

Current Affairs - Mar 2020

Month  Type



- **112** Current Affairs were found in Period **March 11 - 20, 2020** for Type - **All**

Appointments

- ▶ Government appointed Bansilal Bhat as officiating chairperson of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).
- ▶ Iraqi President Barham Salih appointed **Adnan al-Zurfi** as country's new prime minister.
- ▶ Prashant Kumar has been appointed as New MD & CEO of Yes Bank, with Sunil Mehta as non-executive chairman.
  1. Mahesh Krishnamurthy and Atul Bheda will serve as non-executive directors.
  2. SBI, which has 49 % stake in Yes Bank, will nominate 2 directors. Any investor other than SBI with 15% voting rights can nominate 1 director.
  3. RBI appointed R Gandhi (former RBI Deputy Governor) and Ananth Narayan Gopalakrishnan as additional directors on Yes Bank board.
- ▶ President Ramnath Kovind nominated former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi to Rajya Sabha.
  1. Under Clause (3) of article 80, President can nominate upto 12 persons to Rajya Sabha.
- ▶ RBI nominated Debasish Panda (*Department of Financial Services Secretary*) on its central board.

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Awards

- ▶ Arfa Khanum Sherwani of *The Wire* and Bengaluru-based freelancer Rohini Mohan jointly conferred Chameli Devi Jain Award for outstanding woman journalism. It was instituted by the Media Foundation in 1980, named after Chameli Devi Jain, a legendary freedom fighter.
- ▶ Badminton Player P V Sindhu won BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) Indian Sportswoman of the year award 2019 and former sprinter Pilavullakandi Thekkeparambil Usha won Lifetime Achievement award.
  1. PV Sindhu also named brand ambassador for Andhra Pradesh government's anti-graft helpline or anti-corruption helpline 14400.
- ▶ BusinessLine Changemaker Awards 2020 organized by Hindu Business Line in New Delhi -
  1. Social Transformation - Shanti Raghavan.
  2. Digital Transformation - Government e-Marketplace (GeM).
  3. Changemaker – (Financial Transformation)– India Stack.
  4. Young Changemaker - Pradeep Mewada, for using innovative ways to end open defecation in villages.
  5. Iconic Changemaker– Arunachalam Muruganandam, for creating low-cost sanitary pad for women.
  6. Changemaker of the Year– Dutee Chand - for winning India's first medal in 20 years, in 100-metre race at Jakarta Asian Games in 2018.
  7. Changemaker of the year– ISRO - for making India the first Asian nation to reach Martian orbit.
- ▶ Hockey India 3rd annual awards 2019 -

S.No.	Award/Category	Winners
1	Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award 2019	Mr. Harbinder Singh
2	Player of the Year 2019 (Male)	Mr. Manpreet Singh
3	Player of the Year 2019 (Female)	Ms. Rani Rampal
4	Upcoming Player of the Year 2019 (Men – Under 21)	Mr. Vivek Sagar Prasad

5	Upcoming Player of the Year 2019 (Women – Under 21)	Ms. Lalremsiami
6	President's Award for Outstanding Achievement 2019	Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha

5. ▶ Indian Origin businessman *Rajesh Chaplot* honoured with Highest Civilian Award (Golden Jubilee Medal-Civilians) of Uganda, for his excellence in field of Business & Commerce, Social Service and for fostering India - Uganda ties.
6. ▶ Noted writer Paramananda Majumder has been presented 10th Moghai Ojah Award, for his significant role in raising issues of public interest.
  1. Moghai Ojah award was instituted in 2011 by Jorhat district unit of the Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP).
  2. It is annually presented on 15 March, carrying cash prize of 21000.

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## **Books**

1. ▶ Apurva Purohit's 2nd book *Lady, You're the Boss*, has been launched.
2. ▶ Book *Invincible – A Tribute to Manohar Parrikar*, authored by Tarun Vijay has been released.
  1. Another book based on life of *Manohar Parrikar*, titled *An Extraordinary Life*, will be lanced in April 2020.
3. ▶ Book *My Encounters in Parliament* authored by Bhalchandra Mungekar has been released. He is former member of Rajya Sabha.
4. ▶ Book titled *An Extraordinary Life*, based on life of *Manohar Parrikar*, will be lanced in April 2020. He served as Union defence minister and Goa chief minister.
5. ▶ Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik released comic book *The Adventures of the Daredevil Democrat*, on occasion of 104th birth anniversary of former Odisha CM Biju Patnaik.
6. ▶ Tahira Kashyap Khurrana 's new Book *The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman* has been released.

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## **Committees**

1. ▶ 15th Finance Commission constituted a Committee to review fiscal consolidation roadmap of the general government, to be headed by N K Singh (15th Finance Commission Chairman). Fiscal Consolidation is the policy adopted by the Government to reduce the deficits.
2. ▶ 2 special committees formed by Ministry of Home Affairs to deal with issues and approvals related to Central Armed Police Force(CAPF).
  1. First committee will be chaired by Home Secretary (*Ajay Kumar Bhalla* currently) and will deal with issues that need to be decided between Home Ministry and CAPFs.
  2. Second committee will be headed by Secretary (Border Management) and will solve only the procurement matters.
3. ▶ Government has set up a 12-member panel to prepare an investigation manual for probe agency SFIO (Serious Fraud Investigation Agency), chaired by Corporate Affairs Secretary Injeti Srinivas.

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## **Days**

1. ▶ Mar 12 is observed Globally as World Kidney Day.
2. ▶ Mar 13 is observed as World Sleep Day (Friday before the northern hemisphere vernal equinox).
3. ▶ Mar 14 is observed as International Pi (π) Day, observed since 1988.
  1. Mar 14 is also observed as International Day of Action for Rivers.
4. ▶ Mar 15 is observed as World Consumer Rights Day. 2020 Theme is *The Sustainable Consumer*.
5. ▶ Mar 16 is observed as National Vaccination Day in India.
6. ▶ Mar 18 is observed as Ordnance Factory Day in India. First Ordnance Factory was established in Kolkata in 1801, which are 41 now.
  1. Mar 18 is also observed as Global Recycling Day, created in 2018.
7. ▶ Mar 20 is observed as International Day of Happiness, with 2020 Theme *Happiness For All, Together*.
  1. UN released World Happiness Report 2020 (153 Nations Analyzed for 6 Variables) -
    1. India ranked **144th**.
    2. Top 5 - Finland (1), Denmark (2), Switzerland (3), Iceland (4), Norway (5)

3. Bottom 3 - Afghanistan (153), South Sudan (152), Zimbabwe (3299)
2. Mar 20 is also observed as UN French Language Day.
3. Mar 20 is also observed as World Sparrow Day. 2020 Theme is *I Love Sparrows*.
4. Mar 20 is also observed as Navroz (Parsi New Year). Globally, Dates vary between Mar 20 and 21.
5. Mar 20 is also Observed as World day of theatre for children and Young People.

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## **Defence**

1. ▶ Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) under chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, has approved procurement of 83 more advanced Mk1A version of Tejas aircraft from HAL.
  1. Light Combat Aircraft Tejas is indigenously designed by Aircraft Development Agency (ADA) under DRDO and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). Proposal will now be placed for consideration of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).
2. ▶ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched draft of new *Defence Procurement Procedure 2020*, which aims to increase Indigenous Content ratio to boost indigenous manufacturing.
  1. Ratio is percentage of content of defence equipment built in India.
    1. Draft proposes increasing Indigenous Content (IC) stipulated in various categories of procurement by about 10% to support the 'Make in India's initiative.
    2. For instance, Indigenous Content Ratio of Light Combat Aircraft Tejas is 75.5%.
  2. Procedure has introduced *Buy Global* category, with minimum 50% indigenous content on cost basis of total contract value.
  3. Procedure introduced *Leasing* as a new category. This is to replace huge initial payments with periodical rental payments.
  4. A new system has been introduced for *software* procurement, as software requires more frequent updates.
3. ▶ India signed agreement with Israel to procure 16, 479 Light Machine Guns named Negev, for Rs 880 crores.
4. ▶ Supreme court cleared permanent commission for women officers in Indian Navy, contrary to Govt's policy of 1991 and 1998 which lifted statutory bar on induction of women officers in Navy.

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## **Economy**

1. ▶ 39th GST Council Meet Held in New Delhi -
  1. Rate Changes -
    1. GST on mobile phones increased from 12% to 18%.
    2. Reduced GST on handmade and machine made match sticks to 12%.
    3. GST on maintenance repair overhaul services of aircraft was reduced from 18% to 5%.
  2. Policy Updates -
    1. New facility called 'Know Your Supplier' to be introduced.
    2. IT Firm Infosys will deploy a better GSTN system by July.
2. ▶ According to RBI report, India's current account deficit (CAD) fell sharply to \$ 1.4 billion, or 0.2 % of GDP, for October-December 2019 quarter of FY 2019-20, compared to 2.7 % of GDP (\$ 17.7 billion) in same period last fiscal.
  1. Foreign direct investment (FDI) during the period stood at \$ 10.0 billion, higher than \$ 7.3 billion same period last year.
3. ▶ Bharti Airtel acquired 10 % stake in fitness start-up Spectacom Global Pvt Ltd, under its 'Airtel Startup Accelerator Program'.
  1. Spectacom is 2nd firm to join the Airtel Start-up Accelerator Program after Bengaluru-based Vahan.
4. ▶ E-commerce company Flipkart tied up with Aegon Life Insurance to sell insurance solutions to its customers.
5. ▶ RBI Issued guidelines for implementation of Indian Accounting Standards (Ind-AS) by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) while preparing their financial results.
  1. Guidelines mandate NBFCs/ ARCs to put in place board-approved policies that articulate and document their business models and portfolios.
6. ▶ RBI revised exposure limits for urban cooperative banks (UCBs) to a single borrower and a group of borrowers to 15 % and 25 % , respectively, of tier-1 capital.
  1. RBI had earlier permitted UCBs to have exposures up to 15 % and 40 % of their capital funds to a single borrower and a group of borrowers, respectively. UCBs must down existing exposures within these ranges, by March 2023.

2. UCBs shall have at least 50 % of their aggregate loans (comprising loans of under 25 lakh or 0.2 % of their tier 1 capital), whichever is higher, subject to a maximum of 1 crore, per borrower.
3. RBI also increased priority sector lending (PSL) target for UCBs to 75 % of adjusted net bank credit (ANBC), higher from 40 % earlier.
7. ▶ RBI will infuse liquidity of 30000 crores to maintain financial stability in economy, amid market segments facing stress due to COVID-19 outbreak. RBI will purchase Government securities under Open Market Operations (OMOs), for total amount of 30000 crores.
8. ▶ SBI acquired 6.825% stake in *Zero Mass*, the first ever Business Correspondent in country (starting in 2006 with Seiling village in Mizoram).

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## **International**

1. ▶ 5 Indians Named on World Economic Forum (WEF) list of 115 Young Global Leaders -
  1. Byju Raveendran (Educational App Byju's Founder)
  2. Gaurav Gupta (Zomato's co-founder)
  3. Tara Singh Vachani (CEO of Antara Senior Living)
  4. Vinati Mutreja (MD & CEO, Vinati Organics Limited)
  5. and Swapan Mehra (CEO, Iora Ecological Solutions)
2. ▶ *Aon Plc* acquired *Willis Towers Watson Plc* for nearly \$30 billion, making it world's biggest insurance broker. Both Firms are UK Based.
3. ▶ Alibaba Founder Jack Ma (China) replaced India's Mukesh Ambani as Asia's richest man. It came after Reliance shares crashed due to Coronavirus pandemic and fall of oil prices, causing Mukesh Ambani to USD 5.8 billion of his worth. Jack ma has worth of USD 44.5 billion, ahead of Mukesh Ambani with USD 41.8 billion.
4. ▶ Bangladesh High Court declared *Joy Bangla* as national slogan of Bangladesh. Joy Bangla' was the main slogan during the liberation war of Bangladesh fought against Pakistan in 1971.
5. ▶ Environmental organisations criticised a major project intending to link three rivers and provide seamless navigation between three of Europe's peripheral seas.
  1. Danube-Oder-Elbe Canal intends to connect the Danube, Oder and Elbe rivers and thus provide another navigable link from the Black Sea to the North and Baltic Seas.
  2. Several environmental organisations asked European Union to halt this 23 Billion Euros project, as it would reportedly destroy region's river landscapes, and is in violation of EU environmental laws.
6. ▶ Global Animal Protection Index 2020 by *World Animal Protection* -
  1. India gained C grade (same as 1st edition in 2014), with other 8 countries.
  2. No country gained A grade.
7. ▶ Gurugram Based Marketing Technology Firm *AdGlobal360* has been acquired by Japanese company Hakuodo Inc.
8. ▶ IT Firm Infosys and US Based chip maker Qualcomm tied up, to provide smart city solutions in India. These companies will provide several facilities in Indian Smart Cities like Smart Stadiums, Smart Venues, Smart Event Management and much more.
9. ▶ In Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'s 4th edition of Inclusive Internet Index 2020 (100 countries), India ranked 46th and Sweden is at 1st place.
10. ▶ India signed MOU with Nepal, to provide 107.01 million Nepali Rupees for three new school buildings in Nepal, in Darchula, Dhanusha and Kapilvastu districts.
11. ▶ International Dark Sky Association named Small Oceanic Nation *Niue* as first Dark Sky Preserve Nation.
  1. International Dark Sky Places are spaces recognised for responsible lighting policies that keep the night-time environment naturally dark. There are over 130 of these accredited dark sites across the world, but never before has been bestowed on an entire country like now.
12. ▶ Jewar International airport Project in Uttar Pradesh has been included in world's 100 strategic global infrastructure projects for 2020, recognised in CG LA Infrastructure list. Uttar Pradesh (India) and Yugoslavia have been chosen in field of aviation all over world.
13. ▶ Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG)'s global Technology(Tech) industry innovation survey ranked India at 2nd position, shared with China as most promising country for developing globally impactful disruptive technologies. US topped the survey.

14. ▶ Mar 17, 2020 marks 100th Birth Anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Jatir Pita of Bangladesh. He was first president of Bangladesh and later served as Prime Minister of Bangladesh.
15. ▶ Noted conservationist Ian Redmond, Environmentalist Sacha Dench and Indian actor *Randeep Hooda* are named CMS Ambassadors for Migratory Species until 2023 under redesigned Ambassadors Programme launched at CMS COP13.
  1. Key UN Event 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals was hosted by India in Gandhinagar (Gujarat), in Feb 2020, called CMS-COP-13.
16. ▶ PSU Telecommunications consultants India Limited (TCIL) signed MoU with Gambia, for participation in MEA's (eVBAB) e-VidyaBharati and e-ArogyaBharati Network Project for tele-medicine and tele-education in Africa. Gambia is 16th country to participate in this e-Network project.
17. ▶ UN Security Council approved peace agreement between US and Taliban, paving way for the complete withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. The deal was signed in February 2020 in Doha (Qatar).
18. ▶ UN's Food and Agriculture Organization released a report recently on *Peatlands* -
  1. Peatlands cover only 3% of the earth's surface, they consist of 30% of world soil carbon. When they are released, they emit greenhouse gases.
  2. Peatlands are formed due to accumulation of decomposed plant remains. These remains stay accumulated over thousands of years due to water-logging.
  3. Indonesia has 40% of tropical peatlands. In India, peatlands occupy 320 square kilo metres to 1,000 square kilo metres area.

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### **Meetings**

1. ▶ 7th World Cities Summit (WCS) will be held in Singapore in July 2020, with theme *Livable and Sustainable Cities: Adapting to a Disrupted World*
2. ▶ WION (World Is One News)'s 3rd Global summit 2020 based on theme *Navigating and negotiating global imperatives*, held in Dubai (UAE).
  1. During the meet, Pakistan recalled plan for Sir Creek pact. Sir Creek (originally Ban Ganga) is a 96 km long stream of water disputed between India & Pakistan in Rann of Kutch marshland.
  2. Sir Creek boundary line dispute has arisen due to a vague interpretation of maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh.

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### **National**

1. ▶ Microsoft and NASSCOM Foundation jointly launched Innovate for Accessible India campaign to empower people with disabilities with the help of technology and tools to provide better integration into society and access to equal opportunities.
2. ▶ Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) signed MoU with Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), to bring in better synergy in agricultural activities.
  1. It aims to link Farmer Producer Organization and farmer cooperatives with export value chain. SFAC will share clusters of farmers and grouping distributed in various states with APEDA. They will then work together to link up these farmers with export chain.
3. ▶ Andhra CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched 'NIGHA' app to ensure 'clean and healthy' elections by curbing use of money and alcohol in upcoming local body elections.
4. ▶ As First such event, Supreme Court removed Manipur Minister Thounaojam Shyamkumar Singh from state cabinet.
  1. Mr Shyamkumar won 2017 assembly elections, and Disqualification petitions were filed against him to speaker by other MLAs.
  2. When the issue was appealed to SC, It invoked Article 142 and has removed minister from the cabinet.
  3. Under Article 212, courts (including Supreme Court) cannot interfere in proceedings of Legislature of state. This has been over ruled by SC in this matter invoking Article 142. This is because, the matter was left unsolved by state assembly.
5. ▶ Assam government will construct 33 stadiums in the state under Uttaran scheme, costing 300 crores.
6. ▶ Border Roads Organisation (BRO) opened for traffic 360 feet long bailey suspension bridge over Teesta River in Munshithang near Chungthang town.

7. ▶ CRPF Signed MOU with a disability support NGO *Aditya Mehta Foundation*, to train its troops, who lost their limbs in operations, in various skills including cyber operations, artificial intelligence and para-sports
8. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Mar 13, 2020) -
  1. General Approvals -
    1. Approved releasing additional instalment of Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners, with effect from Jan 01, 2020. There will be an increase of 4 percent over existing rate of 17 % of Basic Pay/Pension.
  2. CCEA -
    1. Approved reconstruction plan for Yes Bank -
      1. State Bank of India (SBI) will buy 49 % stake of Yes Bank, investing 7250 Crores.
      2. HDFC Bank will invest 1000 crores, ICICI 1000 crores, Axis Bank 600 crores and Kotak Mahindra Bank will invest 500 crores.
      3. Troubled Yes Bank will be replaced in Nifty banking index by Bandhan Bank from March 27, 2020.
    2. Approved introducing Scheme for *Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP)*, under which a mechanism would be created for reimbursement of taxes/ duties/ levies, at central, state and local level, which are currently not being refunded.
      1. It aims to boost domestic industry and Indian exports providing a level playing field for Indian producers in International market so that domestic taxes/duties are not exported.
      2. Refunds under RoDTEP scheme would be a step towards “zero-rating” of exports, along with refunds such as Drawback and IGST. This would lead to cost competitiveness of exported products in international markets and better employment opportunities in export oriented manufacturing industries.
      3. As and when rates under RoDTEP Scheme are announced for a tariff line/ item, the *Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS)* benefits on such tariff line/item will be discontinued.
    3. Approved Rehabilitation and Upgradation of various National Highways covering total 780 kms in States of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
      1. It involves investment of 7662 crores which includes a world bank loan component of 3500 crores (USD 500 Million).
    4. Approved proposal of Department of Fertilizers to remove ambiguities in Modified New Pricing Scheme -III (NPS-III) for determination of fixed costs for urea units.
      1. Modified NPS-III was notified on 2nd April, 2014. However, due to ambiguous language of the notification, it could not be implemented.
      2. Concerned decision will facilitate its smooth implementation which will result in grant of Additional Fixed Cost of Rs.350/MT to 30 urea manufacturing units.
      3. The approval will also grant the special compensation of Rs. 150/MT to urea units which are more than 30 years old and converted to gas.
    5. Approved Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for copra for 2020 season.
      1. Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of milling copra - 9960 per quintal (from 9521).
      2. Ball copra - 10300 per quintal (from 9920)
      3. It assures a minimum of 50 percent as margin of profit as one of the important and progressive steps towards making possible doubling of farmers' incomes by 2022.
9. ▶ Facebook announced a call for applications for its CSR initiative, Facebook Pragati - powered by N/Core (The/Nudge Centre for Social Innovation). It will incubate and accelerate, early stage women led non-profits in areas of women entrepreneurship.
10. ▶ Flying car-maker PAL-V of The Netherlands will set up a manufacturing plant in Gujarat, aiming to commence production by 2021.
  1. PAL-V stands for Personal Air Land Vehicle.
  2. PAL-V can run at a speed of 160 kilometres on road and can fly at a speed of 180 kms. The car can turn into a flying vehicle in just three minutes and cover a distance of 500 km on a full tank.
11. ▶ General Conferences (Mar 11-20, 2020) -
  1. Hola Mohalla festival celebrated at Anandpur Sahib (Punjab), a Sikh festival celebrated in month of Phalgun, a day after Holi.



2. Uttar Pradesh Government passed ordinance *Recovery of Damages to public and private property ordinance 2020*, to deal with violent acts and control its persistence. It will also provide recovery of public and private property damages.
  1. Governor of a state can pass ordinance under Article 213, and promulgate the ordinance without permission of President.
3. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of State for Shipping (I/C) inaugurated ROPAX service from Bhaucha Dhakka (Mumbai) to Mandwa, Alibag in Maharashtra. ROPAX service is a 'Water Transport Service Project', under Eastern Waterfront Development.
4. Welcomgroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration (WGSHA) of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) entered Limca Book of Records (LBR) for establishing *India's First Living Culinary Arts Museum* at WGSHA, Manipal, Karnataka.
5. Renovated Animal Memorial for mules and horses of Indian Army unveiled in Bengaluru. It was Erected in 2006, as first of its kind animal memorial in Asia.
6. Kerala will launch a digital literacy drive *I am also digital*, to create public-awareness about e-governance and use of various digital platforms through which wide ranges of services are delivered.
7. On 35th Inception Day of National Crime Records Bureau, Crime Multi-Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) and National Cybercrime Training Center (NCTC) were launched in New Delhi.
8. 6th edition of Economic Times Global business summit held in New Delhi.
9. UNGCNI (United Nations Global Compact Network India) organized 3rd edition of its Gender Equality Summit 2020 with theme "India Inc. For Generation Equality: Decade of Action, in New Delhi.
10. An exhibition titled "Jallianwala Bagh" held in New Delhi, on occasion of 130th Foundation Day of National Archives of India (NAI).
11. Government approved renaming Amin village as Abhimanyupur in Kurukshetra district of Haryana as per request of State government.
12. Department of Posts(DoP) launched free digital parcel locker service in 2 post offices in Kolkata Circle, as First such event. Under this, customers will be able to collect their parcel from post office according to their convenience.
13. Maharashtra Government approved implementation of *happy hours* for auto rickshaws, reducing 15% of fare prices from 12 pm to 4 pm, as recommended by Khatua panel.
14. Tamil Nadu government hosted first-ever regional event *Divya Kala Shakti: Witnessing the abilities in disabilities a unique cultural* in Chennai.
15. 11th Bengaluru India Nano conference and exhibition Held in Bangalore, showcasing technologies / products developed in nanotechnology.
12. ▶ Google introduced *DigiPivot*, a skilling programme designed for women looking to return to their corporate careers after a break or simply planning to make mid career shifts to digital marketing.
13. ▶ Government Invoked *Disaster Management Act 2005* and *Epidemic Diseases Act 1897*, to control and mitigate coronavirus outbreak.
  1. Epidemic Diseases Act 1897 was first enacted to tackle bubonic plague in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) in former British-occupied India. The law is meant for containment of epidemics by providing special powers that are required for the implementation of containment measures to control the spread of the disease.
  2. Disaster Management Act aims ensure prices regulation and availability of Surgical and protective mask, Hand sanitizer and Gloves. Govt also brought masks and hand sanitizers under Essential Commodities Act.
14. ▶ Govt approved 365 crores for constructing a new Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Sabroom (South Tripura district). This will be second ICP along the Indo-Bangla border in state after Akhaura ICP.
  1. Also, Recently in Dec 2019, Government had approved first SEZ (Special Economic Zone) of Tripura at Sabroom, with primary focus on agro-based food processing. As per rules, minimum of 25 hectares of land is required to set up a new SEZ in the North Eastern States. The SEZ is expected to generate 12,000 skilled jobs.
15. ▶ Govt initiated Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship programme (MGNF) in Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bengaluru, as part of SANKALP (Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) programme, to boost skill development at district level.
  1. IIMB will train 75 graduates for two years in preparing District skill plan. Candidate will receive stipend of 50,000 - 60000 per month during 2 Year program.

16. ▶ IIT Kanpur and L&T Technology Services collaborated to carry out joint research in industrial and infrastructure cybersecurity, by setting up a Center of Excellence (CoE) at IIT Kanpur campus.
17. ▶ IIT Mandi will establish a Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) under National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), costing 7.25 crores.
18. ▶ Indian airline SpiceJet signed pact with GMR Hyderabad Aviation SEZ Limited (GHUSL), enabling SpiceJet to set up warehousing, distribution and trading facility in aerospace and industrial park of GMR Hyderabad International Airport.
19. ▶ Maharashtra Assembly approved a bill that exempts gram panchayat members from submitting their caste validity certificates at time of filing of the nominations, allowing candidates to submit their caste validity certificates within a year of winning elections.
  1. Maharashtra Cabinet also approved renaming Mumbai Central Station to commemorate Nana Shankarseth. Jagannath Shankarseth was a philanthropist and educationalist who lived between 1803 and 1865.
20. ▶ Manikaran Power Ltd became first member of India's first gas trading platform, called Indian Gas Exchange (IGX).
  1. IGX is India's first automated national level trading platform to promote and foster gas trading in country.
21. ▶ Manipur CM N. Biren Singh has announced scheme for welfare of sports persons and artists of State, named *Chief Minister's Akhannaba Sanaroising gi Tengbang (CMAST)* and *Chief Minister Artist Sing gi Tengbang (CMAT)*.
  1. Under CMAST, a suitable employment in government services will be provided to designated medalists. Cash awards for Olympic participants enhanced to 1 crore, 75 lakh, 50 lakh and 10 lakh rupees for different categories.
  2. CMAT will encourage artists in different fields and targeted to cover 4000 artistes annually. Pension will be given to selected artists who are over 60 years age.
22. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development notified new Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Rules 2020, by replacing earlier 2012 rules. Under new amendments, punishment for sexual exploitation of children have been further made stringent.
23. ▶ New National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's bench has been established in Chennai, amid requirement being felt in South India.
  1. Chennai bench will hear petitions filed against orders of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLAT) of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry. New Delhi Bench of NCLAT will be known as Pradhan Peeth.
24. ▶ Odisha government launched a star-rating program for industries in a bid to cut air pollution, which will rate industries from 1-star to 5-stars, depending of level of pollution they emit. Maharashtra had launch a similar program in 2019.
25. ▶ Oil India Limited (OIL) signed 5 - year Crude Oil Sales Agreement (COSA) with Numaligarh Refinery, expected to streamline sale and purchase transactions of crude oil which will be produced from fields in North East India.
26. ▶ Project *Tech for Tribal*, aimed at transforming 5 crore Tribal Entrepreneurs has been launched by TRIFED, in association with various reputed Higher education Institutes.
  1. Tech for Tribals aims at imparting entrepreneurship skills to tribal forest produce gatherers enrolled under Pradhan Mantri VanDhan Yojana(PMVDY). *TRIFED* is establishing 1,200 Van Dhan Vikas Kendra across Nation.
27. ▶ Rajya Sabha approved some minor changes made by Lok Sabha in Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order Amendment Bill 2019 -
  1. Amendments replaced word 'seventieth' to 'seventy-first' and figure '2019' to '2020' at line one in first page.
  2. Bill seeks to include Parivara and Talawara tribal communities of Karnataka in ST category.
28. ▶ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) announced Swavalamban Express, which will visit 11 entrepreneurial cities, including *Delhi, Jammu, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Kolakata, Bhubaneswar and Varanasi*. Any person between 20 and 35 years age can participate.
29. ▶ Traditional *Faghi' festival* celebrated in Yangpa village of Kinnaur district (Himachal Pradesh), to observe *victory of good over evil*.
30. ▶ Under UDAN scheme, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) flagged off first-ever flight from Indore (Madhya Pradesh) to Kishangarh (Ajmer, Rajasthan). With commencement of this route, Ministry of Civil Aviation has operationalised 268 routes under UDAN scheme.
31. ▶ Uttarakhand celebrated traditional harvest festival *Phool Dei*, observed on first day of Chaitra or in mid-March (according to Gregorian calendar).
32. ▶ Wings India 2020, biennial civil aviation and aerospace event held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad (Telangana).
33. ▶ World's first Digital Solutions Exchange, *GOKADDAL* has been launched in India. This cloud-based platform is created to help customers realize their digital transformation vision by bringing them solutions with tools and right providers.



## **Persons**

1. ▶ India's Nita Ambani (owner of Mumbai Indians cricket team franchise) is named in list of 10 most influential women in sports for 2020, by iSportconnect.
2. ▶ Indian Mountaineer Bhawna Deharia scaled Mount Kosciuszko (2, 228 meters), which is highest peak in Australia.
3. ▶ Indian Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta entered 'Limca Book of Records', becoming first Indian to climb highest volcanoes in world of all 7 continents. He has conquered -
  1. Mt Kilimanjaro, Africa (5,895 m)
  2. Mount Elbrus, Europe (5,642 m)
  3. Mt Pico de Orizaba, North America (5,636 m)
  4. Mt Giluwe, Australia (4,367 m)
  5. Mt Sidley, Antarctica (4,285 m)
  6. Mt Ojos del Salado, South America (6,893 m)
  7. Mt Damavand, Asia (5,610 m)

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## **Science**

1. ▶ Scientists at Hyderabad-based DNA Finger Printing and Diagnostics Center have discovered a new mechanism that prevents cancer when an anti-cancer protein is converted.
  1. CDFD scientists have identified a rare p53 form of tongue cancer in Indians, which causes these mutant p53 cancers.
  2. Scientists identified genes of mutant p53 protein. One of these genes, called SMARCD1, is the most important. SMARCD1 converts a protein into symbolic words. It goes with other proteins and forms a multi-protein complex. Scientists have found that SMARCD-1 is seen in tongue cancer in Indians.
2. ▶ National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) Lucknow has developed a pest-resistant variety of cotton, due for field trials during April - October 2020, in Faridkot Center of Punjab Agriculture University (Ludhiana).
  1. This is expected to protect against whiteflies that are one of top devastator pests in world and vectors for some 200-plant viruses.
3. ▶ Newly discovered species of treehopper in US, has been named *Kaikaia Gaga* after American singer Lady Gaga. Earlier,
  1. A deep-sea crustacean was named from American heavy metal band Metallica and is now known as *Macrotylis metallica*.
  2. *Synalpheus pinkfloydi* shrimp was named after the English rock band Pink Floyd.
4. ▶ Paleontologists of Canada linked human hands to fins of fish, as First such event time in study of Human Evolution, by examining a fossil of "Elpistostege".
  1. Elpistostege represents pivotal stage of transition of fish into land vertebrates, supported by front fins of fish called *pectoral fins*.
  2. Paleontologists believe that during its era, Elpistostege was the top predator in brackish estuary ecosystem.
  3. Elpistostege lived during Devonian period, that spanned 60 million years and is around 419 million years ago. It is named after place Devon (England), where rocks of this era were first found.
5. ▶ Researchers at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) developed a new method to rapidly identify whether a disease-causing bacteria is alive or dead. It uses Raman spectroscopy, a technique usually used to identify chemical bonds in materials – to recognize bacteria and check for their viability.
6. ▶ Researchers from Indian Institute of Geomagnetism Mumbai (IIG) found that Himalayas subside and move up depending on seasonal changes in groundwater.
  1. As Himalayas are crucial in influencing climate in Indian subcontinent, this study will help in understanding how hydrology affects climate. Water acts as a lubricating agent, and hence when there is water in dry season, the rate of slip of fault in this region is reduced.
  2. Researchers used Global Positioning System(GPS) and Gravity Recovery And Climate Experiment (GRACE) data, which has made it possible for them to quantify variations of hydrologic mass.
7. ▶ Researchers from National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS) Pune found a way to speed up Process of generating RBCs outside the body (*in vitro*) from haematopoietic stem cells (HSCs).

1. They found that adding a very low concentration of a small protein molecule called 'transforming growth factor  $\beta 1$ ' (TGF- $\beta 1$ ), along with a hormone called *erythropoietin* (EPO), can cut down process time by three days (18 days from 21 earlier).
2. Issue is that blood banks often face a severe shortage of whole blood as well as components of blood like red blood cells. Generating RBCs outside the body (*in vitro*) from haematopoietic stem cells (HSCs) is an expensive and lengthy process (21 days). The new finding can help speed it up.
8. ▶ Researchers from National Centre for Cell Science Pune found that the pathogenic protein called the Huntingtin Protein causes decrease in overall protein production.
  1. Huntington Disease is a genetic disorder that declines cognitive abilities, impairs coordination of balance and movement, memory lapses, mood swings and personality changes.
  2. The disease is caused due to the mutation of the gene called HTT. The major function of these genes is to produce protein called Huntingtin.
9. ▶ Scientists at International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials (ARCI) have developed a process for size-selective deposition of nanocomposite coatings which can reduce friction in several aerospace, defence, automobile, space devices need to reduce friction, wear, and tear to enhance the life of components.
  1. Coatings developed by ARCI group reduced friction more and could withstand corrosion due to salt spray better than many similar wear-resistant coatings available in the market.
10. ▶ Scientists from Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) developed a starch-based 'hemostat' material that concentrates the natural clotting factors in blood by physically absorbing excess fluid. The biodegradable microparticles that combine to form a gel on a wound offer significant improvements over existing alternatives.
  1. Hemostat materials absorb excess fluid by concentrating the natural clotting factors in the blood that are critical for stopping the blood flow.
11. ▶ Scientists from International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) Hyderabad have developed a cost-effective solar receiver tube technology for industrial process heat applications.
  1. It efficiently absorbs solar radiation and converts it into heat for targeted applications, specially in industries. It exhibits high corrosion resistance suitable for Indian weather.
12. ▶ Scientists from University of Geneva (Switzerland) detected liquid iron rain on highly heated exoplanet WASP-76b, which revolves around its star 'WASP-76' so closely that temperature reaches 1000 °C.
  1. Observations made by *Echelle Spectrograph for Rocky Exoplanets and Stable Spectroscopic Observations (Espresso)*, fitted to Very Large Telescope (VLT) based at the European Southern Observatory (ESO) in Chile's the Atacama Desert.

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## **Sports**

1. ▶ 2019–20 Indian Super League season (sixth season) won by ATK (previously known as Atlético de Kolkata) FC, as their 3rd Title. They defeated Chennaiyin FC in Final.
2. ▶ 2020 All England Badminton Open (112th Edition) -
  1. Men's Singles - Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)
  2. Women's Singles - Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)
  3. Men's Doubles - Japan's Hiroyuki Endo AND Yuta Watanabe
  4. Women's Doubles - Japan's Yuki Fukushima AND Sayaka Hirota
  5. Mixed Doubles - Indonesia's Praveen Jordan AND Melati Daeva Oktavianti
3. ▶ Asian/Oceanian Boxing Olympic Qualifiers event 2020 held in Amman (Jordan) -
  1. 9 Indian boxers qualified in this event for Tokyo 2020 Olympics. India ranked 9th with 8 medals (2 Silver, 6 Bronze).
  2. China topped at top with 6 medals (4 gold, 2 bronze).
4. ▶ Indian Table Tennis Player *Achanta Sharath Kamal* won ITTF Challenger Plus Oman Open, defeating Marcos Freitas of Portugal. His last title was Egypt Open in 2010.
5. ▶ Saurashtra won Ranji Trophy Cricket title for first time in 70 years, beating Bengal.

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