



Current Affairs - Apr 2020

Month Type



- 57 Current Affairs were found in Period - **April 1-10, 2020** for Type - **All**

Appointments

1. ▶ Infosys COO UB Pravin Rao is appointed as chairman of National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) for 2020-21.

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Books

1. ▶ Book *Sridevi: The Eternal Screen Goddess* written by Satyarth Nayak has been released.
2. ▶ Book titled *Backstage: The Story Behind India's High Growth Years*, authored by Montek Singh Ahluwalia has been launched.
3. ▶ Book titled *The Enlightenment of The Greengate Tree* written by Shokoofeh Azar has been released.
4. ▶ To provide better understanding and prevention of novel coronavirus (COVID-19), 2 new books to release in May 2020 -
 1. *How Contagion Works: Science, Awareness and Community in Times of Global Crisis* - Italian physicist Paolo Giordano.
 2. *Deadliest Enemy: Our War Against Killer Germs* - Michael Osterholm and Mark Olshaker.

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Days

1. ▶ Apr 10 is observed as World Homoeopathy Day. 2020 marks 265th birth anniversary of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of Homoeopathy. During a special webinar on this occasion, Ministry of AYUSH approved Telemedicine guidelines for homeopathic practitioners.
2. ▶ Apr 2 is observed as World Autism Awareness Day, proclaimed in 2007.
 1. Apr 2 is also observed as International Children's Book Day (ICBD).
3. ▶ Apr 4 is observed as International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.
4. ▶ Apr 5 is observed as National Maritime Day in India, being observed since 1964.
 1. The saga of India shipping started on April 5, 1919, when SS Loyalty, the first ship of The Scindia Steam Navigation Company travelled from Mumbai to United Kingdom (London).
5. ▶ Apr 5, 2020 is observed as First ever UN International Day of Conscience.
6. ▶ Apr 6 is observed as International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.
7. ▶ Apr 7 is observed as World Health Day, with 2020 theme *Support Nurses and Midwives*. It marks establishment of World Health Organization, on Apr 7, 1948.
 1. Apr 7 is also marked as International Day of Reflection on 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda.
8. ▶ Apr 8 is observed as International Romani Day, to celebrate Romani culture and raise awareness of issues facing Romani people.
9. ▶ Apr 9 is observed as CRPF's Valour Day.
 1. A CRPF contingent on April 9, 1965 fought against Pakistanis in Rann of Kutch, eliminating 34 Pakistani Soldiers, losing 6 CRPF Soldiers.
10. ▶ Odisha Day (Utkala Dibasa) is observed on 1 April, in memory of formation of 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.

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Economy

1. ▶ Amid COVID-19 Outbreak, Small Industries Development Bank of India will provide emergency working capital of up to 1 crore rupees to small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Named, SIDBI SAFE PLUS, it will be offered collateral free and disbursed within 48 hours, at interest rate of 5 %.
2. ▶ As per RBI report, Consumer price index based inflation will soften during FY 21 (2020-21). CPI inflation is projected to ease from 4.8% in Q1= of 2020-21 to 4.4% in Q2, 2.7% in Q3 and 2.4% in Q4, amid prevailing high uncertainty due to COVID-19 Outbreak.
3. ▶ Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved loan of \$60 million for India's Aavas Financiers, enabling it to provide housing finance to women in low-income communities either as primary borrowers or co-borrowers.
4. ▶ Asian Development Bank approved loan of 2.2 billion USD to India, to combat COVID-19.
 1. India sought help of 6 Billion USD from ADB and AIIB to tackle the pandemic.
 2. Earlier, World Bank offered \$1 billion help to India for the purpose.
5. ▶ Fitch Solutions expected India's fiscal deficit to go up to 6.2 % of gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal year FY21 (2020-21). due to economic slowdown and enhanced welfare spendings amid COVID-19 Outbreak. Government had set a target of limiting fiscal deficit to 3.5 % of GDP during FY 2020-21.
 1. Earlier, Fitch Ratings had lowered India's GDP growth forecast to 0.8 % for FY2020-21(FY21), the 30 year low, due to global recession triggered by COVID-19 Outbreak. Also, Fitch Ratings lowered Global Growth forecast for 2020-21 (FY21) to 1.3% from 2.5% earlier.
6. ▶ Gross GST revenue collected in March 2020 is 97597 crores (CGST 19183 crores, SGST 25601 crores, IGST 44508 crores, and Cess 8306 crores).
7. ▶ Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) completed merger of GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare Limited (GSKCH) with itself, a year after this 31700 crores merger was announced.
8. ▶ ICICI Securities partnered with IIM Bangalore's startup hub N S Raghavan Centre of Entrepreneurial Learning (NSRCEL), to support startups in fintech space through a structured program.
9. ▶ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) issued guidelines for health insurance providers to implement Arogya Sanjeevani Insurance Policy.
 1. IRDAI had earlier made it mandatory for the insurance providers to frame a policy to provide basic coverage to at least 55% of Indian population. Purpose of this new policy is to cut the clutter created by insurance companies that launched multiple products with different features, leaving customers confused.
 2. Cost of premium shall cover between Rs 1000 and Rs 1 lakh. Interested customers shall opt for coverage up to Rs 5 lakhs. Room rent shall also be covered under the policy. It has been capped at 2% of the sum.
 3. IRDAI Notified Arogya Sanjeevani Insurance Policy products of 29 Insurance Companies.
 4. To maintain its uniqueness, IrdaI banned insurance companies from imposing deductibles or offer riders and variants with it. Increase in cover, 5% for each claim free year subject to a maximum of 50% of the sum assured, is also mandated by IrdaI.
 5. Though the entry age is restricted to 65 years, this policy will offer lifelong renewability.
10. ▶ Merger of several Public sector Banks became Effective from April 01, 2020 -
 1. Merger 1 - Punjab National Bank + Oriental Bank of Commerce + United Bank
 1. Created 2nd largest PSB with business of 17.95 lakh crores.
 2. Anchor Bank - Punjab National Bank
 2. Merger 2 - Canara Bank + Syndicate Bank
 1. Created 4th largest PSB with business of 15.20 lakh crores.
 2. Anchor Bank - Canara Bank
 3. Merger 3 - Union Bank + Andhra Bank + Corporation Bank
 1. Created 5th largest PSB with business of 14.59 lakh crores.
 2. Anchor Bank - Union Bank of India
 4. Merger 4 - Indian Bank + Allahabad Bank
 1. Created 7th largest PSB with business of 8.08 lakh crores.
 2. Anchor Bank - Indian Bank
11. ▶ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology notified 3 schemes for the electronic sector to boost manufacturing, offering incentives worth over 48000 crores.

1. Incentives will be applicable from August 2020, initially open for 4 months. The schemes were recently approved by Cabinet.
2. Schemes are Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) 2.0 and Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronics Components and Semiconductors (SPECS).
3. Production Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing -
 1. Scheme shall extend an incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales (over base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies, for a period of five (5) years.
 2. Cost of proposed scheme is approx 40995 crores.
 3. It has direct employment generation potential of over 2,00,000 jobs over 5 years. Indirect employment will be about 3 times of direct employment as per industry estimates.
 4. Under this, companies that sell mobile phones for 15000 or more and which make a cumulative investment of 1,000 crore over 4 years, starting with 250 crore in the first year, will qualify for an incentive of 6 % for the first two years, followed by 5 % for the next two and 4 % in the fifth year.
4. Approved assistance to Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC2.0) Scheme for development of world class infrastructure along with common facilities and amenities through Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs).
 1. EMCs would aid growth of ESDM sector and help development of entrepreneurial ecosystem. Outlay of proposed EMC 2.0 Scheme is 3,762 crores.
 2. Scheme will create a robust infrastructure base for electronic industry to attract flow of investment in ESDM sector and lead to greater employment opportunities.
5. Approved offering financial incentive of 25% of capital expenditure for manufacturing of goods that constitute supply chain of an electronic product under Scheme for *Promotion of manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS)*.
 1. Scheme will help offset disability for domestic manufacturing of electronic components and semiconductors in order to strengthen electronic manufacturing ecosystem.
 2. Cost is approx 3285 crores.
12. ▶ PNB Housing Finance signed agreement with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to raise 75 million dollars. Citibank will be co-financing 25 million dollars.
13. ▶ RBI Conducted Targeted Long Term Repo Operations (TLTROs) of 3 year tenors -
 1. 1st TLTRO (Mar 27, 2020) -
 1. Notified amount was 25000 crores with 3-year tenor. Total bids received amounted to 60500 crores, with 25009 Crores as allotted amount.
 2. 2nd TLTRO (Apr 3, 2020) -
 1. Notified amount was 25000 crores with 3-year tenor. Total bids received amounted to 99760 crores, with 25016 Crores as allotted amount.
 3. 3rd TLTRO (Apr 9, 2020) -
 1. Notified amount was 25000 crores with 3-year tenor. Total bids received amounted to 113470 crores, with 25016 Crores as allotted amount.
 4. Facts -
 1. RBI started Long Term Repo Operation (LTROs), to enable banks to avail one year and three-year loans at same interest rate of one day repo. It will put pressure on banks to reduce their lending rates. Hence, there will be a decline in short term lending rates of banks.
 2. RBI Conducted 4 LTROs in Feb - Mar 2020 earlier.
14. ▶ RBI announced further 3 measures to contain economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic -
 1. *Extension of realisation period of export proceeds* - The Value of goods and software exports made by exporters currently is required to be realised fully and repatriated to the country within 9 months from date of exports. RBI extended it to 15 Months, by end of July 2020.
 2. *Review of Way and Means Limits of States/UTs* - Based on the suggestions of Sudhir Shrivastava committee, RBI decided to increase the ways and means limit by 30 percent for all states and UTs.
 3. *Implementation of countercyclical capital buffer framework* - RBI had put forward a framework on the countercyclical capital buffer (CCyB) in its guidelines issued in February 2015. Under it, countercyclical capital buffer will be activated when required. CCyB framework envisages the credit-to- GDP gap as main indicator that is used along with other supplementary indicators.

15. ▶ RBI enhanced limits of liquidity support for states /UTs facing cash-flow mismatches, elongating tenor and frequency of this facility. RBI increased number of days for which a State/UT can be in overdraft continuously, to 21 working days from current 14 days.
 1. Earlier, government enhanced WMA facility by 30 %, to meet revenue mismatches by States/UTs.
16. ▶ RBI increased foreign portfolio investment (FPI) limit in corporate bonds to 15% of outstanding stock for FY 2020-21 from 9% to strengthen segment of corporate bonds.
 1. Currently, an investor can invest Rs 3.17 lakh crore in Indian corporate bonds through FPI but with this hike, investors can hold Rs 4.29 lakh crore of corporate bonds for half year ended September 2020, and 5.41 lakh crore for half year ending March 2021.
 2. RBI also enabled a Fully Accessible Route (FAR) for investment by non-residents in government securities. All new issuances of government securities of 5-year, 10-year and 30-year tenors from the FY20-21, will be eligible for investment under FAR.

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International

1. ▶ 34th Forbes' annual world's billionaires list *The Richest in 2020* -
 1. Topped by Amazon Founder Jeff Bezos for 3rd time in a row, with net worth \$113 billion.
 2. He was followed by Bill Gates (\$98 billion), Bernard Arnault (\$76 billion).
 3. India's Mukesh Ambani with net worth of \$44.3 billion, is top-ranked Indian and 17th globally.
2. ▶ Saudi Arabia began a two-week unilateral ceasefire in Yemen, to show its awareness of threat the coronavirus poses to war-torn Yemen. So far no Covid-19 cases have been reported in Yemen.
3. ▶ United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) World Economic Forecasting Model estimates that global economy could shrink by 1% in 2020 due to coronavirus pandemic, compared to earlier forecast of 2.5%.
 1. In 2009 global crisis, world economy had contracted by 1.7%.
4. ▶ United Nations released a report on Economic and Social Survey of Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) 2020 -
 1. Economic growth rate of India stood at 5% in 2019-20, forecasted to shrink to 4.8% in 2020-21 and improve to 5.1 % in 2021-22.
 2. Inflation in India - 4.8 % (2019-20), 5.3 % (2020-21), 3.5 % (2021-22)
 3. Global economy is to grow at 2.3% in 2019-20 and will pick up in 2021.
5. ▶ World's major oil producing nations agreed to slash their output, to save market from collapse amid COVID-19 Outbreak. Led by Russia and Saudi Arabia, the group of 23 countries have pledged to cut production by at least 10 million barrels a day.

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Meetings

1. ▶ Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel, Dharmendra Pradhan participated in G20 Extraordinary Energy Ministers' virtual Meeting. It was called by Saudi Arabia, as G20 President.

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National

1. ▶ Government of Andhra Pradesh modified guidelines of Navatnatnalu-Pedalandariki Illu programme, called *Houses for all the poor*. Updated guidelines as per directions of High Court -
 1. House sites are to be allotted to the poor at Re 1 to the poor with white ration cards. State Government is to collect Rs 20 from people (Rs 10 for stamp paper charges and Rs 10 for lamination charges). Beneficiaries compulsorily use these sites to construct houses.
 2. They cannot sell the sites. However, they can sell the houses after occupying them for a minimum of five years.
 3. 9 Navatnatnalu flagship schemes of Andhra Pradesh Government are active.
2. ▶ CSIR's National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune tied up with Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) to produce medical devices in view of COVID19 outbreak.
 1. Under joint venture, CSIR-NCL's Venture Centre's incubatee BMEK has developed hand held digital Infra Red (IR) thermometer and Oxygen Enrichment Unit (OEU).
3. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Apr 06, 2020) -

1. General -

1. Decided not to operate Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) for two years (2020-21 and 2021-22), To help contain spread of COVID 19 by using these funds in managing adverse impact of COVID-19.
2. Approved to cut salary of Prime Minister and other MPs by 30%.
4. ▶ Construction Firm Larsen & Toubro received a contract from Indian Army, for setting up an advanced IT-enabled system to operate Armed Forces network under the Network of Spectrum (NFS).
5. ▶ General News / Events / Conferences (Apr 1-10, 2020) -
 1. Online delivery platform Dunzo tied up with packaged foods company Britannia to deliver range of products to its customers, during CCOVID-19 Lockdown and further.
 2. MHRD, AICTE and Forge and InnovatioCuris launched online challenge - SAMADHAN - to test the ability of students to innovate, enabling students to suggest measures for tackling COVID-19.
 3. Jan Aushadhi Sugam App has been launched, that can be used to locate nearest Pradhan Mantri Janaushadhi Kendra, established under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJAP). These kendras provide essential medicines at affordable prices.
 4. Indian Railways ' West Bengal Based Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) has set Limca Book of Records for producing record 431 locomotives in FY 2019-20 (FY20) in 292 working days. It is 2.15 times its installed capacity of 200 locomotives per year.
6. ▶ HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" launched a web-portal YUKTI (Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation), as a unique portal and dashboard to monitor efforts and initiatives of MHRD.
7. ▶ Jammu & Kashmir UT became 12th State / UT to have Price Monitoring & Resource Unit (PMRU) set up by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA). PMRU shall function under State Drug Controller, helping ensure availability of medicines at affordable prices.
8. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs ordered adaptation of Jammu and Kashmir state laws to be called as Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order 2020.
 1. Out of 138 state laws, 25 have been repealed as whole while other laws have been adopted with substitutes.
 2. MHA has added "domicile" clause in Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Decentralisation and Recruitment Act). Jobs will be reserved under domicile for only who fulfill the requirements of "Domicile".
9. ▶ Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) designated DigiLocker as the sole National Academic Depository (NAD) and also directed University Grants Commission (UGC) to implement NAD as a permanent scheme within DigiLocker.
 1. UGC also constituted an expert committee to recommend use of e-resources and enhance online education system in country.
10. ▶ NHAI accomplished construction of 3,979 km of national highways in FY 2019-20, as highest ever highway construction achieved in a financial year by NHAI.
 1. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways's highway development programme *Bharatmala Pariyojana* includes development of about 65,000 km national highways.
 2. Under Phase-1, Ministry approved implementation of 34,800 km of national highways in 5 years with an outlay of Rs 5,35,000 crores. NHAI has been mandated development of about 27,500 km of national highways under *Bharatmala Pariyojana* Phase-I.
11. ▶ TRIFED collaborated with UNICEF for developing a digital communication strategy for promoting a digital campaign for Self Help Groups (SHGs), To ensure tribal gatherers carry on their work safely by highlighting importance of Social Distancing.
 1. TRIFED also asked State Nodal Departments / Implementing Agencies to initiate procurement of Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) at Minimum Support Price (MSP) from the available funds under *MSP for MFP* Scheme.

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Persons

1. ▶ *Madhuban Gajar*, a biofortified carrot variety with high β -carotene and iron content developed by Shri Vallabhhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya, a farmer scientist from Junagadh (Gujarat), benefitting local farmers.
 1. Madhuban Gajar is a highly nutritious carrot variety developed through selection method with higher β -carotene content (277.75 mg/kg) and iron content (276.7 mg/kg) dry basis and is used for various value-added products.
 2. Vallabhhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya has been conferred with several notable awards, including Padma Shri in 2019.

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Science

1. ▶ Scientists at Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) developed a highly efficient superabsorbent material for liquid respiratory and other body fluid solidification and disinfection for the safe management of infected respiratory secretion, titled *Chitra Acrylosorb Secretion Solidification System*.
 1. AcryloSorb can absorb liquids at least 20 times more than its dry weight and also contains a decontaminant for in situ disinfection.
2. ▶ Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) has developed a one-step curable anti-microbial coating which, when coated on different surfaces such as textile, plastic and so on could kill a range of virus types including COVID 19.
 1. Corona virus, like influenza, is also an enveloped virus. Therefore it is anticipated that the coating may inactivate SARS-CoV-2 upon contact and can help prevent contamination if coated on various surfaces.
3. ▶ NASA issued plans for its project *Artemis*, which aims at placing first woman and next man on moon by 2024. The project aims to build a base camp on moon's south pole, aiming to make a month long stay on moon.
4. ▶ National Innovation foundation developed an indigenous herbal medicine called *Wormivet*, as an alternative to chemical methods that are currently being used to treat worms. Wormivet is used to treat endoparasite worms in livestock.
5. ▶ Pune based clean weather Technology private limited (Scitech Park) has developed a technology- "ScitechAiron negative ion generator" to control viral, bacterial and fungal infections in closed environments can clean the air & disinfect areas caused by COVID-19 positive cases & suspects.
6. ▶ Researchers from Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) Mohali made computer based designs of nano-materials with superhigh piezoelectricity which can be building blocks of futuristic nano-electronics for applications like ultrathin, next-generation nano-transistors.
 1. Piezoelectricity is generation of electricity in certain materials upon application of pressure. Applications include lighters, pressure gauge, sensors and so on.
 2. Piezoelectricity in 2D materials was first confirmed in monolayer in 2014. However, most of 2D materials reported till date mainly show in-plane piezoelectricity. Therefore, out-of-plane piezoelectricity is very much desired and sought after.
 3. INST Mohali research has demonstrated induction of superhigh out-of-plane piezoelectricity via stacking one monolayer over the other in 2D nanostructure, based on 2 dimensional van der Waals heterostructure (vdWH) comprising of 2D monolayers.
 4. This is a significant step towards meeting growing demand for superfast ultrathin nanodevices and nanotransistors.

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Sports

1. ▶ England's Ben Stokes is named as leading cricketer in world in 2020 by Cricket Magazine Wisden. In Women's category, Australia's Ellyse Perry is named Wisden's Leading Female Cricketer in World.
2. ▶ Olympic Council of Asia announced Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen which are collectively known as "The Smart Triplets", as official mascots of 19th Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou in 2022.

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