involved in manufacturing essential goods such as pharmaceuticals, drugs and hospital equipment are operational amidst Lock Down.
- ❖ These economic zones contribute 18% of the exports of the country.
- ❖ It is to be noted that in 2019-20 the exports from the SEZs have increased and has reached 110 billion USD.
- ❖ The SEZs operate under Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ❖ The states were permitted to operate SEZs under SEZ Act, 2005.
- ❖ The Act defines key role of the state governments in export promotion.

## **Ways and Means Advances**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has raised the limit for short term credit that the government can borrow from the central bank.
- ❖ The limits for this credit facility, known as 'Ways and Means Advances', has been raised sharply to Rs 1.2 lakh crore for the first half of 2020-21.
- ❖ The increased limit comes at a time when government expenditure is expected to rise as it battles the fallout of a spreading Coronavirus.
- ❖ The availability of these funds will give government some room to undertake short term expenditure over and above its long term market borrowings.

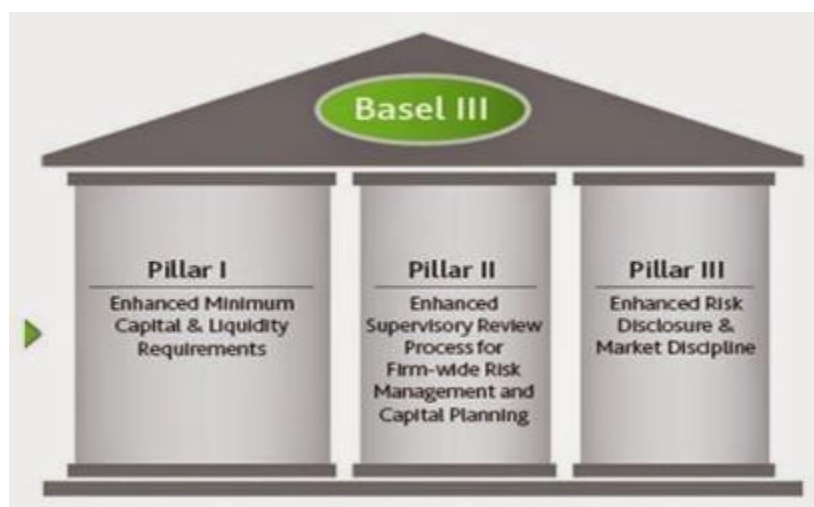
### **About Ways and Means Advances (WMA)**

- ❖ They are temporary loan facilities provided by RBI to the government to enable it to meet temporary mismatches between revenue and expenditure.
- ❖ It was introduced on April 1, 1997, after putting an end to the four-decade old system of adhoc or temporary Treasury Bills to finance the Central Government deficit.
- ❖ The government can avail of immediate cash from the RBI, if required.
- ❖ But it has to return the amount within 90 days, and the Interest is charged at the existing repo rate.
- ❖ The limits for WMA are mutually decided by the RBI and the Government of India.
- ❖ There are two types of Ways and Means Advances — normal and special.
- ❖ Special WMA or Special Drawing Facility (SDF) is provided against the collateral of the government securities held by the state.
- ❖ After the state has exhausted the limit of SDF, it gets normal WMA.



### Countercyclical Capital Buffers (CCyB)

- ❖ Reserve Bank has deferred implementation of countercyclical capital buffers (CCyB).
- ❖ The countercyclical capital buffer is intended to protect the banking sector against losses that could be caused by cyclical systemic risks increasing in the economy.
- ❖ The rule was first introduced in Basel III norms.
- ❖ Basel III is a voluntary set of measures agreed upon by central banks all around the world.
- ❖ These measures were drafted by the Bank of International Settlements' Basel Committee on Banking Supervision in response to the financial crisis of 2007-09, in order to strengthen regulation of banks and fight risks within the financial system.



### **Fully Accessible Route**

- ❖ RBI has introduced a separate channel namely Fully Accessible Route (FAR), to enable non - resident to invest in specified government bonds with effect from April 1.
- ❖ The move follows the union budget announcement that certain specifies categories of government bonds would be opened fully for nonresident investors without any restrictions.

### **Foreign Trade Policy**

- ❖ The Government of India notified that the export schemes such as Export Promotion Capital Goods and Duty-Free Import authorization are to be extended by one year.
- ❖ Also, the Government has planned to extend Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 by another one year till 2021.
- ❖ It targets to bring in overseas sales of 900 billion USD by 2020.
- ❖ The policy launched five different schemes.
- ❖ They include Focus Product Scheme, Focus Market Scheme, Market-linked Focus Product Scheme and Agriculture infrastructure incentive scrip.
- ❖ Gram Udyog Yojana and Vishesh Krishi were merged with single merchandise exports, the MEIS (Merchandise Exports from India Scheme) scheme.
- ❖ The policy also aimed to diversify export baskets of the country.
- ❖ It also aimed to provide regular appraisal mechanism to reduce trade imbalances.

### **Companies Fresh Start Scheme, 2020**

- ❖ The Ministry of Corporate Affairs introduces the “Companies Fresh Start Scheme, 2020” and revised the “LLP Settlement Scheme, 2020”.
- ❖ It aims to provide relief to law abiding companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) in the wake of COVID 19.
- ❖ These schemes incentivise compliance and reduce compliance burden during the unprecedented public health situation caused by COVID-19.
- ❖ The schemes provide a one-time waiver of additional filing fees for delayed filings by the companies or LLPs.

#### About

- ❖ A Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) is a partnership in which some or all partners have limited liability.
- ❖ It therefore exhibits elements of partnerships and corporations.

- ❖ In an LLP, one partner is not responsible or liable for another partner's misconduct or negligence.

### **Action COVID Team**

- ❖ The Action COVID Team was launched by top fund managers of private sector and blue-chip venture capital firm in India.
- ❖ It is the First of its kind in the world.
- ❖ The funds are being raised by the Team to promote the Indian companies and start-ups to work on COVID-19 based products and researches.
- ❖ The Team gained its popularity lately as Rs 1 crore was bagged by the Mylab from the fund set up by the team.
- ❖ Mylab is the first Indian firm to get permission to make and sell corona testing kit.
- ❖ India is currently using and promoting indigenously made kits.

### **Arogya Sanjeevani Insurance Policy**

- ❖ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has provided guidelines for the health insurance providers to implement Arogya Sanjeevani Insurance Policy.
- ❖ It was basically launched to cover the hospitalisation expenses of the COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ The regulator had earlier made it mandatory for the insurance providers to frame a policy to provide basic coverage to at least 55% of Indian population.
- ❖ The cost of the premium shall cover between Rs 1000 and Rs 1 lakh.
- ❖ Interested customers shall opt for coverage up to Rs 5 lakhs.
- ❖ It is to be availed for citizens above the age of 18 years and up to the age of 65 years.

### **En Kasu**

- ❖ In a first of its kind in the country, Karur Vysya Bank has launched "Enkasu", a pre-paid card in Karur.
- ❖ In response to the digital initiative of the Government of India, the bank undertook a "Quit Cash Movement" in Karur - a movement to reduce the usage of cash in the district of Karur.
- ❖ Karur Vysya Bank hails from Karur, where the Bank was established 104 years ago.



## **UN on World Economy**

- ❖ The global economy could shrink by up to 1 per cent in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic
- ❖ The analysis was done by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).
- ❖ It was the part of UN DESA's World Economic Forecasting Model.
- ❖ The analysis noted that before the outbreak of the COVID-19, world output was expected to expand at a modest pace of 2.5 per cent in 2020, as reported in the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020.

## **Ordinance to Cut expenditure**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved to cut the salary of Prime Minister and other MPs by 30%.
- ❖ Apart from them, the salaries of president, governor and vice president are also to be cut.
- ❖ An ordinance in this regard was approved by the Union Cabinet to amend the "Salaries, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954".
- ❖ According to the Act, as amended in April 2018, MPs are entitled to a monthly salary of Rs.1 lakh, apart from various allowances.
- ❖ The amount cut from the members are to go to consolidated fund of India.
- ❖ Only the MPs' salaries would be cut, not allowances or the pensions of ex-MPs.
- ❖ The Cabinet has also approved that the MPLADS are to be suspended for 2 years that is between 2020-21 and 2021-22.
- ❖ The MPLADS is Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS).
- ❖ It was introduced in 1993.
- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has been looking into its working.
- ❖ It is fully funded by the Government of India.
- ❖ Each MP is allocated Rs. 5 crore per year since 2011-12.
- ❖ Funds are non-lapsable in nature i.e. in case of non-release of fund in a particular year it is carried forward to the next year.

## MPLADS - Member of Parliament Local Area Development Program

- ✓ Launched on 23rd December, 1993
- ✓ Rs 5 crore per annum grant to each MP
- ✓ To take development project in constituency.
- ✓ Applicable to Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs.
- ✓ 15% of annual outlay of funds must be utilized on areas inhabited by Scheduled Caste Population
- ✓ 7.5% of annual outlay of funds must be utilized on areas inhabited by Scheduled Tribes Population



**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Statistics and**  
**Programme Implementation**

### **Force Majeure in insurance**

- ❖ The Life Insurance council announced that the “Force Majeure” clause will not apply to COVID-19 deaths.
- ❖ All life insurers, both public and private, are committed to process any death claim pertaining to COVID-19.
- ❖ A force majeure in a contract can now be used to argue that the contract cannot be completed in time due to the spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ Force Majeure is described as an event or effect that can be neither anticipated nor controlled.
- ❖ Force Majeure clause was introduced for unforeseen circumstances.
- ❖ It is embodied under Indian Contract Act, 1972.

### **Poshan Abhiyan**

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh ranked 1st in country for overall implementation of Poshan Abhiyan (Prime Minister’s Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment).

- ❖ It was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March, 2018 Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan.
- ❖ It is earlier called as National Nutrition Mission (NNM), since 18th December, 2017.
- ❖ The Abhiyan aims to reduce malnutrition in the country in a phased manner, through a life cycle approach, by adopting a synergized and result oriented approach.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu tops the list of the states in terms of the number of participants in the programme.
- ❖ It was result of the progress report of NITI Aayog, "Transforming Nutrition in India: POSHAN Abhiyan".
- ❖ It is under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

### **India Pharma & India Medical Device 2020 Conference**

- ❖ The Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry - FICCI organized India Pharma 2020 & India Medical Device 2020 Conference & Exhibition at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat.
- ❖ Theme of the event is "India Pharma: Meeting Challenges of Affordable and Quality Healthcare and India Medical Device: Promoting Affordable responsible and Quality Medical Device for Universal Health Care".
- ❖ This year is the fifth edition and the event is being organized for the first time in the State of Gujarat.
- ❖ The Indian pharmaceutical market is the third largest in terms of volume and thirteenth largest in terms of value.
- ❖ India is the largest supplier of generic medicines globally.



### **Decline of Edible Oil imports in India**

- ❖ The edible oil imports in India has declined by 32.44% in March 2020.
- ❖ India, the largest importer of vegetable oil in the world, has reduced its imports due to the threats of COVID-19.
- ❖ India feeds its citizen with 60% of imported edible oil.
- ❖ India imports its palm oil mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia.
- ❖ India imports soyabean oil from Argentina and sunflower oil from Ukraine and Russia.

### **Unemployment in India**

- ❖ The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) recently released a survey on the current unemployment situation in India.
- ❖ More than 20% of Indian Economy has lost their jobs since the lock down.
- ❖ The unemployment rate for the month of March is expected to be 8.7% as compared to 7.8% in February.
- ❖ The Government of India publishes Unemployment report every year.
- ❖ In 2019, the unemployment rate was 6.1%.
- ❖ It was the highest in 45 years of Indian History.

### **Bharatmala Pariyojana**

- ❖ The National Highway Authority of India completed the construction of 3,979 km of national highways in the financial year 2019-20.
- ❖ This is the highest ever target achieved by the authority in a financial year since its establishment.
- ❖ The Government of India envisaged construction of national highway under Bharatmala Pariyojana.
- ❖ The scheme is being implemented by Ministry of Road and Transport and Highways.
- ❖ It was launched in 2015.
- ❖ The scheme has set a target of completing 65,000 Km of Highways.



## UN Report

- ❖ The United Nations released a report on Economic and Social Survey of Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), 2020.
- ❖ According to the report, the economic growth rate of India stood at 5% in 2019-20.
- ❖ It has forecasted that the growth rate is to shrink to 4.8% in 2020-21 and the growth rate might improve in the year 2021-22.
- ❖ The report predicts that the global economy is to grow at 2.3% in 2020 and will gradually pick up in 2021.

## CPI Inflation

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India projected that the consumer Price Index (CPI) is to ease from 4.8% in Q1 to 4.4% in Q2 of the financial year 2020-21.
- ❖ The estimated easing of CPI implies that the aggregate demand will weaken further.
- ❖ Currently, RBI is following target inflation rate in the country.
- ❖ The inflation target has been set at 4% with +2% and -2% as target bands on either sides.
- ❖ This means that RBI will try to maintain the inflation rate between 2% and 6%.
- ❖ The Inflation Targeting was adopted by Government of India in 2015.

## COVID-19 Package Fund

- ❖ The Government of India sanctioned Rs 15,000 crore.
- ❖ It was earlier announced for the Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness package.
- ❖ The main objective of the package is to contain the spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ The Funds are to be completely handled by the Ministry of Health and Family welfare.

## Long Term Repo Operation (LTRO)

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said it has received Rs 1.13 lakh crore worth of bids in the targeted long term repo operation (LTRO).
- ❖ The LTRO is a tool under which the central bank provides one-year to three-year money to banks at the prevailing repo rate, accepting government securities with matching or higher tenure as the collateral.
- ❖ While the RBI's current windows of liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) and marginal standing facility (MSF) offer banks money for their immediate needs



ranging from 1-28 days, the LTRO supplies them with liquidity for their 1- to 3-year needs.

- ❖ LTRO operations are intended to prevent short-term interest rates in the market from drifting a long way away from the policy rate, which is the repo rate.

### **NASSCOM new head**

- ❖ Infosys' chief operating officer, UB Pravin Rao, has been appointed as the new chairman of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom), for 2020-21.
- ❖ Rekha M Menon, Chairman and Senior Managing Director, Accenture in India, will be the Vice-Chairperson of the NASSCOM.
- ❖ It is a trade association of Indian Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry.
- ❖ Established in 1988, NASSCOM is a non-profit organisation.

### **Developing countries in WTO**

- ❖ US president has asked for changing the WTO (World Trade Organization) rules for changing the developing country status of China.
- ❖ There are no WTO definitions of "developed" and "developing" countries.
- ❖ Members announce for themselves whether they are "developed" or "developing" countries.
- ❖ Generally countries are designated as developed, developing, and least developed countries (LDCs).

#### **Matter of choice**

WTO allows member countries to classify themselves as "developed" or "developing". However, other members can challenge the decision of a country to be classified as "developing". Only the "least-developed countries" status is designated by the UN. Countries in the three lists:

Developing	Developed	Least-developed countries
India	U.S.	Afghanistan
China	European Union	Bangladesh
Russia	Japan	Bhutan
Brazil	Canada	Myanmar
South Africa	Australia	Nepal
South Korea	New Zealand	South Sudan

- ❖ However, other members can challenge the decision of a member to make use of provisions available to developing countries.

- ❖ Developing country status ensures special and differential treatment (S&DT).
- ❖ It allows them more time to implement agreements and commitments, to safeguard their trade interests, and to implement technical standards.
- ❖ China became a WTO member in 2001.
- ❖ By 2011, China became the second-largest economy in GDP terms, the first largest merchandise exporter, the fourth largest commercial services exporter and the first destination for inward FDI among developing countries.

### **MSP for MFP scheme**

- ❖ The TRIFED asks State Nodal Departments & Implementing Agencies to initiate procurement from available funds under 'MSP for MFP scheme'.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet, in 2013, approved a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for marketing of non-nationalized / non monopolized Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and development of a value chain for MFP through Minimum Support Price (MSP).
- ❖ The Minor Forest Produce (MFP), also known as Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), is a major source of livelihood and provides essential food, nutrition, medicinal needs and cash income to a large number of STs who live in and around forests.

### **Helicopter Money**

- ❖ Helicopter Money is a solution being suggested by economic specialists all over the world.
- ❖ It was the term framed by an American Economist Milton Friedman.
- ❖ It is the monetary policy tool used for Quantitative Easing.
- ❖ It aims to dump money into a struggling economy.
- ❖ It is extension of non-repayable money towards state and central governments from central bank.
- ❖ It intends to make more money available for the people to induce them to spend more.



## World Bank on India

- ❖ India is likely to record its worst growth performance since the 1991 liberalisation this fiscal year.
- ❖ India's economy is expected to grow 1.5 per cent to 2.8 per cent in the 2020-21 fiscal.
- ❖ The slow growth will be the result of a Coronavirus outbreak.
- ❖ The World Bank said the above observations in its South Asia Economic Focus report.
- ❖ It estimated India will grow 4.8 per cent to 5 per cent in the 2019-20 fiscal.

## E-NAM

- ❖ On April 14, 2020, the Electronic-National Agricultural Market completed four years of implementation.
- ❖ It was developed under the concept of “One Nation One Market”.
- ❖ E-NAM is managed by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC).
- ❖ It provides single service for all APMC (Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee) related activities.



## First Ship of Crude Oil

- ❖ The first crude oil of 1 million barrels from UAE have reached India.
- ❖ India has an emergency storage of 5.33 million tonnes.
- ❖ This would suffice the oil demands of the country for 9.5 days
- ❖ The oil reserves are stored in Mangalore, Padur and Vishakhapatnam.
- ❖ The Padur oil storage is the biggest of all the three storages.
- ❖ India imports 83% of its oil.
- ❖ Iraq is India's largest crude oil supplier meeting one-fourth of the country's needs.
- ❖ Following Iraq, Saudi Arabia is the second largest oil supplier of India.
- ❖ USA is the sixth largest oil supplier of India.

### **Palm Oil Imports**

- ❖ India tightened its curbs on imports of palm oil.
- ❖ India is the world's largest importer of vegetable oil and buys around 15 million tonnes annually.
- ❖ India primarily imports palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia.

### **Exit from Lock Down**

- ❖ The Confederation of Indian Industries recently published its report "Exit from Lock Down".
- ❖ Under the report, the confederation suggests slow and staggered approach of reopening of industrial sectors.
- ❖ The Report suggests classification of geographies as red, amber and green.

### **World Economic Outlook 2020**

- ❖ The International Monetary Fund has set growth rate of India at 1.9%.
- ❖ IMF also says that the India will recover at the growth rate of 7.4% in 2021-22.
- ❖ The global economy is expected to shrink by 3 per cent during 2020.
- ❖ It will mark the steepest downturn since the Great Depression of the 1929-1932.
- ❖ The IMF has predicted that the countries such as India, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam will alone see increasing growth.
- ❖ According to the report, the other major economies of the world, such as USA, France, Germany and Italy, are to face decreasing growth rate.



## RBI measures

- ❖ It has decided to reduce the fixed reverse repo rate under liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by 25 basis points.
- ❖ It cut the reverse repo rate from 4% to 3.75%.
- ❖ Earlier in March Month, it cut the repo rate to 4.4% from 5.15%.
- ❖ Also, the central bank has announced Rs 50,000 crore for Long Term Repo Operation (LTRO).
- ❖ This time the LTRO is to focus on liquidity needs of microfinances and NBFC.
- ❖ Earlier the LTRO went largely to the public sector undertakings and larger corporations.
- ❖ RBI has eased the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) from 100% to 80%.
- ❖ The LCR is the assets held by the banks to make sure its ongoing ability to meet short-term obligations are fulfilled.
- ❖ The RBI will also provide Rs 50,000 crore special finance assistance to institutions such as SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India), NABARD, National Housing Bank.

## Monetary antidote

- RBI provides special refinance facility of ₹25,000 crore to NABARD for refinancing regional rural banks, cooperative banks and micro finance institutions; ₹15,000 crore to SIDBI for on-lending and refinancing; and ₹10,000 crore to NHB for supporting housing finance companies



- Banks can avail themselves of ₹50,000 crore through targeted long term repo operation (TLTRO)

- They must invest funds from TLTRO in investment grade bonds, commercial paper, and non-convertible debentures of NBFCs

- Small, mid-sized NBFCs and micro finance institutions should receive at least 50% of these funds

- Of this, 10% to be invested in MFI securities, 15% in securities issued by NBFCs with asset size of ₹500 crore and below; and 25% in securities of NBFCs with asset sizes in the ₹500 crore-₹5,000 crore range

## OBICUS

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India launched OBICUS.
- ❖ OBICUS is Order Books, Inventories and Capacity Utilization Survey (OBICUS).
- ❖ The survey provides an insight into the demands of the Indian manufacturing sector.



- ❖ The survey covers 2,500 companies both in public and private sector.
- ❖ The survey is conducted quarterly (4 times a year).
- ❖ It is being conducted since 2008.

### **IMFC meeting**

- ❖ The Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman recently attended the Plenary Meeting of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) through video-conference.
- ❖ The discussions at the meeting were based on IMF Managing Director's Global Policy Agenda titled, "Exceptional Times – Exceptional Action".
- ❖ The Committee discusses matters of common concern affecting the global economy and also advises the IMF on the direction its work.
- ❖ The IMFC has 24 members, drawn from the pool of 187 governors.
- ❖ As such, the IMFC represents all the member countries of the Fund.
- ❖ The IMFC meets twice a year, during the spring and Annual Meetings.
- ❖ There is no formal voting at the IMFC, which operates by consensus.



### **All India Agri Transport Call Centre facility**

- ❖ The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare launched All India Agri Transport Call Centre facility.
- ❖ The facility will avail inter-state movement of perishables.
- ❖ The call centres are to be operated by IFFCO Kisan Sanchar Limited (IKSL).
- ❖ The IKSL has been promoted by the IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative Limited) along with Bharti Airtel and Star global Resource Limited.
- ❖ The IFFCO is the biggest cooperative society in the country that was founded in 1967.

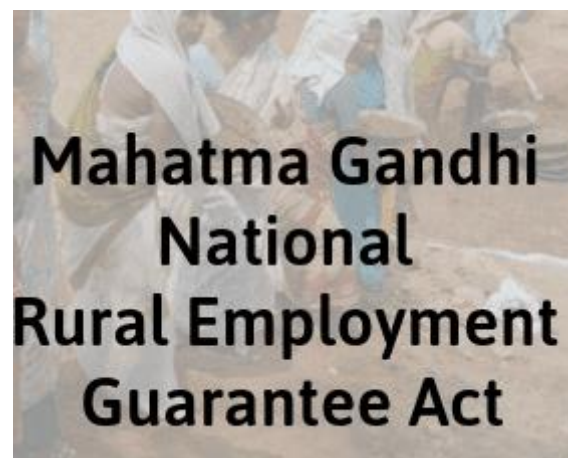
## Wheat Procurement

WHEAT PROCUREMENT			
State	Procurement as on May 10, 2019	Target	
Punjab	12.09	12.5	
Haryana	9.01	8.5	
Uttar Pradesh	1.93	5	
Madhya Pradesh	5.31	7.5	
Rajasthan	0.85	1.7	
Bihar	0	0.2	

- ❖ Wheat Production is estimated to be at all an all-time high of over 106.21 million tonnes.
- ❖ This is mainly because the acreage in all these major wheat growing states is high.
- ❖ The three states namely Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana account to 90% of wheat production in the country.

## MGNREGA

- ❖ Under the Lockdown guidelines, the Government allows industrial works, road construction works and MGNREGA to begin in the rural areas.
- ❖ The aim is to help workers of unorganized sector and the migrants.
- ❖ MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) is the biggest source of employment generation in the country.
- ❖ The central government had allocated Rs 60,000 crore for MGNREGA for the financial year 2020-21.



## **Amendment to FDI Policy**

- ❖ The Government of India amended the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy, 2017.
- ❖ The new amendment requires certain investment to come only through the government approval route alone, and not under the direct route of investment.
- ❖ Under the current rule, any non-resident entity is allowed to make investments in India only through Government route.
- ❖ This will be applicable to all neighboring countries that share a land border with India.
- ❖ Also, while transferring the ownership, the beneficiary is required to obtain the approval of Indian Government.
- ❖ The investments through Government route by Pakistan investors can be made only in sectors such as space, defense, and atomic energy.
- ❖ This step primarily intends to stem any attempts by Chinese firms to take control of Indian firms.
- ❖ Earlier Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd (HDFC) said that the Chinese central bank, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) had raised its stake in the HDFC from 0.8% to 1.01% through open market purchases.

## **101<sup>st</sup> Development Committee meeting**

- ❖ The Indian Finance Minister attended the Development Committee meeting of World Bank-International Monetary Fund through Video Conference.
- ❖ The major debt initiative is International Call for Action in Support of IDA countries.
- ❖ The IDA countries are International Development Association countries that offer concession loans and grants to the poorest countries in the world.
- ❖ It shares the World Bank mission of reducing poverty.
- ❖ The Association is governed by the board of Governors of the World Bank.

## **SDR basket**

- ❖ The SDR basket is reviewed every five years or earlier if warranted.
- ❖ India is not supporting a general allocation of new Special Drawing Rights (SDR) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- ❖ The new SDR allocation was supposed to provide all 189 members with new foreign exchange reserves with no conditions.

### About SDR

- ❖ The SDR is an international reserve asset, created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement its member countries' official reserves.

- ❖ The value of the SDR is based on a basket of five currencies—the U.S. dollar, the euro, the Chinese renminbi, the Japanese yen, and the British pound sterling.
- ❖ The SDR serves as the unit of account of the IMF and some other international organizations.
- ❖ The SDR is neither a currency nor a claim on the IMF.
- ❖ Rather, it is a potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members.

	Current basket	As of 1 October 2016
USD	41,9	41,73
EUR	37,4	30,93
JPY	9,4	8,33
GBP	11,3	8,09
RMB	N.A.	10,92

Source: IMF.

### **RBI on NPA**

- ❖ According to the RBI's latest announcement, the bad loan classification period now changes from 90 days to 180 days for all such accounts.
- ❖ The 90-day NPA norm shall exclude the moratorium period.
- ❖ There would be an asset classification standstill for all such accounts from March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020.
- ❖ To ensure that loans given to real estate projects, the RBI provided an extension of another year before they are recognised as NPAs.

### **About NPA**

- ❖ A nonperforming asset (NPA) refers to a classification for loans or advances that are in default or in arrears.
- ❖ A loan is in arrears when principal or interest payments are late or missed.
- ❖ A loan is in default when the lender considers the loan agreement to be broken and the debtor is unable to meet his obligations.
- ❖ In most cases, debt is classified as nonperforming when loan payments have not been made for a period of 90 days.
- ❖ Nonperforming assets are listed on the balance sheet of a bank or other financial institution.
- ❖ After a prolonged period of non-payment, the lender will force the borrower to liquidate any assets that were pledged as part of the debt agreement.

- ❖ If no assets were pledged, the lender might write-off the asset as a bad debt and then sells it at a discount to a collection agency.

### **Pet Coke Imports**

- ❖ Directorate General of Foreign Trade has invited applications for import of pet coke.
- ❖ Earlier, it had banned import of pet coke.
- ❖ Import of petcoke was allowed only in lime kiln, cement gasification and calcium carbide industries.
- ❖ India is the largest consumer of pet coke in the world.

#### **Pet Coke**

- ❖ Petroleum Coke is called Pet Coke.
- ❖ Pet Coke consists of more than 80% of carbon.
- ❖ Pet coke emits over 11% more greenhouse gases than coal.
- ❖ It is rich in carbon and is derived during oil refining.
- ❖ Pet Coke is mainly used in aluminum industry as raw material.



### **Sale of Electric vehicles**

- ❖ The Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV) has released its data on Electric Vehicles sales.
- ❖ According to its report, the sales of Electric Vehicles have increased by 20% in the Fiscal Year 2019-20.
- ❖ The sale of electric vehicles for the year 2019-20 included 3,400 cars, 152,000 two wheelers and 600 buses.
- ❖ Around 90,000 e-rickshaws were sold in the year 2019-20.
- ❖ Of the electric vehicles sold in 2019-20, 97% were electric scooters.



## **Mapping India's Energy Subsidies, 2020**

- ❖ The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CCEW) and International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) recently released a report called "Mapping India's Energy Subsidies, 2020".
- ❖ The report says that India's energy subsidies to renewable energy have declined by 35% in 2019 as compared to 2017.
- ❖ On the other hand, the oil and gas subsidies have increased by 65%.
- ❖ But the subsidies for electric vehicles and renewable energy have increased by three and a half times since 2014.

## **Surplus Rice - Sanitizers**

- ❖ The National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC) has decided that surplus rice available with Food Corporation of India is to be used in manufacturing ethanol.
- ❖ Ethanol is used in hand sanitizers.
- ❖ Under the NBCC, it was also decided that the surplus rice is to be used for making Ethanol blended petrol programme.
- ❖ The decision has been taken in accordance with the National Policy of Biofuels, 2018.
- ❖ Under the policy, during every crop year, when there is an oversupply of food grains as that expected by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, then the surplus quantity shall be used to produce ethanol.
- ❖ The Government of India launched the Ethanol Blending Programme in 2003 for undertaking the blending of ethanol in petrol to address the environmental concerns due to fossil fuel burning, provide remuneration to farmers, subsidize crude imports and achieve forex savings.
- ❖ At 99%-plus purity, ethanol is used for blending with petrol.

## **TIFAC**

- ❖ A team of scientists from Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) is to prepare a revival strategy to help in the growth of Indian Economy post COVID-19 lock down.

### About

- ❖ It was established in 1988.
- ❖ It is an autonomous organization under the Department of Science and Technology.

## Jio and Facebook

- ❖ Facebook has bought a 9.9% stake in Reliance Jio for \$5.7 billion (Rs 43,574 crore).
- ❖ RIL said this is the largest investment for a minority stake by a technology company anywhere in the world and the largest FDI in the technology sector in India.

## 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission Fund allocation

- ❖ The Union Finance Ministry has released Rs 46,038 crore to states as their share in central taxes and duties for April.
- ❖ The devolution of taxes has been done based on recommendations of Fifteenth Finance Commission.
- ❖ The calculation of net proceeds of shareable taxes has been kept unchanged as per Budget 2020-21.

### State wise Break up of Devolution

Sl. No.	State	Amount (₹ Crore)
1	Andhra Pradesh	1892.64
2	Arunachal Pradesh	810.28
3	Assam	1441.48
4	Bihar	4631.96
5	Chhattisgarh	1573.60
6	Goa	177.72
7	Gujarat	1564.40
8	Haryana	498.15
9	Himachal Pradesh	367.84
10	Jharkhand	1525.27
11	Karnataka	1678.57
12	Kerala	894.53
13	Madhya Pradesh	3630.60
14	Maharashtra	2824.47
15	Manipur	330.56
16	Meghalaya	352.20
17	Mizoram	232.96
18	Nagaland	263.80
19	Odisha	2131.13
20	Punjab	823.16
21	Rajasthan	2752.65
22	Sikkim	178.64
23	Tamil Nadu	1928.56
24	Telangana	982.00
25	Tripura	326.42
26	Uttar Pradesh	8255.19
27	Uttarakhand	508.27
28	West Bengal	3461.65
	<b>Total</b>	<b>46038.70</b>

- ❖ In its interim report for FY21, the 15th Finance Commission has reduced the share of States in the divisible pool of Central taxes by one percentage point to 41 per cent.
- ❖ It was because of the conversion of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union territories.
- ❖ It assigned 15 per cent weight to the population of a State, down from the 17.5 per cent allocated by the 14th Finance Commission.
- ❖ But it raised the weight under demographic performance from 10 per cent to 12.5 per cent.
- ❖ The highest share of Central taxes for April has gone to Uttar Pradesh and followed by Bihar.
- ❖ Goa and Sikkim have got the least from Central pool of taxes.

### **IFAD**

- ❖ IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) has launched a multi-donor COVID-19 Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF).
- ❖ The ultimate goal of the RPSF is to accelerate the recovery of poor and vulnerable rural people from the COVID-19 crisis.
- ❖ IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialised agency of the United Nations that works to address poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries.

### **Sown Crop Area**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare announced that the sown crop area of summer crops has increased by 36%.
- ❖ The rise has been mainly observed in rice cultivation.
- ❖ In Madhya Pradesh, harvesting has increased by 95%, Rajasthan has increased by 85% and Uttar Pradesh by 65%.

### **NDB Bank**

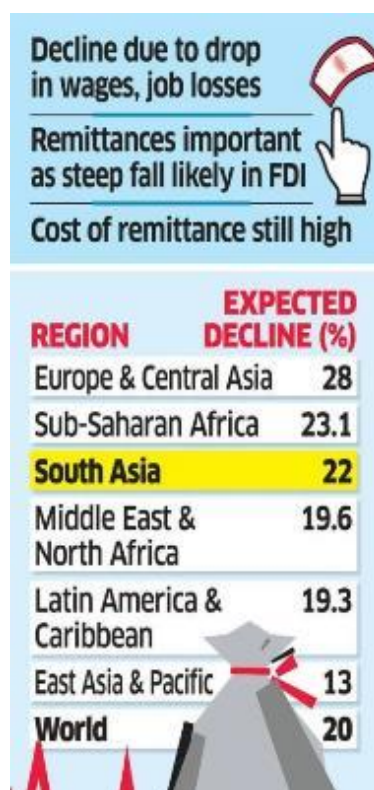
- ❖ The Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman attended the fifth annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the National Development Bank (NDB) through a video conference.
- ❖ NDB assured to provide a financial assistance of 1 billion USD of COVID-19 funds to India.
- ❖ The bank was established in 2014 by BRICS member countries.
- ❖ It supports both public and private projects.
- ❖ The initial authorized capital of the bank was 100 billion USD.

## Dearness Allowance (DA)

- ❖ The Government of India put on hold to the hike in dearness allowance for the year 2021 (Up to July 2021).
- ❖ Currently, the central government employees are receiving Dearness Allowance at 17% of their salary.
- ❖ The allowance is provided to the employees and pensioners to compensate inflation.
- ❖ It is linked to the Consumer Price Index Inflation.
- ❖ Dearness Allowance is received by pensioners and government employees.
- ❖ The DA is revised twice every year in the month of July and January.

## Remittance Prices Worldwide

- ❖ Remittance Prices Worldwide is a resource report sponsored by the World Bank Group.
- ❖ It provides data on the cost of sending remittances from 48 remittance sending countries and 105 receiving countries.
- ❖ According to recent report global remittances are projected to decline sharply by about 20 percent in 2020 (around 110 million USD) due to the economic crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown.
- ❖ In 2019, the remittance reached all-time high of 554 billion USD.



- ❖ Remittances to India are likely to drop by 23 per cent from \$83 billion last year to \$64 billion this year.
- ❖ India is the world's biggest recipient of remittances.
- ❖ In 2019, India is estimated to have received \$83.1 billion in remittances from people working overseas, about 12% of the total expected global inflow.

### **Banking Industry**

- ❖ The Government of India has declared banking industry as public utility service till October 21.
- ❖ The order has been issued under the provisions of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.
- ❖ The main objective of the Act is to secure harmony and peace in the work culture of Indian Industries.
- ❖ The Act applies only to organized sector.
- ❖ The order was initiated by Ministry of Finance and has then gone to Reserve Bank of India for clarification.
- ❖ The order was passed and implemented by the Ministry of Labour.

### **States and FRBM**

- ❖ The Finance Commission has advised the state governments to use the clauses of FRBM (The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management) Act in order to raise additional resources to fight against COVID-19.
- ❖ The states have their own FRBM act.
- ❖ The limit of fiscal deficit for both central and state is 3% and the state governments can raise the deficit up to 50 basis points.

### **Commodity Markets Outlook**

- ❖ World Bank's April 2020 Commodity Markets Outlook has been released.
- ❖ It provides market analysis for major commodity groups — energy, metals, agriculture, precious metals, and fertilizers.
- ❖ It is published in April and October.

### **Trade and Development Report**

- ❖ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has released its latest Trade and Development Report.
- ❖ UNCTAD has announced that it is to cancel over 1 trillion USD of debt owed by developing countries.



- ❖ UNCTAD is a permanent intergovernmental body established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964.
- ❖ It reports to the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.
- ❖ It is a part of the UN Secretariat.
- ❖ It is also a part of the United Nations Development Group.

### **Global Report on Food Crises**

- ❖ A new edition of the annual Global Report on Food Crises has been released by the Global Network against Food Crises.
- ❖ The report reveals scope of food crises as COVID-19 poses new risks to vulnerable countries.
- ❖ It was launched by the European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS).

### **Education for Justice**

- ❖ The Education for Justice (E4J) initiative was launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) to teach next generation about crime prevention and address problems under law.
- ❖ The organization has launched “Lockdown Learners’ Series” under Education for Justice Initiative.
- ❖ The E4J initiative is under the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration.



### **Global Debt Deal**

- ❖ The G20 grouping has called for “Global Debt Deal”.
- ❖ It will grant one-year debt standstill.
- ❖ After one year, the developing world shall pay back the debt with interest.

## Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API)

- ❖ The Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) has collaborated with LAXAI Life Sciences to produce Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients inside India.
- ❖ This will help to reduce dependence of pharmaceutical sector on Chinese imports.
- ❖ The Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients are also known as bulk drugs.
- ❖ They are the main part of the drugs that produce intended effects.
- ❖ India is the third largest producer of API in the world.
- ❖ Around two-third of the API of India are imported from China.
- ❖ In March 2020, the Government of India had constituted a committee under chairmanship of CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organization) director to revive the API industry.

## Operation Twist

- ❖ The Reserve bank of India has decided to bring back its bond swapping programme.
- ❖ It is billed as India's Operation Twist with an aim to help monetary transmission.
- ❖ The RBI said that it will conduct purchase and sale of government securities under open market operations (OMO) for Rs10,000 crore.
- ❖ 'Operation Twist' is RBI's simultaneous selling of short-term securities and buying of long term securities through open market operations (OMO).
- ❖ Under this mechanism, the short-term securities are transitioned into long-term securities.
- ❖ The RBI manages and controls the liquidity, rupee strength and monetary management through purchase and sale of government securities (G-Secs) in a monetary tool called Open market Operations.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### NIDHI program

- ❖ A new technology has been adopted by the Maharashtra hospitals in the fight of COVID-19 fight.
- ❖ The technology was developed by a Pune based Start Up.
- ❖ The product is named “Scitech Airon”.
- ❖ It is a Negative Ion Generator.
- ❖ The technology has been developed under the NIDHI PRAYAS program initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- ❖ The Scitech Airon ionizer machine generates negatively charged ions at approximately hundred million per 8 seconds (10 ions per sec).
- ❖ The negative ions generated by the ionizer form clusters around microparticles such as airborne mould, corona or influenza viruses, mite allergens, bacteria, pollens, dust and so on.
- ❖ The negative ions render them inactive through a chemical reaction by creating highly reactive OH groups called “hydroxyl radicals and H O”.
- ❖ These are highly reactive and known as atmospheric detergents.
- ❖ The detergent property generated by the ion generator helps in the breakdown of the outer protein of the allergens, viruses, and bacteria, which helps in controlling airborne diseases.
- ❖ It increases the body’s resistance to infections and harmful environmental factors.
- ❖ This resistance could be helpful for the next 20-30 days outside the ion atmosphere.
- ❖ It also decomposes gaseous pollutants like Carbon Monoxide (1000 times more harmful than Carbon dioxide), Nitrogen dioxide, and Volatile Organic Compounds.
- ❖ This technology helps to control the virus, bacteria, and other fungal infections in a closed environment and could help purify the air and disinfect areas around COVID-19 positive cases and suspects.

### About

- ❖ Department of Science & Technology has launched a NIDHI program (National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations) under which programmes for setting up of incubators, seed fund, accelerators and ‘Proof of concept’ grant for innovators and entrepreneurs have been launched.
- ❖ Under NIDHI, PRAYAS (Promoting and Accelerating Young and Aspiring innovators & Startups) programme has been initiated.



### **Sun Radio Interferometer Space Experiment (SUNRISE) mission**

- ❖ The NASA announced SUNRISE mission is to study about how sun creates Giant Solar Particle Storms.
- ❖ Studying the solar storms, the mission aims to understand the working of the solar system.
- ❖ It aims to study how the Sun generates and releases giant space weather storms – known as solar particle storms – into planetary space.
- ❖ The study will also aid future astronauts travelling to Mars and protect them from solar storms.
- ❖ The mission is to study sun's spectrum.
- ❖ This is important as sun's spectrum cannot be studied from the earth due to the ionosphere.
- ❖ It is an array of six CubeSats operating as one very large radio telescope.



### Three quasi sub species of COVID-19

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) reported that three quasi sub species of COVID-19 virus are in circulation in the country.
- ❖ According to the council, they were imported variants.
- ❖ In India, the COVID-19 cases originated from people with travel history.
- ❖ Hence, the virus was brought from outside India.
- ❖ So far, science has not discovered how the virus is behaving in other parts of the world.
- ❖ However, ICMR confirms that the virus in India has taken its variant form due to external and biological factors of the country and people living in the country.

### Project Prana

- ❖ The students and scientists of IISc-Bengaluru have developed indigenous ventilators under “Project Prana”.
- ❖ The ventilator was made using pressure sensor that widely finds its application in automobile industry.
- ❖ The ventilator mixes oxygen with compressed air.
- ❖ Recently Indian Naval Dockyard supplied its MOM (Multi-feed Oxygen Manifold) ventilators to Andhra Pradesh Government.
- ❖ The MOM ventilator is portable and is capable of serving 6 patients at a time.

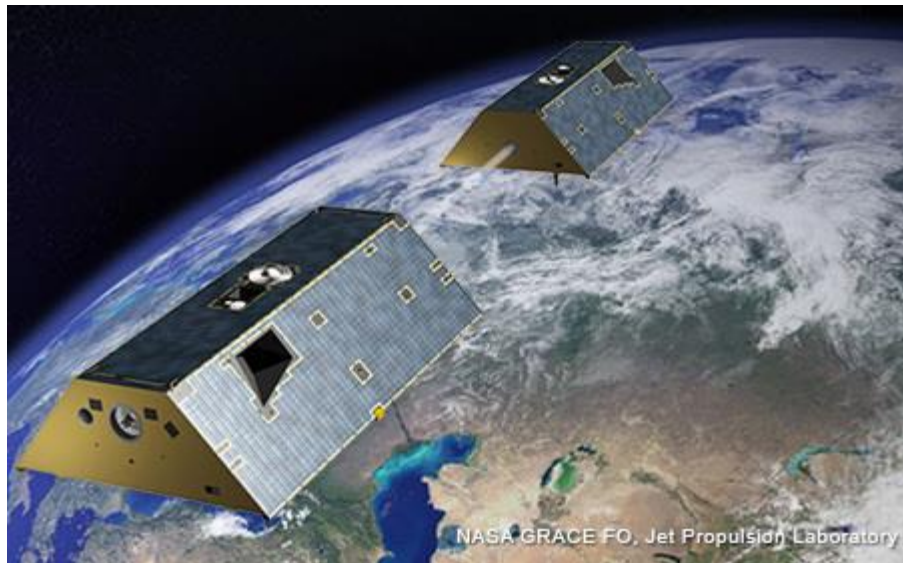
### Lancet Infectious Diseases Report

- ❖ A study in the Lancet Infectious Diseases has estimated the mean duration from onset of symptoms (coronavirus) to death to be about 18 days and that of hospital discharge to be about 25 days.
- ❖ The estimates of the case fatality ratio for COVID-19, are substantially higher than for recent influenza pandemics (Example- H1N1 influenza in 2009).

### GRACE-FO mission

- ❖ New satellite-based, weekly global maps of soil moisture and groundwater wetness conditions were developed by US space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL).
- ❖ The Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-on (GRACE-FO) mission is a partnership between NASA and the German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ).
- ❖ It measures variations in gravity over Earth’s surface, producing a new map of the gravity field every 30 days.





### Corona Kavach application

- ❖ The Government of India launched Corona Kavach application to map the location of a COVID-19 positive patient through GPS.
- ❖ It tracks the data of the user every hour.
- ❖ It then alerts him if he has crossed a Corona Positive patient.
- ❖ The application has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information technology and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ❖ The AYUSH ministry has also suggested “Kabasura Chooranam” as a preventive measure.



### **Automated ventilators.**

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology tied up with the Wipro 3D to jointly build proto type of automated ventilators.
- ❖ The ventilators will help in meeting urgent requirement of Covid-19 crisis.
- ❖ The ventilators are called AMBU (Artificial Manual Breathing Unit).
- ❖ They are hand held devices that will provide automatic pressurized ventilation to the patients that are not breathing or facing extreme difficulties in breathing.
- ❖ The AMBU is portable and hence will be ideal to suit the temporary hospital beds set up in railway coaches.
- ❖ It has provisions to add PEEP (positive end expiratory pressure) as an extra component in order to maintain pressure.

### **Bio Suit**

- ❖ A Bio Suit has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) to keep the medical professionals working with COVID-19 safe.
- ❖ The suit exceeds the criteria set by the Ministry of Health and Family welfare for the body suits of protection against synthetic blood.
- ❖ Synthetic blood is artificially made blood that will keep a patient under trauma alive up to 48 hours.
- ❖ Synthetic blood is made from Perfluorocarbons.

### **Low-Cost Temperature Gun**

- ❖ The Mumbai Naval Dockyard has designed a low-cost IR based temperature sensor.
- ❖ The sensor is to be used to check the personnel entering at the gates of the yard.
- ❖ The instrument was manufactured at less than Rs 1000.

#### **Working mechanism**

- ❖ The accuracy of the temperature gun is 0.2 degree Celsius.
- ❖ The temperature gun has a LED display and an infrared sensor.
- ❖ The IR thermometer uses lens to focus infrared light.
- ❖ It works on a principle called Black body radiation.
- ❖ Any object at temperature above 0 degree Celsius has molecules moving around.
- ❖ The speed of the molecules increases with increase in temperature.

- ❖ As they move, these molecules emit IR rays.
- ❖ The IR thermometer has a detector that concentrates these IR rays from the hot body.
- ❖ If the rays are more, the detector generates higher current.
- ❖ Higher the current, higher is the temperature of the body.

### **Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH).**

- ❖ The Department of Science & Technology (DST), in a rapid response to combat COVID-19 global pandemic, has approved this CAWACH.
- ❖ The Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), a technology business incubator at IIT Bombay supported by DST has been identified as the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH.
- ❖ CAWACH will scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that address COVID-19 challenges.

### **CoroFlu**

- ❖ Bharat Biotech along with virologists of University of Wisconsin and Madison have begun development and testing of a new vaccine called CoroFlu for COVID-19.
- ❖ The vaccine is to be developed with the M2SR vaccine as the main component.
- ❖ The M2SR vaccine is used against flu.
- ❖ The M2SR is a self-limiting version of the influenza virus.
- ❖ The vaccine will be delivered intranasally.



## **JEEVAN**

- ❖ It is a low-cost energy efficient ventilator made by the Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala in Punjab.
- ❖ The cost of the machine is fraction of what the original designs cost.
- ❖ The ventilator consists of an air container which is considered as the heart of the device.
- ❖ The machine is completely silent.
- ❖ It does not use link mechanism, servo motor or piston mechanism.
- ❖ The design is microprocessor based and was designed by India's leading team that produces German-design linke Hoffman coaches.

## **TB Machines**

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research approved the use of Tuberculosis machine for conducting COVID-19 tests.
- ❖ Currently India is using the RT-PCR (Real Time-Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing recommended by the US and approved by FDA.
- ❖ Along with this, the ICMR has recommended the use of Truenat test.
- ❖ The Truenat test is currently used to detect drug-resistant TB.
- ❖ The Truenat is a battery-operated device.
- ❖ The device uses chip-based technology and takes minimum of 60 minutes for a test.
- ❖ Today there are total of 800 Truenat machines in India.
- ❖ Of these 457 are in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ Currently, India is importing these kits and is not manufacturing locally.



### **Ivermectin**

- ❖ Australian scientists have found that a common anti-parasitic drug Ivermectin killed SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- ❖ The research team made up of Monash University's Biomedicine Discovery Institute (BDI) and the Peter Doherty Institute of Infection and Immunity in Australia.
- ❖ It is an anti-parasitic drug that has also been shown to be effective in vitro against a broad range of viruses including HIV, dengue, influenza and Zika virus.
- ❖ It is currently used as a treatment for strongyloidiasis, a parasitic disease caused by roundworms.
- ❖ It was published in the journal Antiviral Research.
- ❖ Ivermectin was first developed in 1975 and came into medical use in 1981.
- ❖ It is on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines.

### **First home testing**

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research recently approved the home testing COVID-19 kit.
- ❖ It was designed by a startup called Bione.
- ❖ The kit examines the blood that oozes out from the pick and displays the result in 5 to 10 minutes.

### **Guidelines for quarantine**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued this.
- ❖ According to the guidelines, the quarantine is separation and restriction of movement.
- ❖ It shall be applied to an individual or a group of persons.
- ❖ They are placed in quarantine for 14 days and are discharged after a final test.
- ❖ The bio-medical waste at the site of collection should be treated with 1% of hypochlorite solution.

### **Ordnance Factories against Covid 19**

- ❖ The Ordnance Factory Board that governs the defence manufacturing unit spread across India is to introduce “modified tents” to set up isolation units.
- ❖ The idea of modified tents was brought by the Ordnance Equipment Factory, Kanpur.
- ❖ The tent is to be made of Poly Viscos and is water proof.



- ❖ The Ordnance Factories are also working on hand sanitizers.
- ❖ The Ordnance Factory in Aruvankadu, Tamil Nadu has delivered hand sanitizers
- ❖ The Ordnance Factory in Itarsi, Madhya Pradesh and Bhandara, Maharashtra are delivering hand sanitizers on daily basis.



### **Covid 19 Test kits in India**

- ❖ Recently the government had allowed two private companies - Indian company MyLab and German firm Altona Diagnostics - to supply COVID-19 test kits to both government as well as private testing laboratories in India.
- ❖ Two South Korean firms, Seegene and SD Biosensor have received government approval to supply RT-PCR based Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) diagnostic kits in India.

#### **Mechanism**

- ❖ RT-PCR is known as Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction.
- ❖ It is a laboratory technique combining reverse transcription of RNA into DNA by using a polymerase chain reaction (PCR).
- ❖ It is primarily used to measure the amount of specific RNA in a cell.
- ❖ Its ability to quantify viral RNA makes the technique one of the most common ways of identifying viral strains.

#### **Other firms**

- ❖ The government also approved 12 rapid antibody test kits for COVID-19 diagnosis.
- ❖ The advantage of antibody rapid tests is that the result can be made available within 30 minutes.
- ❖ The test comes positive after 7 to 10 days of infection.
- ❖ While positive test indicates exposure to COVID-19, negative does not rule out the infection.

### **Biotech**

- ❖ The Bhopal of Madhya Pradesh based Biotech is second Indian firm to produce COVID-19 testing kit.
- ❖ It is to produce real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) COVID-19 testing kits.
- ❖ The firm in the past had launched India's first homemade test for another pandemic — H1N1 — commonly known as swine flu.
- ❖ Mylab Discovery Solutions became the first Indian company to get commercial approval for its diagnostic test for covid-19 from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) after an evaluation by the Indian Council of Medical Research.
- ❖ The test kit, named the Mylab Patho Detect COVID-19 Qualitative PCR kit, was developed in a record six weeks.
- ❖ This project was headed by the head of research and development of Mylab "Minal Dakhave Bhosale".

### **NAMASTE Portal**

- ❖ It is developed by the Ministry of AYUSH.
- ❖ Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy is the expansion of AYUSH.
- ❖ Recently, the Ministry has developed National Ayurveda Morbidity Codes (NAMC), which is a comprehensive classification of diseases described in Ayurveda and Standardized Ayurveda Terminologies.
- ❖ National AYUSH Morbidity and Standardized Terminologies Electronic Portal (NAMASTE Portal) was launched on 17th October, 2017 (2nd Ayurveda day).
- ❖ The National Ayurveda Day is celebrated every year on the occasion of Dhanwantari Jayanti (Dhanteras).

### **Anti-microbial coating**

- ❖ The Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), an autonomous institution under DST, has come up with a one-step curable anti-microbial coating.
- ❖ This coating is capable of completely killing the influenza virus and resistant pathogenic bacteria and fungi, including methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, fluconazole-resistant C. albicans spp. and a range of virus type Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-19).
- ❖ The anti-microbial coating can be applied or fabricated into surfaces such as textiles, plastics, etc.
- ❖ It is anticipated that the coating will not allow microorganisms to become active on coated surfaces.

- ❖ The coating kills the microbes within 30 minutes of contact.
- ❖ The Compound developed through the technology is soluble in several solvents such as plastics, textiles, PVC, polystyrene, polyurethane.
- ❖ During the COVID-19 outbreak, the coating may be used to protect personal protective tools, clothes and equipment of health workers.

### **Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID)**

- ❖ India has shared nine whole genome sequences of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) with the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID).
- ❖ All these have been shared by the Pune-based National Institute of Virology.
- ❖ Early in March, India became the fifth country in the world to sequence the genome of the novel Coronavirus, or Covid-19.
- ❖ With 621, the U.S. has shared the most number of sequences, followed by the U.K. (350), Belgium (253) and China (242).
- ❖ The CCMB (Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology), CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) and IGIB (Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology) are working on genome sequencing of COVID-19.
- ❖ Genomic sequencing is a technique that allows us to read and interpret genetic information found within DNA or RNA.
- ❖ It is being done to understand the evolution of the virus.
- ❖ Sequencing the genome of SARS-CoV-2 will help understand
  - Where the virus came from.
  - If there are different strains circulating in India.
  - How the virus has spread.
- ❖ GISAID is a public platform started by the WHO in 2008 for countries to share genome sequences.
- ❖ In 2010 the Federal Republic of Germany became the official host of the GISAID platform.

### **Three types of Health Care Facilities**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare announced that the hospitals and health facilities have been classified to deal with COVID-19 cases in the country.
- ❖ The ministry has also announced that if one person does not follow strict guidelines of social distancing, he or she shall infect 406 people in just 3
- ❖ There are three types of COVID-19 health centres to be set up in the country.
- ❖ The three types of centres are as follows

- COVID Care Centre
- Dedicated COVID Health Centre
- Dedicated COVID Hospital

#### **COVID Care Centre**

- ❖ These centres will attend cases that are clinically assigned as very mild or mild.
- ❖ They can be hostels, stadiums, schools, lodges, etc.

#### **Dedicated COVID Health Centre**

- ❖ These centres will attend cases that are assigned as “moderate”.
- ❖ These centres will compulsorily have oxygen support in all beds.
- ❖ Also, these centres will have dedicated ambulance support equipped with sufficient oxygen support.

#### **Dedicated COVID Hospital**

- ❖ These hospitals attend cases that have been clinically assigned as “severe”.
- ❖ They can be either a complete hospital or a part of the hospital.
- ❖ The private hospitals shall also be designated to this category.
- ❖ These hospitals will hold complete set up of ICUs, beds with oxygen support and ventilator units.

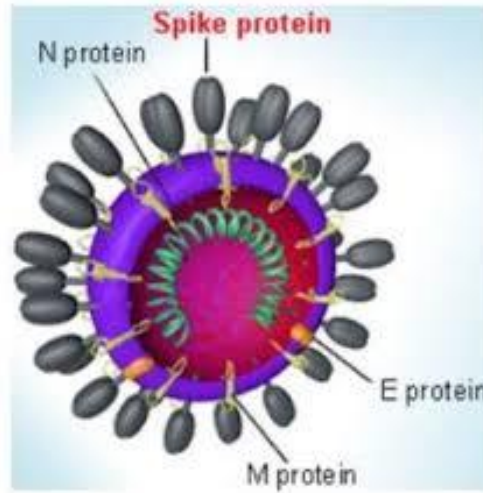
### **Nasal Passage Gel for COVID-19**

- ❖ The Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering and IIT Madras have developed a nasal passage gel that will inactivate COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ The funding to support the technology is to be provided by SERB (Science and Engineering Research Board), a statutory body operating under Department of Science and Technology.
- ❖ Under one approach, the plan is to create a causative agent that will prevent the virus from binding to the host cells.
- ❖ Another approach is to inactivate the virus by trapping them.

### **nCoVSENSE Module**

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology has funded a health care start up called the “Module Innovations” in order to develop COVID-19 testing kit.
- ❖ The purpose of the kit is to make the testing quicker within 10 to 15 minutes.
- ❖ The device will test for antibodies that are generated against COVID-19 in human body.
- ❖ The human body generates Immunoglobulin G and Immunoglobulin M in human body as the virus begins its infection.

- ❖ The antibodies are targeted against the spike proteins of the virus.
- ❖ The current method of testing COVID-19 that uses Real Time Reverse-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) needs more man power and also it takes longer hours.



### Swachhata application

- ❖ The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched a revised version of Swachhata application.
- ❖ It has separate grievance redressal tool to address complaints of Swachh Bharat Mission.

### Mass Manufacturing Technologies

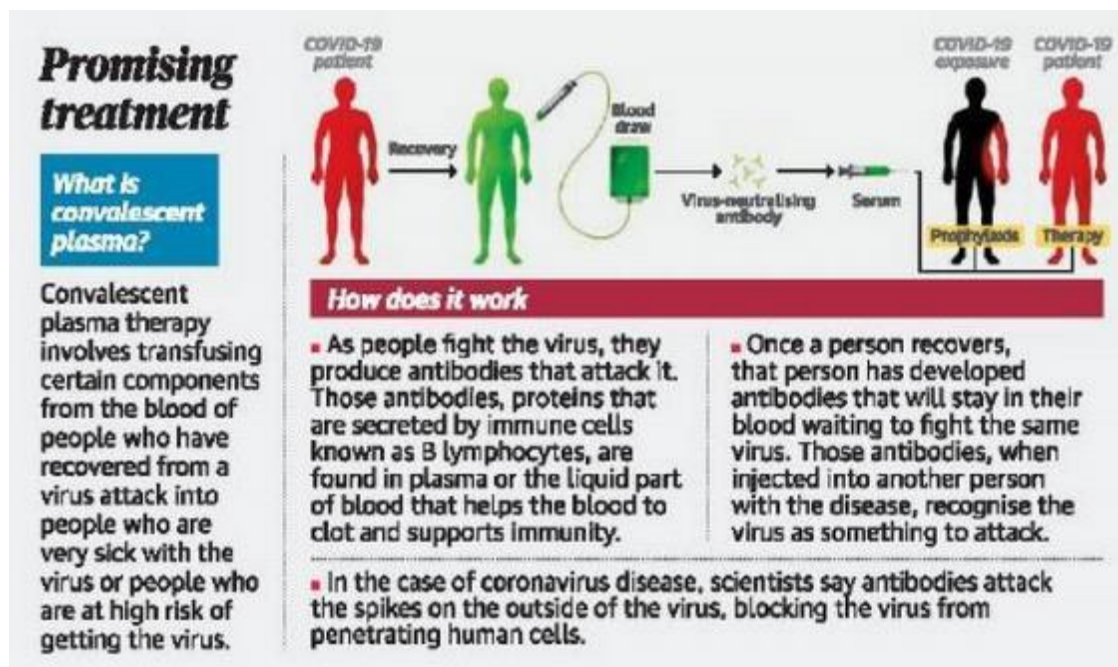
- ❖ The CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) tied up with Bharat Electronics Limited to develop mass manufacturing technologies (hardware and software).
- ❖ The technologies are to focus on production of medical devices.
- ❖ These technologies after creation are to be transferred to companies free of cost.
- ❖ The tie up has helped mitigate COVID-19 through its two recent innovations.
- ❖ They are Digital IR Thermometers and Oxygen Enrichment Unit.

### Plasma Therapy

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) approved clinical trial protocol to be administered for critically ill COVID-19 patients for conducting convalescent plasma therapy for the treatment of critically ill COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ Kerala gets nod for trial of plasma therapy.



- ❖ The ICMR has given its nod to the state government for the first-of-its-kind project, initiated by the prestigious Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) in Kerala.
- ❖ Drugs Controller General's approval and institutional ethics committee approval would have to be there before the treatment can be administered.
- ❖ The therapy takes antibodies from the blood of a person who has recovered from a virus.
- ❖ It transfuses those antibodies into a person sick with that virus.
- ❖ Those antibodies that are secreted by immune cells known as B lymphocytes, are found in plasma, or the liquid part of blood that helps the blood to clot when needed and supports immunity.
- ❖ Once a person has had the virus and recovered, that person has developed antibodies that will stay in their blood waiting to fight the same virus should it return.
- ❖ Those antibodies, when injected into another person with the disease, recognize the virus as something to attack.
- ❖ The scientists say antibodies attack the spikes on the outside of the virus, blocking the virus from penetrating human cells.
- ❖ Convalescent plasma is also known as passive antibody therapy, meaning that while it can immediately provide a person with antibodies to fight a virus, those antibodies only last a short period of time in the recipient's body.



## Hydroxychloroquine

- ❖ While India has agreed to lift an export ban on this drug, US President Donald Trump has called this drug as a "game-changer" in the fight against coronavirus.
- ❖ India is one of the world's largest manufacturers of hydroxychloroquine.
- ❖ It is very similar to chloroquine, one of the oldest and best-known anti-malarial drugs.
- ❖ Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL) has emerged as the only Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) in India which has been manufacturing the currently most sought after anti-malaria drug 'Chloroquine Phosphate' since decades.
- ❖ BCPL was founded in 1901 by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray.
- ❖ It is India's first pharmaceutical company.
- ❖ Prafulla Chandra Ray was known as "Father of Indian Chemistry".

## Remote Patient Health Monitoring System

- ❖ Recently, Bharat Electronics Ltd. and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh, have jointly developed a remote patient health monitoring system.
- ❖ The remote patient health monitoring system can be installed at homes or hospitals premises to reduce the risk of exposure to healthcare workers to Covid-19 while attending to persons undergoing isolation.
- ❖ The system is expected to reduce the increasing demand of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and logistics.

## Active Virosome Vaccine Production

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology operating under Ministry of Science and Technology is to fund Seagull Bio solutions to develop Active Virosome vaccines and immunodiagnostic kits for COVID-19.
- ❖ A Virosome is a drug that consists of unilamellar phospholipid membrane.
- ❖ This membrane allows the drug to fuse with the target cells.

## Wormivet

- ❖ The National Innovation foundation of India has developed an indigenous herbal medicine called Wormivet.
- ❖ It is an alternative to chemical methods that are currently being used to treat worms.
- ❖ The Wormivet is used to treat endoparasite worms in livestock.

- ❖ The National Innovation Foundation operates under Department of Science and Technology.
- ❖ It works to provide support to grass root innovations.



### **Low Cost PPE**

- ❖ Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur has developed a very low cost personal protective equipment (PPE).
- ❖ It can be produced for less than 100 rupees.
- ❖ It has designed the Kit based on thin cylindrical rolls of polythene, which is commonly used in the industry for packaging and making plastic-bags.

### **Smart Stethoscope**

- ❖ A team at the Indian Institute of Technology of Bombay (IIT-B) has developed a "digital stethoscope".
- ❖ It can listen to heart beats from a distance and record them, minimising the risk of healthcare professionals contracting the novel coronavirus from patients.
- ❖ It was developed by a start-up called "AyuDevice" from the IIT's technology business incubator.
- ❖ The product has been developed with clinical inputs from doctors at Reliance Hospital and PD Hinduja Hospital.

### **Contact tracing**

- ❖ Global technology giants Apple and Google have announced that they are partnering on developing contact tracing technology to help governments and health authorities tackle the novel coronavirus pandemic.
- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) defines contact tracing as the process of identifying, assessing, and managing people who have been exposed to a disease to prevent onward transmission.

### **Primordial Black Holes (PBH)**

- ❖ A recent study on Primordial black holes has confirmed that the marginal rise in potential energy resulted in birth of several PBHs and also emitted very powerful gravitational waves.
- ❖ Primordial Black Holes (PBH) were formed during the Hot Big Bang phase.
- ❖ PBH can be massively large as 3000 kms or be extremely tiny like nucleus of an atom.
- ❖ It is believed that they are formed as a result of collapsing radiations as opposed to the collapse of massive stars, which is the case of any other black holes.
- ❖ Primordial black holes were born as a result of a tiny bump in the potential energy levels of the universe, at a time when it was expanding rapidly.
- ❖ After big bang the universe had expanded to nearly  $10^{27}$  times its original size.
- ❖ It occurred within just fraction of a second by the time Cosmic Inflation phase concluded.
- ❖ Thereafter, the remnant energy possessed by gravitational force got converted mainly into photons (light) in addition to protons, electrons, neutrons and other particles.
- ❖ As the universe continued to grow exponentially during the Cosmic Inflation phase, it was sent across tiny quantum jitters.
- ❖ These fluctuations, released in a specific fashion, when sufficiently large, slowly give birth to galaxies and stars and there is a bump in energy.
- ❖ Among those that were significantly large, helped form PBHs.
- ❖ The bump in energy then produces PBHs besides triggering very strong gravitational waves.



### **Remdesvir Drug**

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research announced that the antiviral drug Remdesvir is highly effective in stopping the replication of COVID-19.
- ❖ The research on the efficacy of Remdesvir is a part of WHO's "Solidarity Trial".
- ❖ The drug was used against Ebola virus.



### **First State to start Pool Testing**

- ❖ The ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) gave permission for the state of Uttar Pradesh to start pool testing of COVID-19.
- ❖ With this, UP has become the first state to start pool testing.
- ❖ Pool testing is being done in the state to increase the number of testing.
- ❖ Under pool testing, the samples will be mixed and tested.
- ❖ A pooled testing algorithm involves the PCR (polymerase chain reaction) screening of a specimen pool comprising multiple individual patient specimens.
- ❖ It is followed by individual testing only if a pool screens positive.
- ❖ As all individual samples in a negative pool are regarded as negative, it results in substantial cost savings when a large proportion of pools tests negative.

### **Need of Pool testing**

- ❖ This will reduce the total test kits used to examine patients and treat them.
- ❖ It increases the testing capacity of a state.
- ❖ The pooling test samples is cost effective, especially for the countries with limited resources.
- ❖ It can be used to prevent community spread of the disease.



### **Rapid Anti Body tests**

- ❖ The Government of India announced that the Rapid Antibody tests will strictly be used as surveillance test.
- ❖ India recently imported 5 lakh rapid antibody kits from China.
- ❖ India is to continue using DNA based RT-PCR testing to detect COVID-19.
- ❖ This is done by using throat swabs.



- ❖ According to ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research), persons with influenza like symptoms and patients with runny nose and sore throat should take the RT-PCR (Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) test.
- ❖ When the test is negative, they should go through antibody test after 7 days.
- ❖ This is being done as antibodies are formed on persons' body only after 8 days a person is infected.

### **COVSACK**

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has developed COVSACK to receive samples from COVID-19 infected patients.
- ❖ The COVSACK is COVID-19 Sample Collection Kiosk.
- ❖ The COVSACK was developed by consulting doctors in Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).
- ❖ There is no involvement of manual disinfection in the entire process.
- ❖ Moreover, the cabin is flushed with water and UV light.
- ❖ Therefore, the system is safe to use.



### **Testing Kit by SCTIMST**

- ❖ The Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Science (SCTIMST), an institute of national importance developed a diagnostic kit.
- ❖ The time taken by the kit to examine the samples is half as that of the time taken by the RT-PCR tests.
- ❖ The kit uses RT-LAMP (Reverse Transcriptase Loop Mediated Isothermal Amplification) technique to identify the N gene of the virus.

- ❖ The technique has begun to replace RT-PCR for its rapidity, simplicity, sensitivity and specificity.

### **Rapid Antibody testing**

- ❖ India is buying RNA extraction kits and antibody testing kits from China.
- ❖ India will also import PPE kits from China.
- ❖ The rapid antibody testing is quicker than the PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) testing.
- ❖ It takes 15 to 30 minutes to provide the results.
- ❖ The kit uses a lancet to prick on a person's finger and collects blood to examine for antibodies.
- ❖ The test checks for IgM and IgG antibodies.

### **Digital and Molecular Surveillance**

- ❖ The Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with King George Medical University to sequence the strains of COVID-19 virus samples obtained from different patients.
- ❖ This is to be done under a "Digital and Molecular Surveillance".
- ❖ Molecular surveillance is currently being used in HIV drug testing, foodborne infections and TB.
- ❖ The CDRI is working on repurposing of drugs to fight COVID-19.
- ❖ The repurposing of drugs is the fastest way to find solution to the virus rather than finding a new drug.
- ❖ Repurposing of drugs is a new strategy that investigates the existing drugs for therapeutic purposes.



### **CSIR - Cover All suit**

- ❖ The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) developed Personal Protective Cover all suit.
- ❖ The suit has been produced with polypropylene spun multilayered non-woven fabric.
- ❖ The main benefit of the suit is that it is competitive in prices as compared to other suits that are being imported.

### **Three new mutations of COVID-19**

- ❖ The scientists at Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC) have found three new mutations of COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ With this, GBRC becomes the first government laboratory in the country to sequence whole genome of COVID-19.
- ❖ The Genome Sequencing is a method that is used to find DNA sequence of genome of an organism.

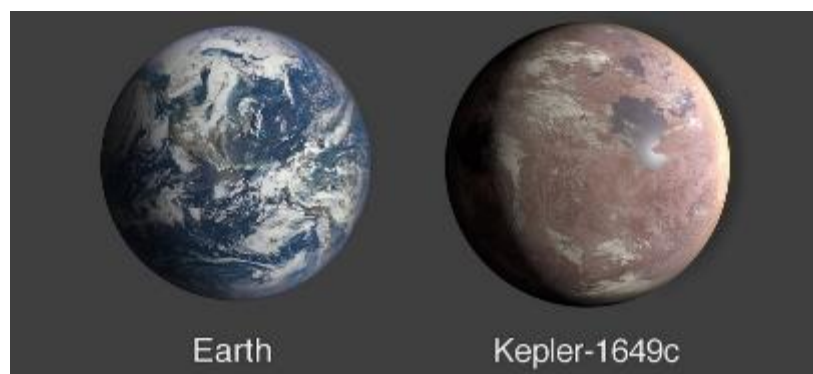
### **New Exoplanet**

- ❖ A group of Scientists from NASA discovered a planet called Kepler-1649c.
- ❖ It is orbiting in its star's (red dwarf star Kepler-1649) habitable zone.
- ❖ The habitable zone is the area around a star where a rocky planet could support liquid water.
- ❖ It is located 300 light-years from Earth.
- ❖ It is most similar to Earth in size and estimated temperature.
- ❖ This newly revealed world is only 1.06 times larger than our own planet.
- ❖ Also, the amount of starlight it receives from its host star is 75% of the amount of light Earth receives from our Sun.
- ❖ It means the exoplanet's temperature may be similar to our planet's as well.
- ❖ But unlike Earth, it orbits a red dwarf.



- ❖ A year on Kepler-1649c is equivalent to only 19.5 Earth days.
- ❖ This type of star is known for stellar flare-ups that may make a planet's environment challenging for any potential life.

- ❖ This gives us even greater hope that a second Earth lies among the stars, waiting to be found.
- ❖ The data gathered by missions like Kepler and Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite [TESS] will continue to yield amazing discoveries.
- ❖ There are other exoplanets estimated to be closer to Earth in size such as TRAPPIST-1f and Teegarden c.
- ❖ Others may be closer to Earth in temperature, such as TRAPPIST-1d and TOI 700d.
- ❖ But there is no other exoplanet that is considered to be closer to Earth in both of these values that also lies in the habitable zone of its system.
- ❖ The Kepler space telescope is a retired space telescope launched by NASA to discover.
- ❖ Named after astronomer Johannes Kepler, the spacecraft was launched in 2009 into an Earth-trailing heliocentric orbit.
- ❖ NASA announced its retirement in 2018.
- ❖ It was designed to survey a portion of Earth's region of the Milky Way to discover Earth-size exoplanets in or near habitable zones.
- ❖ It was to estimate how many of the billions of stars in the Milky Way have such planets.



### **TriboE Mask**

- ❖ A team of researchers at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS), Bangalore, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), have come up with a recipe for making face masks, termed as TriboE Mask.
- ❖ It can hold electric charges to restrict the entry of infections but interestingly, without any external power.
- ❖ It relies on electrostatics.
- ❖ The tribo electric effect is also known as tribo electric charging.

- ❖ It is a type of contact electrification on which certain materials become electrically charged after they are separated from a different material with which they were in contact.



### COVID 19 drug - Sepsivac

- ❖ The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) approved the trial of this drug to reduce mortality rate of COVID-19 patients.
- ❖ It was developed by the Cadila Pharmaceuticals along with Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- ❖ The drug had been used to treat critically ill patients suffering from Gram Negative Bacterial Sepsis.
- ❖ Gram Negative Bacteria with Sepsis is a systematic disease that are caused by micro-organisms.
- ❖ The patients suffering from COVID-19 and Gram Negative Bacterial Sepsis have similarities.
- ❖ Sepsis is a life-threatening condition.
- ❖ When the chemicals in the bloodstream go out of balance, sepsis occurs.

### Lithium in space

- ❖ A team of scientists at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have discovered a number of Lithium rich red giants.
- ❖ They frame a connection between Lithium in interstellar space and lithium in red giants.
- ❖ The Lithium rich Helium burning stars also have connections with red giant stars.
- ❖ This discovery indicates that Li is being produced in the stars and accounts for its abundance in the interstellar medium.
- ❖ The study says that the present amount of Lithium found in the Universe is four times that of the primordial value.
- ❖ Lithium (Li), is one of the three primordial elements, apart from Hydrogen and Helium (He), produced in the big bang nucleosynthesis (BBN).



- ❖ Identifying sources of Li enrichment in our Galaxy has been a great interest to researchers to validate Big Bang Nucleosynthesis.
- ❖ The Big Bang Nucleosynthesis theory predicts that roughly 25% the mass of the Universe consists of Helium.
- ❖ The IIA an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology.



### **Electronic density of ionosphere**

- ❖ The Indian Institute of Geomagnetism researchers have developed a model that will predict electronic density of ionosphere.
- ❖ This Model is an Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) based Global Ionospheric Model.
- ❖ The ANNs mimic the process of human brain.
- ❖ This is highly important for the communication and navigation on the earth.
- ❖ This is highly helpful to study changes in the ionosphere.
- ❖ It also helps to learn about geomagnetic storms that occur due to the magnetic clouds that originate from the sun.
- ❖ A magnetic storm on the earth's magnetosphere is caused by solar winds.

### **DRDO Mobile COVID -19 testing Lab**

- ❖ Defence Minister Raj Nath Singh inaugurated this lab.
- ❖ The facility is capable of testing 1000 samples in a day.
- ❖ The Mobile Virology Research and Diagnostics Laboratory (MVRDL) were developed by DRDO in association with the ESIC Hospital in Hyderabad.
- ❖ The laboratory has Bio Safety level 2 and Bio Safety level 3.

## \*Types Of Biosafety Levels

There are 4 types of biosafety levels according to the risk factors involved depending on the nature of pathogen being handled.

- \* BSL 1 (Basic teaching, Research)
- \* BSL 2 (Primary health services, diagnostic service, research)
- \* BSL 3 (Special diagnostic service, research)
- \* BSL 4 (Dangerous pathogen units)

### China's Mars mission

- ❖ The Chinese National Space Administration (CNSA) named its first Mars Exploration mission as Tianwen 1.
- ❖ The announcement comes on April 24 as China has been celebrating its National Space Day on April 24 since 2016.
- ❖ China celebrates its National Space Day to mark the launch of its first satellite Dongfanghong -1 in 1970.
- ❖ Tianwen means Heavenly Questions.
- ❖ So far countries such as India, Russia, European Union and United States have succeeded in sending missions to Mars.
- ❖ India was the fourth country in the world to reach Mars after Russia, USA and European Union.
- ❖ India's mars mission was named "Mangalyaan".
- ❖ It was launched in 2013 by ISRO.

### Pooled testing restriction

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research announced that pooled testing can be done only in areas where the COVID-19 prevalence is less than 5%.
- ❖ Also, the ICMR has instructed that not more than 5 samples shall be pooled.
- ❖ So far in India, Pooled testing has been adopted in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.
- ❖ Though Andaman was the first Union Territory to adopt pool testing, UP was the first state to adopt the methodology.
- ❖ Pooled Testing has been successful in Israel and Germany as well.

## Hydrogen Fuel Cell

- ❖ The National Thermal Power Corporation recently had invited expression of interest for procuring ten Hydrogen Fuel Cell based buses and 10 similar electric cars.
- ❖ These environment-friendly vehicles would be used in Delhi and Leh.
- ❖ It is first of its kind project in the country.
- ❖ It is to decarbonize transport system in the country.
- ❖ The Hydrogen Fuel Cell use chemical process to convert hydrogen rich fuel into electricity.
- ❖ The main advantage of fuel cells is that they need not be charged frequently.
- ❖ They produce electricity as long as the fuel is available.
- ❖ The major benefits of hydrogen fuel cells include high efficiency, low to zero emissions, fuel flexibility, quiet operation, durability and energy security.
- ❖ Hydrogen fuel is a zero-emission fuel burned with oxygen.
- ❖ It can be used in fuel cells or internal combustion engines.
- ❖ It is also used as a fuel for spacecraft propulsion.

## Herbal Decongestant Spray

- ❖ The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI) has developed herbal decongestant spray.
- ❖ The spray is used to prevent COVID-19 infection and to ease wearing masks.
- ❖ The NBRI is a Lucknow based laboratory that mainly focuses on botanical research work.

## Guidelines for the use of AC

- ❖ The Central Public Works Department has issued guidelines to use air conditioners during COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ The guidelines were prepared by the Indian Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air Conditioner Engineers (ISHRAE).
- ❖ The main objective of the guidelines is to counter the fact use of air conditioners lead to increased spread of COVID-19.
- ❖ The ideal temperature is to be maintained between 24 degree Celsius and 30 Degree celsius.
- ❖ The relative humidity should be maintained between 40% and 70%.
- ❖ In order to maintain positive pressure in the space, the mechanical exhaust air shall be 70% to 80% of fresh air quantity.

- ❖ The Government of India had already issued an order that every air conditioner should have minimum temperature threshold as 24 degree celsius.

### **Mutation of Corona Virus**

- ❖ National Institute of Biomedical Genomics in Kalyani, West Bengal has released a study stating that novel coronavirus has mutated into 10 different types.
- ❖ Among them, A2a has become dominant across all the geographical regions.
- ❖ The A2a mutation has been highly efficient in entering human lungs in large numbers.
- ❖ The virus can be classified into O, A2, A2a, A3, B, B1, and many other types.
- ❖ At present, 11 types have been identified that include type O.
- ❖ It was the ancestral type that originated in Wuhan.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Peak Hour Pollution**

- ❖ In Indian big cities, the peak hour pollution in the morning and evening flattened due to the lock down.
- ❖ It has brought down particulate matter of sizes less than 2.5 microns greatly.
- ❖ According to the Central Pollution Control Board, around 92 cities in the country have recorded pollution level of “Good” from “Satisfactory”.

### **Air Quality Index**

- ❖ The pollution levels is categorized as Good when the AQI is between 0 and 50.
- ❖ The other categories are poor (201-300), very poor (301-400) and severe (401-500).

Air Quality Index - Particulate Matter	
301 – 500	Hazardous
201 – 300	Very Unhealthy
151 – 200	Unhealthy
101 – 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
51 – 100	Moderate
0 – 50	Good

### **Bear Bile for COVID-19**

- ❖ The Chinese Government has put on a list of medicines that shall be used to treat COVID-19.
- ❖ It includes both Chinese traditional medicines and western medicines as well.
- ❖ Among these, “Tan Re Qing” has been identified as best cure.
- ❖ This traditional medicine carries bear bile
- ❖ The Ursodeoxycholic acid in the bear bile is the curing component of COVID-19.
- ❖ It is also called Ursodiol.

### **Anti-smog guns**

- ❖ Anti-smog guns installed at in Delhi.
- ❖ The Supreme Court had said that anti-smog guns should be mandatory in projects that require environmental clearance from the State or Centre
- ❖ Anti-smog gun is a device that sprays nebulised water droplets into the atmosphere to reduce air pollution.



### **CoP 26**

- ❖ The United Nations announced that the Conference of Parties (COP 26) that was to be held in Glasgow in Scotland in November 2020 has been pushed to 2021.
- ❖ The CoP 26 is the meeting of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).



## COP 26 GLASGOW



UNITED NATIONS  
CLIMATE CHANGE  
CONFERENCE

**NOVEMBER 2020**

### **BS VI fuel**

- ❖ Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm, has begun the supply of the world's cleanest petrol and diesel across the country.
- ❖ IOC is the first company to begin supply of BS-VI fuel across country.
- ❖ Other fuel retailers, Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL), are also progressively supplying BS-VI grade fuel.
- ❖ The government had set April 1 as the deadline for starting supply of Euro-VI emission compliant fuels.

### **Covid 19 on Tiger**

- ❖ A four-year-old Malayan tiger in the Bronx Zoo of New York in USA has tested positive of Corona Virus.
- ❖ This is the first time COVID-19 infections are reported on an animal.
- ❖ Indian Council of Medical Research has confirmed that there is no evidence that COVID-19 is air borne disease.
- ❖ There are evidences that it spreads only through droplets.



**TIGER TESTS POSITIVE FOR  
COVID19**

## Wonder Chicken

- ❖ The oldest fossil of a modern bird, dating from the age of dinosaurs, has been discovered.
- ❖ The tiny fossil is nicknamed the "wonder chicken".
- ❖ It was found in the limestone of Sint-Pietersberg near Maastricht at Netherlands.
- ❖ It dates to more than 66 million years ago.
- ❖ This is one of the best-preserved fossil bird skulls of any age.
- ❖ The fossil provides the best evidence yet of when and how the earliest ancestors of today's birds evolved.
- ❖ Maastricht became well known through the Maastricht Treaty and as the birthplace of the euro in 1992.



## Forest Rights Committee

- ❖ The Tribal affairs ministry recently constituted a committee on Community Forest Resources (CFR Guideline) under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA).
- ❖ The ministry created a committee headed by NC Saxena, former member of the Planning Commission of India and of the National Advisory Council.
- ❖ The CFR right under the FRA empowers Gram Sabha to conserve and manage their forest.
- ❖ In 2016, CFR guidelines were prepared by MoTA, in consultation with the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).
- ❖ Earlier the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) appointed committee to facilitate legal recognition for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG).
- ❖ It was headed by former MoTA secretary Hrusikesh Panda.
- ❖ These committee members decided to visit Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- ❖ Under FRA, habitat rights are given to PVTGs and pre-agriculture communities and it gives them access to the resources in the area recognized as their habitat.

### **Bio fortified carrots**

- ❖ A farmer scientist of Junagadh district, Gujarat Vallabhai Vastambhai Marvaniya developed bio fortified carrots.
- ❖ The carrots are locally called “Madhuban Gajar”.
- ❖ It has 277.75 mg/kg of  $\beta$ -Carotene and 276.7 mg/kg of iron.
- ❖ The validation trials of the carrot were conducted by National Innovation Foundation (NIF).
- ❖ It is an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
- ❖ It was set up in February 2000 at Ahmedabad, Gujarat to provide institutional support for the grassroots innovations across the country.



### **Super Pink Moon**

- ❖ Super Pink Moon occurred for the second time in the year 2020.
- ❖ A Super moon phenomenon occurs when Moon is "full" and reaches perigee.
- ❖ Perigee is the point of Moon's orbit when it's nearest to the Earth.
- ❖ Its orbit to the earth is elliptical in Nature.
- ❖ Thus, when a full Moon is nearest to the Earth, a Super moon occurs.
- ❖ The Moon appears to be 14 percent bigger and 30 percent brighter than the average full moon.
- ❖ April Super moon is known as Pink Super moon as it is named after pink flower that is native to eastern North America.
- ❖ Therefore, the supermoon in the month of April derives its name from this flower.
- ❖ It refers to the colour of the flower not the colour of the moon.

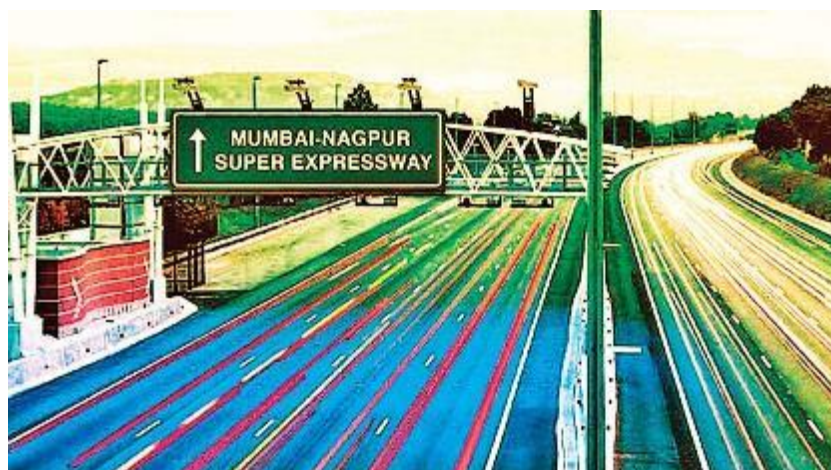


### **Mumbai-Nagpur highway**

- ❖ The National Wildlife Board (NBWL) issued final nod for Mumbai-Nagpur highway
- ❖ This Highway passes through the 10-km eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of Katepurna and Karanja Sohal Blackbuck wildlife sanctuaries.

#### About NBWL

- ❖ NBWL is a “Statutory Organization” constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ❖ It is chaired by the Prime Minister.
- ❖ No alternation of boundaries in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries can be done without approval of the NBWL.
- ❖ It has 47 members including the Prime Minister.
- ❖ It includes three Members of Parliament (two from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha), five NGOs and 10 eminent ecologists, conservationists and environmentalists.





### **Uranium in Drinking Water**

- ❖ A new study conducted by the University of Manchester, UK and Mahavir Cancer Institute and Research Centre, Phulwarisharif in Patna has found uranium contaminating the groundwater in 10 districts of Bihar.
- ❖ The Indian Standard IS 10500: 2012 for Drinking Water specification has specified the maximum acceptable limits for radioactive residues as alpha and beta emitters.
- ❖ As per Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), maximum permissible limit of Uranium is 0.03 mg/l (as per WHO provisional guidelines) in all drinking water standards.
- ❖ A report brought out by Duke University, USA in association with Central Ground Water Board and State Ground Water departments states that the Majority states in India have localised the occurrence of Uranium concentration.

### **Fall Armyworm (FAW)**

- ❖ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has launched a Global Action for FAW Control as a response to the international threat posed by the armyworms.
- ❖ Fall Armyworm (FAW) is a dangerous transboundary insect with a high potential to spread rapidly due to its natural distribution capacity and opportunities presented by international trade.
- ❖ The armyworm caterpillar is the larval stage of several species of moths.
- ❖ FAW represents a real threat to food security and livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers by spreading across all of sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East and Asia.
- ❖ FAW cannot be eliminated.
- ❖ Farmers need significant support to manage FAW sustainably in their cropping systems through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) activities.

### **Fly Ash in Sasan**

- ❖ The Reliance Power's Ultra Mega Power Project's (UMPP) in Sasan area of Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh fly ash dyke collapsed recently.
- ❖ Popularly known as Flue ash or pulverised fuel ash, it is a coal combustion product.
- ❖ It is composed of the particulates that are driven out of coal-fired boilers together with the flue gases.





### **Earth's seismic noise**

- ❖ Scientists at the British Geological Survey (BGS) have reported a change in the Earth's seismic noise and vibrations amid the coronavirus lockdown.
- ❖ In geology, seismic noise refers to the relatively persistent vibration of the ground due to a multitude of causes.
- ❖ This noise includes vibrations caused due to human activity, such as transport and manufacturing.
- ❖ It is the unwanted component of signals recorded by a seismometer.
- ❖ Seismometer records ground motions, such as those caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and explosions.
- ❖ To measure seismic activity accurately, geologists place their detectors 100 metres below the Earth's surface.
- ❖ Since the lockdown, researchers were able to study natural vibrations even from surface readings.

### **Bats in India**

- ❖ As per a study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), presence of a different kind of coronavirus has been found in two bat species in India.
- ❖ These two bat species are from Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ But there is no evidence or research to claim that these bat coronaviruses can cause disease in humans.
- ❖ Pteropus bat species were earlier found positive for Nipah virus in 2018 and 2019 in Kerala.
- ❖ Bats are considered to be the natural reservoir for many viruses, of which some are potential human pathogens.
- ❖ The study has been published in the Indian Journal of Medical Research.



### **Water availability in India**

- ❖ The average annual per capita water availability in India fell from 1820 cubic meters assessed in 2001 to 1545 cubic meters in 2011.
- ❖ It could reduce further to 1341 and 1140 in the years 2025 and 2050 respectively.
- ❖ In a 2018 report, the water and sanitation advocacy group WaterAid ranked India at the top of 10 countries with lowest access to clean water close to home.
- ❖ Annual per-capita water availability of less than 1700 cubic meters is considered as water stressed condition.
- ❖ Annual per- capita water availability below 1000 cubic meters is considered as a water scarcity condition.

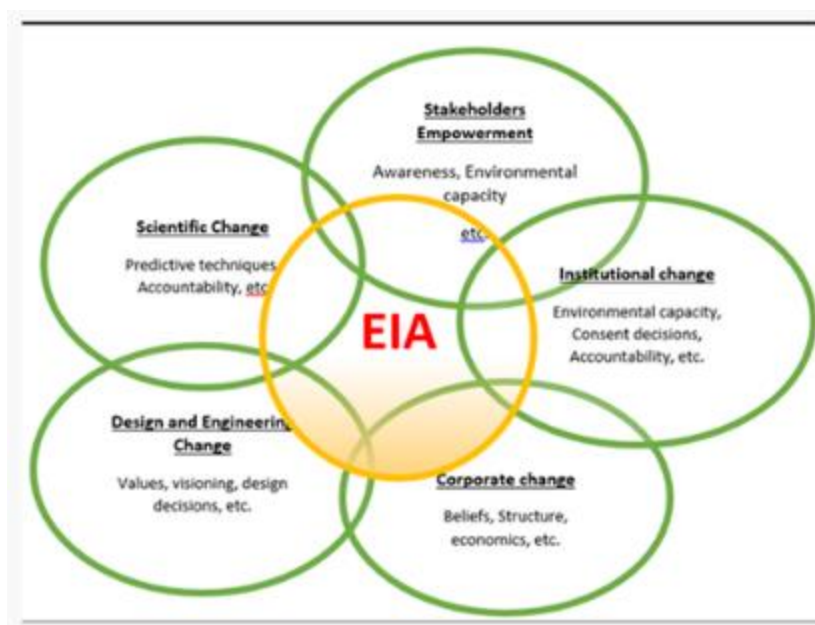
### **Bats in Myanmar**

- ❖ Scientists have discovered six new coronaviruses among bats in Myanmar.
- ❖ This is the first time these viruses have been discovered.
- ❖ They aren't closely related to covid-19 or SARS or MERS – two other types of coronavirus.
- ❖ Experts estimate that thousands of coronaviruses are present in bats.
- ❖ Researchers detected these new viruses while conducting bio surveillance of animals and people.
- ❖ It was done to better understand the circumstances for disease spillover.
- ❖ It was part of a project known as PREDICT.
- ❖ The team was formed by the Smithsonian's Global Health Program.
- ❖ The findings have been published in the scientific journal PLOS ONE.



## Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)

- ❖ Environment Impact Assessment in India is statutorily backed by the Environment Protection Act, 1986.
- ❖ It contains various provisions on EIA methodology and process.
- ❖ To address unprecedented situation arising from COVID-19, and to ramp up availability or production of various drugs, the Environment Ministry has made an amendment to EIA Notification 2006.
- ❖ All projects or activities in respect of bulk drugs and intermediates, manufactured for addressing various ailments, have been re-categorized from the existing Category 'A' to 'B2' category.



### **Monsoon Forecast**

- ❖ Recently the IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) has predicted that India will likely have a normal monsoon in 2020, with a chance of 'above normal' rain in August and September.
- ❖ It has also officially redefined the definition of what constitutes 'normal' rainfall and reduced it by 1 cm to 88 cm from 89 cm.
- ❖ The June-September rainfall accounts for 75% of the country's annual rainfall.
- ❖ The IMD issues a two-stage forecast: the first in April, followed by a more detailed one in the last week of May, which will also illustrate how the monsoon will spread over the country.
- ❖ IMD relies on supercomputers, mathematically simulating the physics of the ocean and the atmosphere.

### **Leather back Turtles**

- ❖ The Leather back Turtles are the world's giant sea turtles.
- ❖ The largest number of nests of this rare Leather back sea turtles were recently found in Thailand.
- ❖ They are considered vulnerable under International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list of threatened species.

### **Trimeresurus salazar**

- ❖ It is the fifth variety of reptile to have been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh in a little more than a year.
- ❖ It was collected from the Pakke Tiger Reserve in Pakke-Kessang district.
- ❖ Of the species recorded from India, seven had been found in the northeast before the Salazar's pit viper.
- ❖ Salazar's pit viper belongs to the genus Trimeresurus Lacépède comprising charismatic venomous serpents with morphologically as well as ecologically diverse species.
- ❖ Pit vipers are venomous snakes distinguished by their heat-sensing pit organs between the eye and the nostril.

### **Corona on Cats**

- ❖ Two pet cats in New York have tested positive for the coronavirus.
- ❖ It is marking the first confirmed cases in companion animals in USA.



- ❖ The public health officials emphasized there is no evidence that animals can pass the virus to humans.
- ❖ Outside the United States, a small number of pets have tested positive — two dogs and one cat in Hong Kong and a cat in Belgium.

### **Anthurium**

- ❖ D Vasini Bai, a women innovator from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, has developed 10 varieties of Anthurium.
- ❖ Anthurium is one of the best domestic flowering plants in the world.
- ❖ NASA has placed it in the list of air purifier plants.



### **Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve**

- ❖ Recently National Board for Wild Life (NBWL) has recommended coal mining in a part of Dehing Patkai elephant reserve in Assam.
- ❖ NBWL is a statutory body constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ❖ It is the apex body to review all wildlife-related matters and approve projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries i.e. Protected Areas.
- ❖ It is chaired by Prime minister.
- ❖ It is a 47-member board (including the chairman) which usually meets once a year.



**Wildlife Board nod  
for mining in  
Assam Elephant  
Reserve**



## STATES

### FRBM Act and Kerala

- ❖ The Chief Minister of Kerala has urged the Centre to provide Kerala with flexibility under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act.
- ❖ It is to ensure that the State's finances are not adversely impacted in the rest of the financial year starting on April 1.
- ❖ To help fund the emergency relief package, Kerala proposes to borrow as much as Rs 12,500 crore from the market in April itself.
- ❖ The law does contain what is commonly referred to as an 'escape clause'.

#### About FRBM

- ❖ The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBM Act), 2003, establish financial discipline to reduce fiscal deficit.
- ❖ The Act's long-term objective is for India to achieve fiscal stability and to give the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) flexibility to deal with inflation in India.
- ❖ Under the Act, the Centre can exceed the annual fiscal deficit target citing grounds.
- ❖ The reasons include national security, war, national calamity, collapse of agriculture, structural reforms and decline in real output growth of a quarter by at least three percentage points below the average of the previous four quarters.

### Rapid Test

- ❖ The Kerala government has announced 'rapid tests' that will ensure speedy results within half an hour.
- ❖ It was taken to tackle suspicions of whether the novel coronavirus has spread into the community.
- ❖ A rapid test is conducted to determine whether there has been any kind of recent viral infection in a person's body.
- ❖ When a pathogen enters a human body, specific antibodies are released as a response to the virus.
- ❖ A rapid test can detect the presence of such antibodies in blood, serum or plasma samples quickly, indicating a viral infection.
- ❖ Rapid testing is conducted usually to check for community transmission of a virus during an epidemic.
- ❖ It is a simple test that can be done with a person's blood sample and will give out results within 10-30 minutes.
- ❖ It is also a low-cost test.

## Salary Cut

- ❖ The Maharashtra and Telangana State Governments announced major salary cuts due to Covid-19 outbreak.
- ❖ The Maharashtra Government had cut 60% of salary from the Chief Minister and other members of Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and other representatives of the local governing bodies.
- ❖ The Telangana Government is to cut 75% of salary from the Chief Minister, members of legislative assembly and state ministers.

## Houses for all the poor

- ❖ The Government of Andhra Pradesh modified the guidelines of Navatnatnalu-Pedalandariki Illu programme.
- ❖ The scheme is called “Houses for all the poor”.
- ❖ Under the scheme, house sites are to be allotted to the poor at Re 1 to the poor with white ration cards.
- ❖ The “Navatnatnalu” is a flagship scheme of the Andhra Pradesh Government.
- ❖ There are nine (Navaratna) welfare schemes.

NAVARATNAS	
1	YSR Rythu Bharosa
2	Fee reimbursement
3	Aarogyasri
4	Jalayagnam
5	Ban on alcohol
6	Amma Vodi
7	YSR Aasara
8	Houses for poor
9	Pension hike

## Punjab Village and Small Towns Act

- ❖ This law was recently invoked in Panchkula of Haryana to curtail movement during lockdown.
- ❖ This law was first enacted in 1918 in erstwhile Punjab to make provisions for nightly patrol duty by inhabitants of small villages and towns in cases of emergency.

- ❖ Under this Act, if the Deputy Commissioner of a district in Punjab or Haryana is of the opinion that in a village, special measures need to be taken to secure public safety, he has the power to make an order requiring all “able-bodied adult male inhabitants” to patrol the village.

### **Price Monitoring & Resource Unit (PMRU)**

- ❖ Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory has become the 12th State where the Price Monitoring & Resource Unit (PMRU) has been set up by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).
- ❖ It is a registered society and shall function under the direct control and supervision of State Drug Controller of respective states.

### **J&K domicile rules**

- ❖ The Centre redefines Jammu and Kashmir domicile rules opening up various categories of jobs in the region to people from across the country.
- ❖ The order has been defined under J&K Civil Services (Decentralisation and Recruitment) Act.
- ❖ In law, domicile is the status or attribution of being a lawful permanent resident in a particular jurisdiction.
- ❖ Earlier, Section 35A associated with the abrogated Article 370 had given the legislative assembly of the state the power to define a Jammu and Kashmir resident.

#### **NEW RULES**

➤ **Domicile rights extended to all migrants who have been registered** by Relief and Rehab Commissioner in the erstwhile state

➤ Anyone who has **studied for a period of 7 years and appeared in Class 10th or 12th exams** in J&K is eligible for domicile certificate

➤ Change in rules, though **only for lower-end govt jobs**, is politically significant as state employment was previously in accordance with definition of permanent residents

### **Rajnish Oswal - permanent Judge of High Court of J&K**

- ❖ Justice Rajnish Oswal was sworn in as a permanent Judge of the common High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh
- ❖ He was administered oath of office by Chief Justice Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Justice Gita Mittal in Jammu.
- ❖ He is the first Judge of the High Court to take oath under the Indian Constitution.
- ❖ All previous Judges of High Court had taken oath under the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, which ceased to have effect since August 5, 2019.
- ❖ With the appointment of Justice Oswal, the strength of Justices of J&K High Court increased from eight to nine.

### **CM of Madhya Pradesh**

- ❖ BJP's Shivraj Singh Chouhan was sworn in as chief minister of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ This is the fourth time Shivraj Singh Chouhan has been administered the oath of office as CM.
- ❖ Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the 32nd Chief Minister of the state.
- ❖ Earlier, Kamalnath from the Indian National Congress Party resigned the CM post.

### **Summer capital of Uttarakhand**

- ❖ Gairsain was recently declared the summer capital of the Uttarakhand state.
- ❖ Its winter capital is Dehradun.
- ❖ On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being carved from the Himalayan districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ It is often referred to as the "Devabhumi".



### **NIGHA mobile App**

- ❖ The Andhra Pradesh State Government launched NIGHA Mobile App to Curb Electoral Malpractices in the Local Body Polls.
- ❖ It empowers citizens to report illegal distribution of money and liquor, and has provisions to upload photos and videos as well.

### **Door Delivery of fish Scheme**

- ❖ The Krishi Vigyan Kendra operating under Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute has launched a door delivery scheme in Kerala.
- ❖ Under the scheme, it is providing door delivery of fishes to several households in Kochi city.

### **5T plan to control COVID-19**

- ❖ The Government of Delhi announced 5T plan to tackle the spread of Corona Virus in the Union Territory.
- ❖ The 5T plan includes Testing, Tracing, Teamwork, Treatment and Tracking.
- ❖ Under the Testing Programme, the government is to conduct 1 lakh rapid tests in hotspot areas of Delhi.



**WHAT ARE THE 5 Ts** Photo: ANI

<b>1T: Testing</b> Govt will conduct random tests, mostly in the corona hotspots of the city, to identify, treat, trace, quarantine and seal, along the lines of South Korea	<b>3T: Treatment</b> 2,950 beds currently available exclusively for Covid-19 patients. Detailed contingency plan ready. Hotels, banquet halls to be converted into hospitals if the number of cases crosses 30,000 mark
<b>2T: Tracing</b> Will trace every single contact of positive cases through cellphone triangulation. 24-hour tabs on those in home quarantine to ensure they're following the norms	<b>4T: Teamwork</b> CM to talk to all Delhi MPs on Wednesday. All departments, agencies working in coordination
	<b>5T: Tracking &amp; Monitoring</b> CM to personally track and monitor every single aspect involved in making this plan successful

### **Lockdown in Odisha**

- ❖ Odisha is the first Indian state to extend Covid-19 lockdown till April 30.
- ❖ Activities related to agriculture, animal husbandry and MGNREGS will be facilitated during the lockdown period following social distancing norms in Odisha.



## **Gamosa**

- ❖ Recently the COVID-19 pandemic has made the ubiquitous gamosa, a decorative cotton towel, evolve from memento to mask.
- ❖ The Gamosa is an article of significance for the people of Assam.
- ❖ It is generally a white rectangular piece of cloth with primarily a red border on three sides and red woven motifs on the fourth.



## **Covid 19 hospital**

- ❖ The Exclusive Covid 19 hospital has been inaugurated at Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences in Bhubaneswar at Odisha.
- ❖ This is the first such hospital in India to treat only for covid 19 patients.
- ❖ The Odisha Mining Corporation and the Mahanadi Coal fields Limited will provide the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for this project.
- ❖ It is the largest corona virus hospital in the country by having 1000 bed capacity.

## **Coronavirus Curve**

- ❖ Kerala's coronavirus curve has started to flatten.
- ❖ The recovered cases (green curve) will cross the yellow curve soon.
- ❖ The Graph has three colours
  - Total positive cases reported - red line
  - Positive cases at present - yellow line
  - People recovered - green line.

## **First Green State**

- ❖ Goa recently became the first zero COVID-19 State in the country with the last seven positive cases also turning negative.
- ❖ This makes Goa the first green State in the country with no case of coronavirus being reported from April 3.
- ❖ Any district which has not reported a new case for 28 days will be classified as "Green Zones".

### **Daporijo Bridge**

- ❖ It was inaugurated across the Subansiri River in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The bridge was constructed by the BRO (Border Roads Organization) just in 27 days.
- ❖ Subansiri River is the largest tributary of Brahmaputra River.
- ❖ It runs through the regions of Tibet as well as Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The river originates in China.
- ❖ It joins Brahmaputra in Assam.



### **COVID-19 Yoddha Kalyan Yojana**

- ❖ The State Government of Madhya Pradesh recently launched the Chief Minister COVID-19 Yoddha Kalyan Yojana.
- ❖ Under the scheme, the Anganwadi workers are to get special health insurance of Rs 50 lakhs.

### **Kasowal Bridge**

- ❖ It is a long permanent bridge on the river Ravi.
- ❖ It is to connect the Kasowal enclave of Punjab along the Pakistan border to the rest of the country.
- ❖ It was built by the Borders Roads Organization under Project Chetak.



## **Namma Oru**

- ❖ The operators of Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru have started a plantation drive in the region as part of their flagship CSR Programme 'Namma Ooru'.
- ❖ It aims to revive and conserve 'Devanahalli Pomelo', an endangered citrus fruit.
- ❖ Devanahalli Pomelo has a Geographical Indication (GI) tag as it is known for its sweet taste.

## **Basava Jayanthi**



- ❖ Global Basava Jayanthi – 2020 was observed on 26th April.
- ❖ Basava Jayanti marks the birth anniversary of Lord Basavanna, the 12th-century poet-philosopher, and the founding saint of the Lingayat faith.
- ❖ He lived during the reign of the Kalachuri-dynasty king Bijjala I in Karnataka.
- ❖ Basavanna spread social awareness through his poetry, popularly known as Vachanaas.

## **Ambubachi Mela - Assam**

- ❖ It has been cancelled this year due to Covid 19.
- ❖ It symbolises the fertility cult of goddess Kamakhya in Assam.
- ❖ The festival is also known as 'Mahakumbh of the East'.
- ❖ Ambubachi Mela serves as an occasion to promote awareness on menstrual hygiene.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

### Pritzker Architecture Award 2020

- ❖ Veteran architect duo- Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara were recently selected as the recipients of the 2020 Pritzker Prize.
- ❖ The Dublin-based architects are the first two women to share the prestigious global award.
- ❖ Their remarkable projects include the University of Engineering and Technology in Lima, Peru, which also won the RIBA International Prize.
- ❖ It is referred to as “modern-day Machu Picchu”.
- ❖ The Pritzker Architecture Prize is awarded annually to honour a living architect or architects.
- ❖ It is often referred to as the Nobel Prize of architecture.
- ❖ Founded in 1979 by Jay A. Pritzker and his wife Cindy, the award is funded by the Pritzker family and sponsored by the Hyatt Foundation.



### Commonwealth Points of Light Award

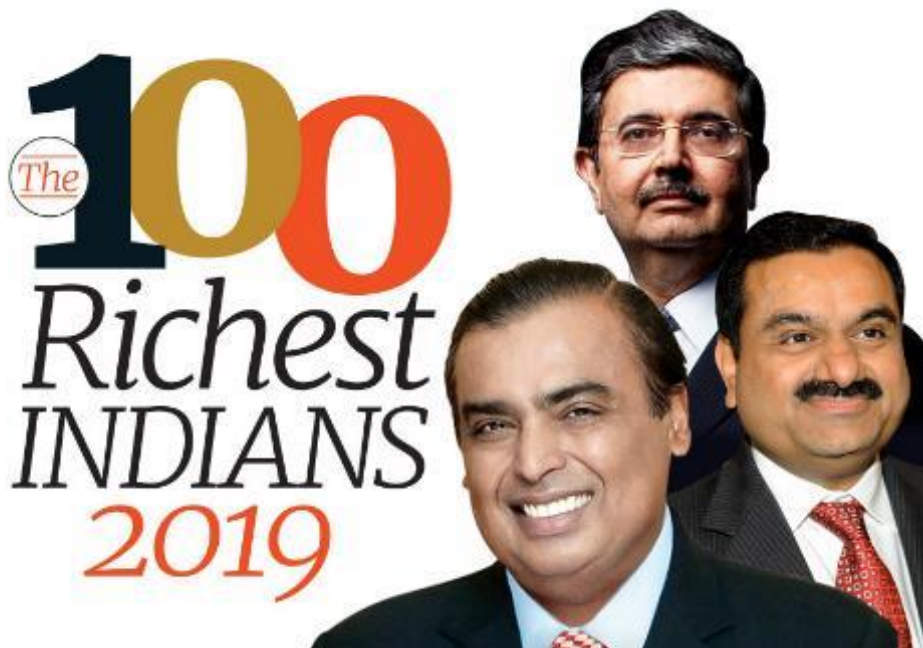
- ❖ The Environmental activist Jadav Payeng, also called the 'Forest Man' of India, was named as the winner of the 128th Commonwealth Points of Light Award.
- ❖ The award recognizes people across the 53 Commonwealth nations for their exceptional contributions towards the community.
- ❖ Payeng of Assam had transformed a treeless sandbar along the Brahmaputra river into a vast wildlife shelter.
- ❖ He was born in the indigenous Mising tribe of Assam.





### **India's 10 Richest Billionaires 2019**

- ❖ It is a list compiled by the Forbes magazine annually.
- ❖ The total number of Indian billionaires has fallen to 102 in 2019, versus 106.
- ❖ Mukesh Ambani, with a net worth of \$36.8 billion, retained his title as the richest Indian.
- ❖ He remains the richest Indian for the 12th year in a row.



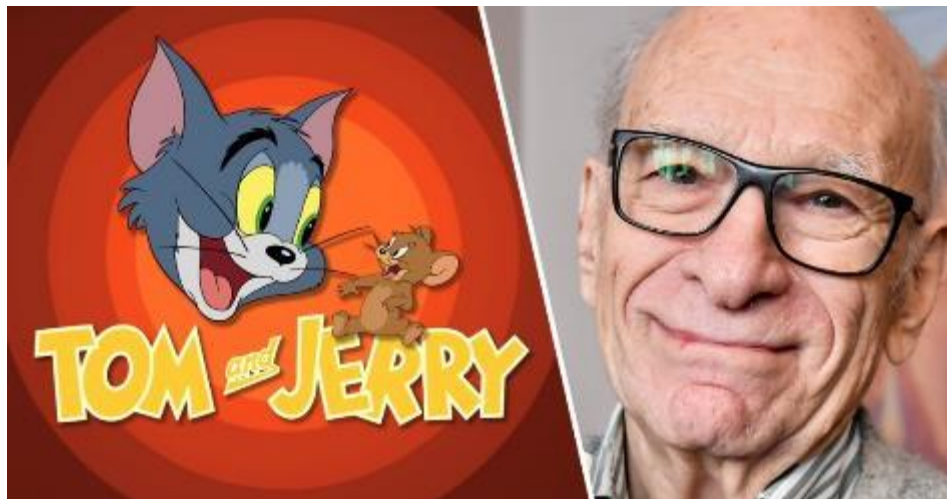


### **Ambassador of WWF India**

- ❖ The Chess legend Viswanathan Anand was named the ambassador of World Wide Fund India (WWF).
- ❖ He was the first chess grandmaster from India.
- ❖ He won the FIDE World chess championship continuously between 2000 and 2002 and was the first Asian to achieve this.
- ❖ The WWF is an international NGO that was founded in 1961.
- ❖ It is the largest conservation organization in the world.

### **Gene Deitch**

- ❖ Oscar-winning illustrator and animator, Gene Deitch, has recently passed away at Prague in Czech Republic.
- ❖ Deitch was known for creating animated cartoons such as Munro, Tom Terrific, and Nudnik, as well as his work on the Popeye and Tom and Jerry series.



### **I am Badminton**

- ❖ The World champion P V Sindhu was named the ambassador of the campaign "I am Badminton".
- ❖ The campaign was launched by Badminton World Federation (BWF).
- ❖ Apart from P V Sindhu, there are other ambassadors.
- ❖ Sindhu is the first Indian to become Badminton World Champion.
- ❖ They are Michelle Li of Canada, Huang Ya Qiong and Zheng Si Wei of China, Valeska Knoblach of Germany, Chan Ho Yuen of Hong Kong.

## SPORTS

### Wimbledon 2020

- ❖ Wimbledon was cancelled due to the threats of Corona Virus.
- ❖ This is the first time the tournament is being cancelled since the World War II.
- ❖ Wimbledon Tennis Tournament was first held in 1877.
- ❖ Since then it has been contested every year at London.
- ❖ However, it was cancelled during two stretches.
- ❖ The first time was during the First World War between 1915 and 1918.
- ❖ It was cancelled another time during the second world war between 1940 and 1945.
- ❖ It is the oldest Tennis Tournament in the world.
- ❖ It is one of the four Grand Slam tennis tournaments.
- ❖ The other three include French Open, US open and Australian Open.
- ❖ Wimbledon is the only tournament that is still played on grass.



### 2021 World Games

- ❖ The 2021 World Games that was scheduled to be held in Birmingham, Alabama in USA was postponed to 2022.
- ❖ This is being done to avoid the clash with Tokyo Olympics.
- ❖ The World Games is held once in four years.
- ❖ It features 32 sports that are not a part of the Olympics.
- ❖ The World Games was first held in 1981.
- ❖ So far, the World Games has not yet been held in African countries.



**The World Games**  
2021 BIRMINGHAM, USA

### **2020 Indian Super League**

- ❖ Two times Champions ATK won the final after beating Chennaiyin held at Goa.
- ❖ It was the sixth season of the Indian Super League.
- ❖ ATK are the most successful team in the tournament's history having won the title thrice.
- ❖ ATK is an Indian professional football club based in Kolkata, West Bengal.

### **FIFA Under 17 Women World Cup**

- ❖ The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) has postponed the Under-17 Women's world cup to November 2020.
- ❖ The FIFA Federations decided that the Under-17 and Under-20 Women's World Cup be postponed.
- ❖ The Under-20 women's FIFA world cup was planned to be conducted in Panama Costa Rica.
- ❖ The Under-17 Women's FIFA world cup was scheduled to be conducted in Indian cities such as Guwahati, Navi Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar and Kolkata.

### **Asian Youth Games**

- ❖ The Olympic Council of Asia announced that the third Asian Youth Games is to be held in China in November 2021.
- ❖ The Asian Youth Games is held once in four years.
- ❖ It is organized by the Olympic Council of Asia.
- ❖ It is the second largest sports games after the Asian Games.



### **Asian Boxing Championship**

- ❖ The National Sports Federation of India recently announced that it is host the Asian Boxing Championship by November-December 2020.
- ❖ The host city is to be decided by the Boxing Federation of India (BFI).
- ❖ The competition is a biennial event but was held in consecutive years in the past.
- ❖ BFI is the governing body for Olympic boxing in India.
- ❖ It represents India at the International Boxing Association.

### **Team Mask Force**

- ❖ It was created by the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India).
- ❖ It features India's most revered cricketers such as Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli, Saurav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid.
- ❖ It intends to spread awareness of the importance of wearing face masks in public places.



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Utkal Divas – April 01

- ❖ It is also known as Odisha Day.
- ❖ It is in the memory of the formation of the state as a separate state out of Bihar, Bengal and Odisha provinces with addition of Koraput and Ganjam from Madras Presidency on 1 April 1936.
- ❖ On November 9, 2010, Parliament of India renamed Orissa as Odisha and Oriya language as Odia.
- ❖ It is well known in the history for its kalinga kingdom during ancient times
- ❖ In 250 BC, it was conquered by King Ashoka, which resulted in the state flourishing for almost a century under the rule of the Mauryan Dynasty.

### World Autism Awareness Day – April 02

- ❖ The day is observed by the United Nations.
- ❖ It is one of only seven official health-specific UN Days.
- ❖ It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly resolution in 2007.
- ❖ It aims to take measures to increase awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- ❖ Theme of this year is “The Transition to Adulthood”.
- ❖ The world come together to “Light It Up Blue” in recognition of people with autism.



### International Children's Book Day – April 02

- ❖ It is a yearly event sponsored by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), an international non-profit organization.
- ❖ Founded in 1967, the day is observed on or around Hans Christian Andersen's birthday, April 2.
- ❖ It is celebrated to inspire a love of reading and to call attention to children's books.

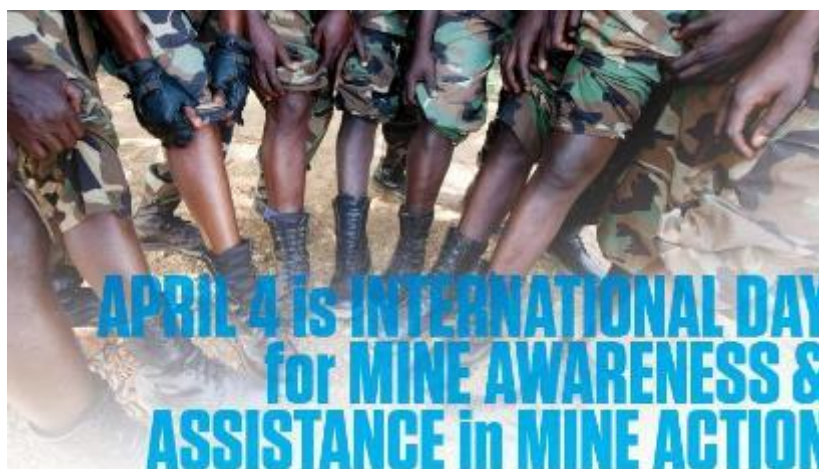


- ❖ IBBY Slovenia is the sponsor for International Children's Book Day 2020.



### **International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action – April 4**

- ❖ In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly declared the observation of this Day.
- ❖ It was first observed on 4 April, 2006.
- ❖ In June 2014, over 1,000 state and non-governmental representatives of the international community gathered in Maputo, Mozambique, and set, through the “Maputo+15 Declaration,” a target of a landmine-free world by 2025.



### **International Day of Conscience – April 5**

- ❖ April 5, 2020, will mark the first International Day of Conscience.
- ❖ It is a United Nations day.
- ❖ This day serves to remind people to self-reflect, follow their conscience, and do the right things.



### **National Maritime Day – April 5**

- ❖ It was first celebrated on April 5, 1964.
- ❖ It aims to spread awareness in supporting safe and environmentally sound commerce between the continents across the world.
- ❖ From 2018, "Varuna Award" is given to those making outstanding contribution to the Indian maritime sector.
- ❖ The saga of India shipping first started on April 5, 1919, when the SS Loyalty, the first ship of The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Limited travelled from Mumbai to the United Kingdom (London).
- ❖ World Maritime Day will be celebrated on September 24, 2020.
- ❖ According to the International Maritime Organization, "Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet" has been selected as the World Maritime theme for 2020.



### **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) – April 6**

- ❖ It is an annual celebration of the power of sport to drive social change, community development and to foster peace and understanding.
- ❖ The "#BeActive" campaign was launched by the FIFA this year.
- ❖ The Day was Created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013, supported by the International Olympic Committee since 6 April 2014.
- ❖ This date commemorates the inauguration, in 1896, of the first Olympic games of the modern era, in Athens, (Greece).



### **Army Medical Corps Day – April 03**

- ❖ On April 3, 2020, the Army Medical Corps Raising Day was celebrated under the Motto: “Survey Santu Nirmaya”.
- ❖ The meaning of “Survey Santu Nirmaya” is “Let all the humans be free from disabilities and diseases”.
- ❖ The Indian Medical Service was the major contributor of the Army Medical Corps.
- ❖ It was formed in 1612 when East India Company was formed.
- ❖ The Army Medical Corps was established in 1943 amalgamating Indian Medical Services, Indian Hospital and Nursing Corps and Indian Medical Department.

### **World Health Day – April 7**

- ❖ The day is marked to celebrate the work of midwives and nurses for their role in keeping the world safety and healthy.
- ❖ Theme for this year - Support Nurses and Midwives.
- ❖ The WHO chose the year 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife” to honour the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.
- ❖ On the world health day, the First State of World Nursing Report, 2020 is to be released.

- ❖ The WHO held the first world health assembly on this day in 1948.



### **International Day of Reflection on 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda – April 7**

- ❖ On April 7, 2004, it was recognized as an international observance by the United Nations.
- ❖ More than 800,000 Tutsi people were systematically murdered in a genocide perpetrated by the Hutu extremist-led government in Rwanda.
- ❖ Tutsis are the second largest population division among the three largest groups in Rwanda and Burundi; the other two being the Hutu (largest) and the Twa (smallest).
- ❖ The Tutsi are a social class or ethnic group of the African Great Lakes region.
- ❖ The African Great Lakes are a series of lakes constituting the part of the Rift Valley lakes in and around the East African Rift.
- ❖ They include Lake Victoria, the third-largest fresh water lake in the world by area, Lake Tanganyika, the world's second-largest freshwater lake by volume and depth, and Lake Malawi, the world's eighth-largest fresh water lake by area.
- ❖ Countries in the African Great Lakes region include Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.



### **Valour Day – April 9**

- ❖ The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) celebrated its Valour Day (Shaurya Diwas) on April 9.
- ❖ On this Day in 1965, the CRPF lost six of its brave soldiers while thwarting the attempts of Pakistan Army at the Sardar Post at Rann of Kutch in Gujarat.
- ❖ This was the first time a full-fledged infantry brigade fierce fully and successfully fought against the Pakistan army.

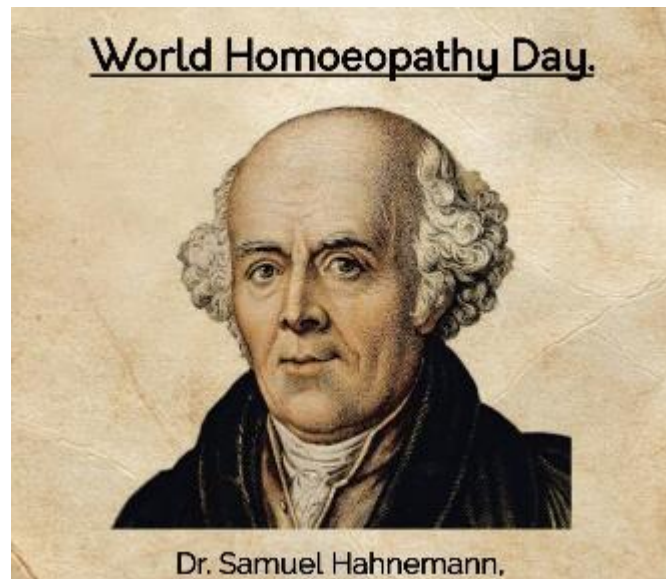
### **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) – April 9**

- ❖ ICCR celebrated its 70th foundation day on April 9.
- ❖ ICCR was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Independent India's first Education Minister.
- ❖ It is an autonomous organisation.
- ❖ It works under the Ministry of External Affairs.

### **World Homeopathy Day – April 10**

- ❖ It is observed to commemorate the Birthday of Dr. Hahnemann, the Founder of Homoeopathy.
- ❖ Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann was a German physician.
- ❖ He is credited with the invention of homoeopathy.
- ❖ The theme of this year for this day is 'Linking research with education and clinical practice: Advancing scientific collaborations'.
- ❖ World Homeopathy Awareness Week is also celebrated annually between April 10th and April 16th.
- ❖ Homoeopathy is one of the most popular medical systems in India.
- ❖ It is an alternative form of medicine.
- ❖ It is a form of medicine that works on the principle of triggering the body's own healing responses.
- ❖ The AYUSH includes medical services of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy '.
- ❖ India is the biggest drug manufacture and traders' sector in Homoeopathy.
- ❖ For this year, the official theme, set by AYUSH Ministry, is 'Enhancing the scope of Homeopathy in Public Health'.





### **National Survey Day – April 10**

- ❖ This day has a special significance in the History of Surveying.
- ❖ On this day the Major William Lambton started the GTS (Great Trigonometrical Survey) and the work of measurement of Great Arc from St. Thomas Mount in Chennai to foothills of Himalayas, on 10th April, 1802.
- ❖ The Great Trigonometrical Survey was a project which aimed to measure the entire Indian subcontinent with scientific precision.
- ❖ The Survey of India is India's central engineering agency in charge of mapping and surveying.
- ❖ Set up in 1767 to help consolidate the territories of the British East India Company, it is one of the oldest Engineering Departments of the Government of India.
- ❖ It is headquartered at Dehra Dun.
- ❖ It works under the Department of Science and Technology.
- ❖ The slogan of the organization is "We know every inch of the nation, because we map every inch of it".

### **National Safe Motherhood day – April 11**

- ❖ It is observed to raise awareness about the proper healthcare of women and maternity facilities to pregnant and lactating women.
- ❖ It is an initiative of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI).
- ❖ The government of India declared in 2003 the national safe motherhood day on April 11.
- ❖ India is the 1st country in the world to have socially declared a National Safe Motherhood Day.

- ❖ India is one of the most high-risk places in the world to give birth, accounting for 15% of total maternal deaths worldwide.
- ❖ On the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi, the national safe motherhood day is observed every year.
- ❖ Kasturba Gandhi is the wife of the father of Nation Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi.



### **International Day of Human Space Flight – April 12**

- ❖ 12 April 1961 was the date of the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen.
- ❖ It was proclaimed at the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly on April 7, 2011, a few days before the 50th anniversary of the flight.
- ❖ Yuri Gagarin became the first human to orbit the Earth, opening a new chapter of human endeavour in outer space.
- ❖ April 12 was also the date of the first Space Shuttle launch, STS-1 of Columbia in 1981, which is also commemorated on this date.



### **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre – April 13**

- ❖ The Government of India marked the anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre on April 13, 2020.
- ❖ It is also known as Amritsar Massacre.
- ❖ On April 13, 1919, (Baisakhi Day), at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in Punjab, a peaceful meeting was held by the people.

- ❖ The people gathered at the park to protest against Rowlatt Act silently.
- ❖ The people also assembled to condemn the arrest of two national leaders Satya Pal and Saifuddin Kitchlew.
- ❖ General Dyer ordered to open fire at the crowd that killed thousands.



### **Siachen Day - April 13**

- ❖ The Indian Army commemorated Siachen Day.
- ❖ The day is observed to commemorate the courage of Indian Army under “Operation Meghdoot”.
- ❖ The Operation Meghdoot was launched on April 13, 1984.
- ❖ Under the operation, the Indian troops successfully gained control of entire Siachen glacier in Kashmir.

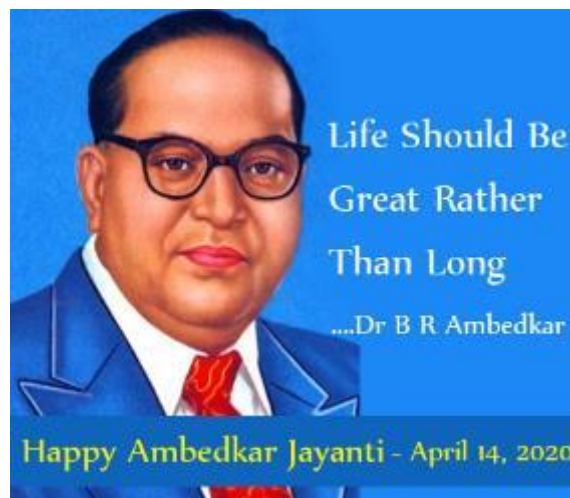
### **World Chagas Disease Day – April 14**

- ❖ On April 14, 2020, the world community is to celebrate World Chagas Disease Day for the first time.
- ❖ The Chagas disease is also called “American trypanosomiasis”.
- ❖ The disease has been termed as silent and silenced disease.
- ❖ It progresses very slowly and mainly affects the people under poverty
- ❖ The disease mainly affects poor people in Latin America.
- ❖ It is prevalent in USA, Western Pacific, European and Canada.
- ❖ The Day is marked by the World Health Organization.
- ❖ It transmits through vectors such as T cruzi parasite.
- ❖ Also, it transmits through contact with urine or faeces of blood sucking bugs.
- ❖ The disease does not spread through human to human contact.
- ❖ However, it can spread through infected blood transfusion.

- ❖ The disease got its name from Dr Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, who diagnosed the first patient with the disease in Brazil on April 14, 1909.
- ❖ It is classified as a neglected tropical disease (NTD), meaning it affects the low-income populations in developing countries across the globe.

### **Ambedkar Jayanthi - April 14**

- ❖ India celebrated the 129th birth anniversary of Bhimarao Ramji Ambedkar.
- ❖ Ambedkar was born in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The town was later renamed as Dr Ambedkar Nagar in 2003.
- ❖ The Indian Constitution was prepared under the leadership of Ambedkar.
- ❖ The Indian Government has set up Panchteerath in the memory of Dr BR Ambedkar.
- ❖ Panchteerath include:
  - Ambedkar's birthplace in Mhow
  - The place in London where he stayed while studying in the UK
  - Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur, where he took education
  - Mahaparinirvan Sthal in Delhi
  - Chaitya Bhoomi in Mumbai



### **Himachal Day – April 15**

- ❖ After independence, the Chief Commissioner's Province of Himachal Pradesh was organised on 15 April 1948.
- ❖ It was a result of the integration of 28 petty princely states (including feudal princes and zaildars) in the promontories of the western Himalayas.
- ❖ Himachal became the 18th state of the Indian Union.
- ❖ On 14 April 1971 Himachal Pradesh got Statehood.

## **World Art Day – April 15**

- ❖ It is an international celebration of the fine arts by the UNESCO.
- ❖ It was declared by the International Association of Art (IAA), a partner of UNESCO, in order to promote awareness of creative activity worldwide.
- ❖ It has also been supported online, especially by the Google Art Project.
- ❖ The first World Art Day was on April 15, 2012.
- ❖ The date was decided in honour of the birthday of Leonardo da Vinci.
- ❖ He was a renowned primarily as a painter from Italy.
- ❖ He has been variously called the father of palaeontology, ichnology, and architecture.
- ❖ He is also known as a symbol of world peace, freedom of expression, tolerance and brotherhood.

### **His works**

- ❖ The Mona Lisa is the most famous of his works and the most popular portrait ever made.
- ❖ The Last Supper is the most reproduced religious painting of all time.
- ❖ His Vitruvian Man drawing is regarded as a cultural icon as well.
- ❖ Salvator Mundi is the highest price ever paid for a work of art.
- ❖ It was sold for a world record of \$450.3 million at a Christie's auction in New York in 2017.



## **World Hemophilia Day - April 17**

- ❖ The day is observed by the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH).
- ❖ It is observed to increase awareness about the hereditary bleeding disorders.
- ❖ Hemophilia is an inherited bleeding disorder in which blood does not clot properly

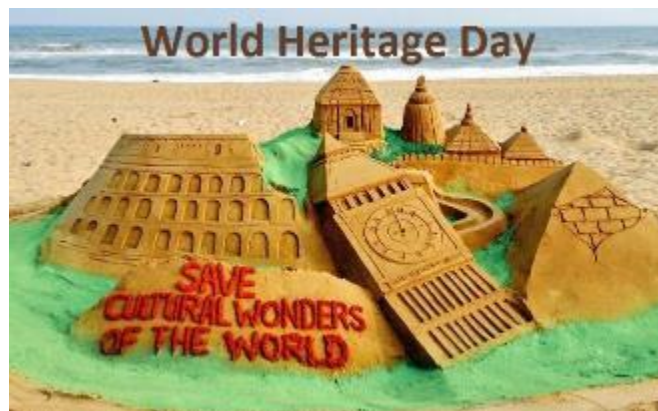


- ❖ Theme of this year is "Get + Involved virtually and stay safe".
- ❖ 17 April is also the birthday of Frank Schnabel, a Canada businessman born with severe haemophilia who was the founder of the World Federation of Haemophilia (WFH).



### **World Heritage Day - April 18**

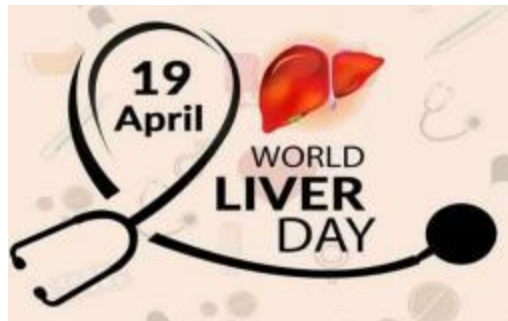
- ❖ It is also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- ❖ The aim of celebrating this day is to promote cultural heritage through activities which are undertaken by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).



- ❖ ICOMOS suggested in 1982 that April 18 should be observed as an International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- ❖ It was approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.
- ❖ Theme of the year 2020 is Shared Culture, Shared Heritage and Shared Responsibility.
- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism celebrated the World Heritage Day - 2020 through a webinar series on Mamallapuram and Humayun's Tomb of Delhi.
- ❖ UNESCO defines a World Heritage Site as a "natural or man-made area or a structure that is of international importance, and space which requires special protection."
- ❖ There are 38 World Heritage Sites located in India.
- ❖ These include 30 cultural sites, seven natural sites and one mixed-criteria site.
- ❖ India has the sixth largest number of sites in the world.

### **World Liver Day – April 19**

- ❖ It is observed to spread awareness about liver related disease.
- ❖ The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, with the exception of the brain.
- ❖ It is a key player in our body's digestive system.
- ❖ Hepatitis is a term used to describe inflammation (swelling) of the liver.
- ❖ It can be caused due to viral infection or when liver is exposed to harmful substances such as alcohol.
- ❖ On 28th July 2018, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India launched National Viral Hepatitis Control Program.
- ❖ This program aims at prevention and control of viral hepatitis in India in order to achieve Sustainable Developmental Goal 3.3 by 2030.



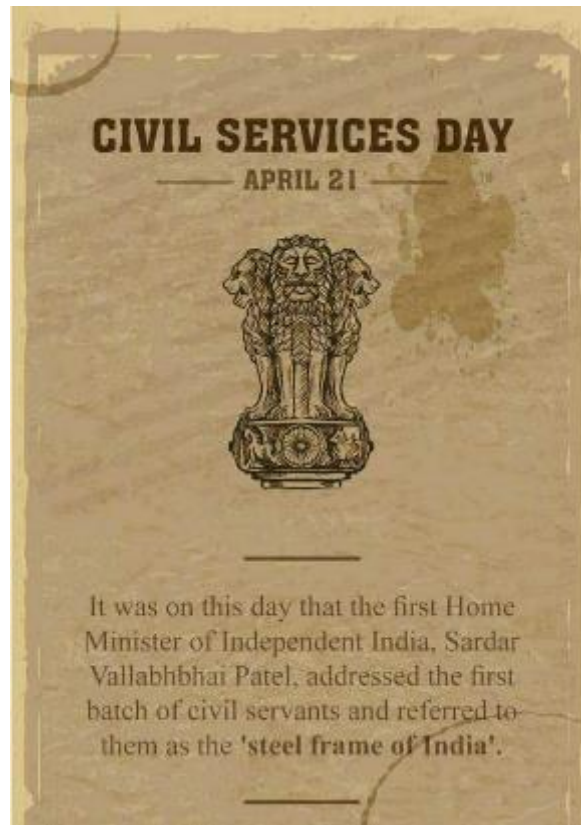
### **United Nations Chinese Language Day - April 20**

- ❖ It was observed first in 2010.
- ❖ The day is observed to pay tribute to Cangjie.
- ❖ Cangjie is a mythical figure who invented Chinese Characters.
- ❖ The Chinese language was set as one of the official languages in the United Nations in 1946.
- ❖ There are six official languages of the UN.
- ❖ They are Arabic, English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish and French.
- ❖ English and French are the working languages of the UN Secretariat.



### **Civil Services Day – April 21**

- ❖ It was on this day in 1947, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel addressed the first batch of civil servants in Independent India at the Metcalf House at Delhi.
- ❖ He referred the civil servants as the 'steel frame of India'.
- ❖ The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has observed this Day.
- ❖ The first such observation function was held in 2006.



### **World Creativity and Innovation Day – April 21**

- ❖ It is celebrated by the United Nations.
- ❖ The day creates awareness about the importance of innovation and creativity to achieve United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- ❖ The World also celebrates the World Creativity Innovation Week April 15 – April 21.
- ❖ It was first was celebrated on April 21, 2018.



### **International Mother Earth Day – April 22**

- ❖ It is being celebrated since 1970.
- ❖ It is celebrated to demonstrate support for environmental protection.
- ❖ It is celebrated this year under the theme - Climate Action.
- ❖ It is celebrated by World Earth Day Network.
- ❖ Earth Day Network is a non-profit organization.
- ❖ This year is the 50th anniversary of World Earth Day.
- ❖ Earth Day is leveraging Citizen Science and emerging technologies to engage one million global citizens in the 50th anniversary “Earth Challenge 2020”.
- ❖ On Earth Day 2016, the landmark Paris Agreement was signed by the United States, China, and some 120 other countries.
- ❖ Earth Day was founded by American senator Gaylord Nelson for environmental education.



### **International Girls in ICT Day - April 23**

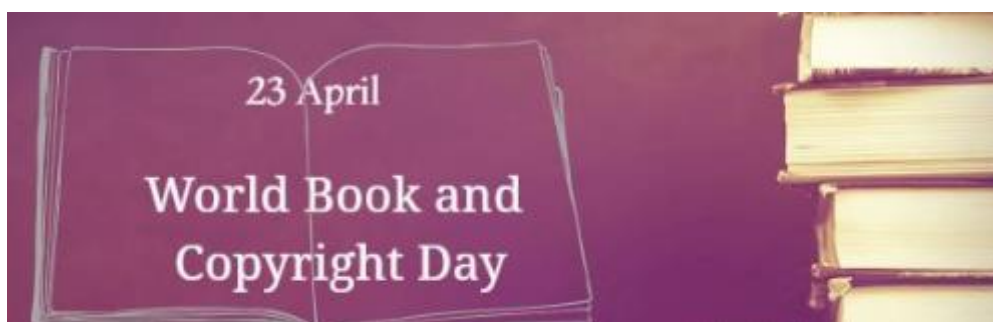
- ❖ It is an initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) introduced in 2010.

- ❖ It is a global effort to raise awareness on empowering and encouraging girls and young women to consider studies and careers in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).
- ❖ ITU is the United Nations specialized telecom agency.



### **World Book Day - April 23**

- ❖ It is an annual event organized by the UNESCO to promote reading, publishing, and copyright.
- ❖ It is also known as World Book and Copyright Day, or International Day of the Book.
- ❖ It was first celebrated on 23 April 1995.
- ❖ This year is it's the 25th edition.
- ❖ Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia was named World Book Capital 2020
- ❖ The slogan for world book and copyright day 2020 is "KL Baca – "Caring Through Reading".
- ❖ April 23 holds a lot of importance, as some of the greatest authors like William Shakespeare, Miguel Cervantes, and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega deceased on this very day.



### **UN English Day - April 23**

- ❖ 23 April was chosen because it is the date "traditionally observed as both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare".
- ❖ It was established by UN's Department of Public Information in 2010.



- ❖ English is the World's third most spoken language after Mandarin Chinese and Spanish.
- ❖ UN Spanish Language Day is also observed annually on April 23.
- ❖ It was established by UNESCO in 2010.
- ❖ It is "to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization".
- ❖ The UN days for the languages are as follows
  - Arabic (18 December)
  - Chinese (20 April)
  - English (23 April)
  - French (20 March)
  - Russian (6 June)
  - Spanish (23 April)

### **National Panchayati Raj - April 24**

- ❖ The first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated in 2010.
- ❖ In 1992 a major change in the Panchayat system of India came in the form of the passage of the Panchayati Raj Act (73rd Amendment).
- ❖ The Act came into existence with effect from April 24, 1993.
- ❖ Every year on this Day, the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj organises National Conference.
- ❖ This Ministry awards best performing Gram Panchayats with 'The Panchayat Shashaktikaran Puraskar/Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar'.
- ❖ Also, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj presented the following awards for the best performing Panchayats
  - E-Panchayat Puraskar
  - Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar
  - Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award
  - Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar
  - Child friendly Gram Panchayat Award.
- ❖ The Prime Minister launched a unified e-Gram Swaraj portal and a mobile app.
- ❖ Also, he launched the Swamitva scheme to integrate lands and reduce land disputes.
- ❖ The scheme was launched in 6 states namely Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh.

- ❖ For this scheme, the ministry of Panchayati Raj is to be joined by State Revenue Department, Panchayati Raj Department and Survey of India.

### **International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace - April 24**

- ❖ It was first observed on April 24, 2019 by the United Nations
- ❖ Also, the day is marked to promote and support three pillars of the United Nations.
- ❖ They are peace and security, human rights and development.
- ❖ This year the day is being marked to spread the importance of multilateralism to win over the combat against COVID-19.



### **International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace : 24 April**

### **World Malaria Day - April 25**

- ❖ It is being celebrated by the World Health Organisation.
- ❖ This year's theme is 'Zero malaria starts with me'.
- ❖ It was established on April 25 in 2007 by the 60th session of the World Health Assembly.
- ❖ Malaria is a leading cause of human morbidity and mortality.
- ❖ Most cases (80%) and deaths (90%) were in sub-Saharan African.
- ❖ At the East Asia Summit in 2015, India pledged to eliminate the disease by 2030.
- ❖ India launched the five-year National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination.

### **World Immunization Week**

- ❖ Every year, last week of April is marked as the World Immunization Week.
- ❖ Theme of this year is Vaccines work for All.
- ❖ The first vaccine developed to immunize against diseases was the small pox vaccine.
- ❖ It was developed by an English Physician Edward Jenner in 1796.



### **International Delegate's Day - April 25**

- ❖ For the first time, the United Nations marked the International Delegate's Day.
- ❖ The Day is being marked to celebrate the 75th anniversary of San Francisco Conference of USA, an event that laid the foundations of the United Nations.
- ❖ On April 25, 1945, delegates from 50 countries came together in San Francisco for the first time.
- ❖ It is also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization.
- ❖ The main aim of the conference was to come together to restore world peace and impose rules post world war.
- ❖ The Charter of United Nations was framed after two months of the conference (June 25, 1945).



International Delegate's Day  
25 April

### **World Intellectual Property Day - April 26**

- ❖ It was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000.
- ❖ The Date coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization entered into force in 1970.
- ❖ It is to "raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life" and "to celebrate creativity, and the contribution made by creators and innovators to the development of societies across the globe".
- ❖ Theme of 2020 – Innovate for a Green Future.

### **International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day - April 26**

- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and the risks of nuclear energy in general.
- ❖ On December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to observe this.
- ❖ An explosion took place at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in 1986 at the city of Pripyat in Ukraine.
- ❖ It spread a radioactive cloud over large parts of the Soviet Union, now the territories of Belarus, Ukraine and the Russian Federation.



### **World Day for Safety and Health at Work - April 28**

- ❖ The International Labour Organization is using this day to raise awareness on the adoption of safe practices in workplaces and the role that occupational safety and health (OSH) services play.
- ❖ The ILO Centenary Declaration adopted in June 2019 declared that "safe and healthy working conditions are fundamental to decent work".
- ❖ The theme for 2020 is Stop the pandemic: Safety and health at work can save lives.
- ❖ It has been observed since 2003.
- ❖ ILO also observes International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers on April 28 since 1996.



### **World Veterinary Day - April 27**

- ❖ It is celebrated on the last Saturday of April.
- ❖ The theme of this year is 'Environment Protection for Improving Animal and Human Health'.
- ❖ The World Veterinary Association (WVA) started World Veterinary Day in 2000 to mark the celebration of the veterinary professionals every year.

### **Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare – April 29**

- ❖ In November 2005 the UN decided to observe this Day.
- ❖ The date April 29 was chosen for this observance because it was when the Chemical Weapons Convention came into force.
- ❖ The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is an intergovernmental organisation and the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, which entered into force on 29 April 1997.
- ❖ The OPCW, with its 193 member states, has its seat in The Hague, Netherlands.
- ❖ The organisation was awarded the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.



### **International Dance Day – April 29**

- ❖ It is a global celebration of dance, created by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.
- ❖ It is the anniversary of the birth of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810), the French dancer and the creator of modern ballet.





### **International Jazz Day – April 30**

- ❖ In November 2011, the UNESCO officially designated April 30 as International Jazz Day
- ❖ It aims to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.

### **Ayushman Bharat Diwas – April 30**

- ❖ It is a National Health Protection Scheme.
- ❖ It was announced by the Prime Minister in his Independence speech of 2018.
- ❖ The scheme has the health benefit cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year.

