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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### NASA Develops high-pressure ventilator 'VITAL' to fight the problem

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has developed an easy-to-build high-pressure ventilator named VITAL, which has been specially designed for the treatment of patients.
- VITAL stands for Ventilator Intervention Technology Accessible Locally.
- VITAL will help to treat the patients with milder symptoms, so that the limited number of traditional ventilators available in the country can be used for treatment of patients with more severe symptoms.

### World Bank ties-up with AIMA to organize virtual workshop on "Contract Management during Emergency situations"

- World Bank (WB) has joined hands with AIMA (All India Management Association), one of the most renowned business schools in India, to organize a virtual workshop called "The Contract Management during Emergency situations" with the aim to create awareness about the likely impact of the on the implementation of the bank-funded projects.

### North Pole's largest-ever ozone hole finally closes

- Scientists who have been observing the ozone hole at Copernicus' Atmospheric Monitoring Service (CAMS) has announced that the Ozone layer hole is now closed in the North Pole.
- They reported that the largest hole in the Ozone layer spreading over 1 million square kilometres above the Arctic has closed due to unusual atmospheric conditions. The hole in Ozone was first identified by scientists in March 2020.

### China begins testing of digital currency - DC/EP

- People's Bank of China (Central Bank of China) has started testing its digital currency named Digital Currency Electronic Payment, DC/EP.
- It is built with Blockchain and Cryptographic technology. The currency is pegged 1:1 to the Chinese National Currency - the RenMinBi (RMB).
- China's official digital currency is undergoing testing and has not been officially released.

### US crude oil prices fall below \$0 mark

- In a historic first, the US crude oil prices crashed below \$0 mark on April 20, 2020 amid crisis. The price of best quality of crude oil West Texas Intermediate (WTI) turned negative to - USD 40.32 a barrel.
- This is the worst ever slash in crude oil prices in the history of mankind. The last such fall in oil prices was reported right after the World War II.

### TCS to power Israel's first fully digital bank

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) will launch Israel's first fully digital bank. TCS is India's largest software services firm. The digital bank has not been named yet and will

be launched in 2021.

- TCS has been selected by Israel's Ministry of Finance to transform its banking sector. The digital banking operations platform will be powered by the TCS BaNCS Global Banking Platform.

### China donates USD 30 million more for WHO to combat

- China on April 23, 2020 announced to donate USD 30 million more to the global health agency World Health Organization (WHO) in its fight against .
- Earlier, China had donated USD 20 million to the WHO, which seeks funding of over USD 1 billion to contain the spread of the novel .

### People's Bank of China now owns 1.01% stake in HDFC

- The People's Bank of China (PBOC), which is the Central Bank of China now owns 1.01% stake in the Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC).
- As per the data submitted by PBOC to BSE, it held 1.75 crore shares of HDFC during the quarter that ended in March 2020. However, PBOC already owned 0.8 percent earlier.
- As per norms, businesses are required to disclose shareholding of over 1 percent at the end of every quarter. The disclosure has been made now by PBOC because the ownership has hit the 1 percent regulatory threshold.

### Google and Apple collaborate to fight against

- Google and Apple collaborate to fight against through contact tracing technology. Both tech-giants have collaborated to enable the use of Bluetooth technology to help governments and health agencies reduce the spread of the Virus, with user privacy and security central to the design.
- Google and Apple will be launching a comprehensive solution that includes application programming interfaces (APIs) and operating system-level technology to assist in enabling contact tracing. Contact tracing is a valuable tool to help contain spread. The joint initiative by Apple and Google will contribute to the cause.

### UNIDO and CUTS look to e-commerce to counter economic impact of COVID

- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) to empower consumers to contribute to the global development agenda as well as support their respective governments in times of global crisis due to .
- The MoU is valid for 5 years and the aim is to create joint technical co-operation initiatives to support ongoing activities in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

### Trump blames WHO for 'covering up' spread; stops US funding

- United States President Donald Trump has decided to halt funding to World Health Organisation (WHO) and has criticized the WHO for "missing the call" on the .
- He has accused the UN agency of failing in its basic duty by covering up the spread of the virus after it emerged in China and acting too slowly and so must be held

accountable.

- US is the biggest contributor to WHO. American taxpayers provide around \$400 million to \$500 million per year to the WHO as compared to roughly \$40 million annual contribution by China.
- The Trump administration has ordered to conduct a review to assess the World Health Organisation's role in "severely mismanaging and covering up" the spread of the deadly .

### South Korean President's party wins absolute majority in Parliamentary Elections

- South Korean President, Moon Jae-in's party won an absolute majority in the recent Parliamentary Elections.
- Moon Jae-in's left-leaning Democratic party and its allies won 180 seats in the 300-member National Assembly, while the conservative opposition coalition won 103 seats. The Democratic party has 120 seats currently.
- The provisional results were released by the National Election Commission on April 16, 2020.

### IMF to double emergency assistance to countries battling

- The International Monetary Fund has proposed to double its emergency financial assistance to countries battling the .
- The IMF has proposed to deploy its full USD 1 trillion lending capacity to support countries battling the . The IMF board has already approved debt relief to 25 of its poorest members.

### US announces \$2.9 million package for India

- The United States recently announced a donation package of USD 2.9 million for India in its fight against the . The announcement regarding the donation was made by US Agency for International Development.
- The aid is a part of the American Global Response Package, wherein the US is providing financial assistance of USD 174 million to over 60 countries.

### Twitter CEO pledges \$1 billion to combat

- Chief Executive Officer of Twitter, Jack Dorsey has pledged to donate \$1 billion to charities working towards combatting the global .
- The donation of \$1 billion by the Twitter CEO seems to be the largest donation pledged by a private individual in the fight against .
- To fulfill the donation amount of \$1 billion, Jack Dorsey will move \$1 billion of his digital payments group "Square" equity i.e. 28% of his wealth, to #startsmall LLC to fund global relief.

### USAID announces \$2.9 million aid to India to fight 19

- The United States has announced \$2.9 million aid for India through the US Agency for International Development (USAID).
- The funds announced are going to help India in its fight against and to also provide

care for those who are affected and help the local communities with the tools to stop the spreading in the country.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other relevant agencies, is working closely with India to support the country's response to the .

### Joe Biden to take on Donald Trump in US Presidential race

- Former US Vice President Joe Biden has become the Democratic nominee in the US Presidential race after Bernie Sanders dropped out.
- US Senator Bernie Sanders called off his presidential campaign on April 8, 2020, paving way for Biden to win the Democratic nomination. Sanders made the announcement through a live telecast.
- This will pit Biden against incumbent US President Donald Trump in the US Presidential Elections 2020, which are scheduled to be held in November 2020. Trump will be seeking a second term.

### Google to launch new virtual Braille Keyboard

- Google has announced the launch of a virtual Braille keyboard for Android users with low vision or blindness. This new keyboard will enable these people to type on their phones without additional hardware.
- A standard 6-key layout has been used in this keyboard with each key representing one of 6 braille dots which, when tapped, can make any letter or symbol.

### Domino's Pizza launches 'Domino's Essentials' service

- Domino's Pizza has partnered with ITC Foods to launch "Domino's Essentials".

#### Highlights of this Partnership:

- Through "Domino's Essentials" service, everyday grocery essentials offered by ITC Foods will be delivered while leveraging the delivery infrastructure of Domino's.
- This partnership aims to serve the community by ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential items at their doorsteps, without them having to step outside of their homes.
- The "Domino's Essentials" service will be available for consumers via "Domino's Essentials" section on the Domino's app.
- Domino's Pizza will leverage its supply chain and delivery network to deliver essential goods to the customers at their home.
- This service is an effort which aligns with the government's decision of nationwide to contain the .

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Asian Paints to make hand sanitisers

- Asian Paints, India's largest paint maker, announced on May 1, 2020 that it will start making hand and surface sanitisers under Viroprotek brand. The sanitizers will be made available in the market from next week onwards.
- The sanitisers will be manufactured at Asian Paints' plant in Ankleshwar, Gujarat. The company stated that it has obtained all necessary permissions from authorities.

## Government revises FDI Policy, bar automatic investments from neighbouring countries

- The Central Government revised the FDI policy making it difficult for overseas investment from neighbouring countries into Indian firms. The decision comes in the backdrop of COVID-19 crisis during which might invite opportunistic investment in Indian countries from neighbouring countries.
- The revised rules of FDI policy are applicable only to the countries that are in India's neighbourhood and share a common land border with India. This includes China and other nations such as Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar.
- According to reports, the changes in India's FDI policy are in line with similar measures undertaken by many European countries which aims to restrict foreign investments from China during the on-going crisis and market disruption due to it.

## Rs.10 lakhs Compensation for all Postal employees

- Amid the nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, the Postal employees including Gramin Dak Sevaks are performing various departmental duties as well as serving the social cause in the crisis times.
- Therefore, it has been decided to grant payment of compensation of Rs. 10 lakhs to all the Postal employees including Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS) succumbing to the disease while brought on duty.
- The above guidelines have been implemented immediately and continues for the entire period till the crises of COVID-19 is over.

## IIM-Kozhikode student-led team develops one-stop platform for accessing emergency services

- An international team of researchers led by an Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode student has developed a one-stop platform, [fyi.in](http://fyi.in), for accessing emergency services related to COVID-19, from official government sources.
- The website will act as a one-stop digital directory for all COVID-19 related services and help to bring the right information to the right people.
- Only official information from Government organisations will be put on this platform to ensure authenticity and credibility.

## Government Amends Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU) scheme to Increase Default Coverage to 75%

- The Ministry of Finance has announced amendment in Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU) scheme, which covers micro loans up to Rs 10 lakh extended under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.
- The government has announced an increase in coverage of lender's loss in case of loan default under the CGFMU scheme to 75% from 50% earlier to incentivise lending to micro businesses and support them during the lockdown and the ensuing nationwide crisis.
- Apart from this, the ministry has also reduced the burden of defaults that the lender had to bear under the scheme from the first 5% of the amount in default to 3%.

## “National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India” launched

- The “National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India” has been launched by the Union Minister for Culture (I/C) Prahlad Singh Patel.
- The National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India has been classified in the following 5 broad domains:
  1. Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
  2. Performing arts
  3. Social practices, rituals and festive events
  4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
  5. Traditional craftsmanship

## Uttar Pradesh Becomes First Indian State to Geotag Community Kitchens & Shelters

- Uttar Pradesh has been reported to become the first state in the country to geotag all its community kitchens and community shelters across 75 districts of the state, so as to provide adequate information to the general public regarding the location of shelter homes and community kitchens amid .
- There are 7,368 community kitchens and community shelters across 75 districts in the state which produce 12 lakh food packets a day.
- The state government has tied up with Google to ‘Geo-map’ the locations of all these establishments on the Google Maps app for ease of beneficiaries.

## Section 115BAC of IT Act, 1961

- Section 115BAC was recently inserted into the Income-tax Act, 1961, which states that an individual or a person belonging to an undivided family earning income other than the business or profession may opt to be taxed and furnish his or her Income Tax Return under sub-section (I) of Section 139 of IT Act.
- The Section 115BAC provides a concessional rate, if the total income is computed without any specified exemption or deduction.

## UP becomes first state to geo-tag community kitchens

- Uttar Pradesh became the first state on April 19, 2020 to geo-tag community kitchens. The state geo-tagged around 7,368 community kitchens and community shelters located across 75 districts. The kitchens produce 12 lakh food packets per day.
- The state has also tied up with Google to 'Geo-map' the locations of all these community kitchens on the Google Maps app for ease of the beneficiaries. The state government mobilised state resources to set up the kitchens through the medium of religious organisations and non-government organisations.
- The main aim to make the community kitchens easy to access for the daily wage labourers who are bearing the heavy brunt of the nation-wide imposed due to the .

## Health Minister Harsh Vardhan Launches ‘ INDIA SEVA’ to Address Related Queries

- The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan has launched an

interactive platform called 'INDIA SEVA' to provide real time solutions to related queries.

- The interactive platform aims at providing transparent e-governance service to citizens by answering their queries swiftly in real-time at large scale, especially during crisis situations like the ongoing .

### **IIT-Mandi develops high-speed magnetic RAM**

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi, Himachal Pradesh has developed a high-speed magnetic Random Access Memory (RAM).
- This Magnetic Random Access Memory (RAM), is faster, energy-efficient and stores more data in a smaller volume as compared to existing data storage technologies.

### **Amid , Guj Govt's Water Conservation Scheme Begins**

- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has given the green signal for the third edition of his government's 'Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan' amid . It is a conservation plan to deepen water bodies in the state before the monsoon.
- The scheme will see the deepening of lakes, check dams and rivers by removing silt. This will be done till June 10, 2020 with people's participation as well as under MNREGA.

### **Violence against healthcare workers will lead to 7 years of jail term**

- An ordinance proposing new amendments to the Disease Act, 1987 has been approved by the Union Cabinet on April 22, 2020. The amendment ensures the safety of healthcare workers and to end violence against them.
- It includes the imprisonment of guilty from 6 months to 7 years. The Union Minister Prakash Javadekar shared the news while briefing the media after a cabinet meeting.

### **Karnataka govt launches Mobile app "Apthamitra" and helpline number to fight**

- Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa has inaugurated a helpline number and a mobile app named 'Apthamitra' to empower the people of the state in the fight against .
- The Apthamitra helpline is an exclusive toll free Number 14410 dedicated to deal with only -related queries including telemedicine, counselling and facilitating testing and treatment for those in need. It will work from 8 AM to 8 PM.
- Similarly, the app is for those, seeking advice for telemedicine from doctors directly.

### **Delhi Government Launches "Operation SHIELD" for Containment of**

- On 9 April 2020, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has announced the launch of an initiative called "Operation SHIELD" in the capital city to curb the spread of the .
- Here SHIELD stands for:
  1. Sealing of the immediate area/surroundings after geographical marking
  2. Home quarantine of all the people living in the area
  3. Isolation and tracing of people who have been first and second contacts
  4. Essential supply of commodities is ensured

5. Local sanitisation of the area by authorities
6. Door-to-door health checks of everyone living in the area

### CSIR-NCL & BEL ink partnership to developed IR Thermometer and OEU

- CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune, Maharashtra has designed and developed Digital IR Thermometer and Oxygen Enrichment Unit (OEU) to assist within the mitigation of the . To speed-up, the project NCL has partnered with Bharat Electronics Ltd, Pune (BEL).
- Digital Infra-Red (IR) thermometer is that the primary and important component that's wont to measure infection.
- The Oxygen Enrichment Unit is that the other technology that's in great demand within the treatment of patients. because the lungs of patients get badly affected, the OEU can do the function of a ventilator by increasing the oxygen concentration from 21-22% to 38-40% from the ambient air.

### Bharat Biotech in tie-up with FluGen to develop 'CoroFlu' vaccine

- Bharat Biotech in tie-up with the US-based company FluGen and University of Wisconsin Madison to develop a vaccine named "Coro-Flu" to fight against .
- CoroFlu will build on the backbone of FluGen's flu vaccine candidate known as M2SR.
- The vaccine is being developed on the basis of FluGen's flu vaccine candidate known as M2SR, a self-limited version of the influenza virus.

### HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Launches web-portal YUKTI in New Delhi

- The Union Minister for HRD Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" has launched a web-portal YUKTI in New Delhi on 12 April 2020.
- YUKTI stands for Young India Combating with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation.
- The unique portal and dashboard aims to monitor and record the efforts and initiatives of MHRD which have been taken in the wake of , to keep the academic community healthy, both physically & mentally.
- The portal will establish a two-way communication channel between the MHRD and the institutions (academic or research) so that the Ministry can provide the necessary support system to the institutions.

### RBI should implement 'Helicopter Money' to counter economic crisis: Telangana CM

- 'Helicopter Money will facilitate the states and financial institutions to accrue funds. We can come out of the financial crisis. Release 5% of funds from GDP through Quantitative Easing Policy,' said K. Chandrashekar Rao.
- Helicopter Money means extension of non-repayable money transfer from the central bank to the state and central governments, to infuse liquidity in the system.
- The policy aims at putting more money into the pockets of people to nudge them to spend more money and in turn pick-up economic activity in the country.
- The direct impact of Helicopter Money is rise in disposable incomes of the people, increase in money supply with an intention to boost demand and inflation in the

economy.

- The term Helicopter Money was given by American Economist Milton Friedman in his famous "The Optimum Quantity of Money". By definition, Helicopter Money is a monetary policy tool for Quantitative Easing (QE), which aims at "unexpectedly dumping money onto a struggling economy with the intention to shock it out of a deep slump."

### Prasar Bharti launches new channel "DD Retro"

- India's Public service broadcaster Prasar Bharti has rolled out a new channel called DD Retro.
- The new channel "DD Retro" would be specifically dedicated to old classics of Doordarshan. The channel has been launched by Prasar Bharti in the wake of the to keep viewers engaged.
- After the return of memorable classics like mythological epics Ramayana and Mahabharat, historical drama Chanakya and superhero series Shaktimaan, Doordarshan has also emerged as the most watched channel in India, surpassing any other genre in the Hindi-speaking markets.

### Ahmedabad station becomes 1st station to get sanitizing tunnel

- The Ahmedabad railway station at Kalupur has installed a Walk Through Mass Sanitizing Tunnel, to ensure the safety of staff and passengers in view of the .
- The Sanitizer Tunnel has been set up by Ahmedabad division of the Western Railway and is the first station on Indian Railways to get such tunnel.

### Government sets foodgrain production target at 298.3 mb tons for 2020-21 crop year

- The agriculture ministry has set a target to increase foodgrain production to record 298.3 million tonnes in the 2020-21 crop year (July-June). This is more by 6.35 million tonnes from the previous years' estimate.
- To be bifurcated, the target is 149.92 million tonnes of foodgrain production in the Kharif (summer) season and 148.4 million tonnes in the rabi (winter) season.
- The foodgrain output in the 2019-20 crop year is estimated at 291.95 million tonnes.

### Finance Minister attends 2nd G20 Finance Ministerial Meeting

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman represented India in the virtual session of the 2nd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting.
- The prime objective of the meeting was to discuss the global economic outlook amid advancing crisis.
- The 2nd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting was held under the presidency of Saudi Arabia.

### India removes ban on export of Paracetamol formulations

- The Central Government recently removed the ban on the export of formulations that are made from Paracetamol. The information was shared in a notification released by

the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

- The formulations including the fixed-dose combinations will now be made available with immediate effect for export purpose.

### Delhi government launches 'Assess Koro Na' app

- The Delhi Government has launched 'Assess Koro Na' mobile application. The Delhi government has also advised the officials to use the new 'Assess Koro Na' app to do door-to-door survey in containment zones.
- This mobile application will speed up decision-making by analysing the real-time data and hence removing a major obstacle in the efforts to contain the virus. Through this app, the collected data can be uploaded in real-time on the servers for its immediate analysis.

### World Food Programme has little impact on global food supply chain

- World Food Programme (WFP) conveyed the rapidly growing novel so far, having little impact on the global food supply chain, but that could change for the worse if major food importers remain anxious.
- The UN agency's global markets for basic cereals are well-supplied, and prices are generally low. However, given the highly globalized nature of food production and supply, commodities need to move from the world's breadbaskets to where they are consumed, and the novel -related containment measures are starting to make this more challenging.

### India seeks \$6 billion of loans from ADB, AIIB to fight

- India is seeking as much as \$6 billion of loans from multilateral institutions such as the Asian Development Bank to bolster its efforts to fight the .
- The World Bank already committed \$1 billion. At the same time, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is in talks with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and ADB, the people said, asking not to be identified because the details haven't been finalized.
- India needs to rapidly scale up testing for the virus to head off the disease from infecting more people in the world's most populated nation after China. Proceeds including from the World Bank will be used to acquire testing kits and ventilators, turning hospital beds into intensive care unit beds as well as for buying personal protective equipment for health care workers.

### Government plans to link 22000 mandis with e-NAM platform by 2022

- The Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Narendra Singh Tomar has launched three new features of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform to enable farmers to sell their harvested produce directly from warehouse which will prevent crowding in mandis amid .
- Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India.

### Geo-fencing app to locate quarantine violators

- The government has tested an application named, Geo-fencing app to trigger emails and SMS alerts to an authorised government agency, if a person has jumped quarantine or has escaped from isolation, based on the person's mobile phone's cell tower location.
- The Centre under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, uses powers to "fetch information" from telecom companies every 15 minutes to track quarantine violators across the country & is accurate by up to 300 m.

### Northern Railways develops PPE coverall

- The Northern Railways has developed a PPE coverall. This is in addition to the personal protective equipment coveralls and the N99 masks that have been developed by DRDO.
- The initiative is to meet the demand of these equipments and ensure proper safety and security of the healthcare workers who are in the frontline of the fight against .
- With rising cases in the country, there is a shortage of PPE kits. Hence, efforts are being made to start mass production of these products. The existing N95 mask producers have also increased their capacity and are producing about 80,000 masks per day.

### Indian Railways develops low-cost ventilator prototype named "Jeevan"

- Indian Railway's Rail Coach Factory (RCF) in Kapurthala, Punjab has developed a low-cost ventilator prototype named "Jeevan" that is much cheaper than regular ventilators.
- The ventilators can be put to use after it receives approvals from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- The cost of these ventilators is expected to be Rs. 10,000 without compressors. RCF Kapurthala has developed the prototype after the government instructed the Indian Railways to explore the possibility of manufacturing ventilators.

### PM, President and MPs Salary Cut by 30% , MPLAD funds suspended for 2 years

- The Union Cabinet approved an ordinance amending the salary, allowances and pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, to reduce the allowances and pension by 30% starting April 1, 2020, for a year.
- All Members of Parliament (MPs), including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Council of Ministers, would be taking a 30 per cent salary cut due to the impact of the novel .
- The cabinet also approved temporary suspension of MPLAD (Member of Parliament Local Area Development) fund scheme during 2020-21 and 2021-22, and the funds will be used for managing health services and the adverse impact of in the country.

### Civil Services Association Launches Initiative 'CARUNA' to help Government Fight

- The Associations representing officers of central civil services, such as IAS, IPS, has come up with an initiative called 'CARUNA', as a collaborative platform to support Government in the fight against # 19.

- The acronym 'CARUNA' stands for Civil services Associations Reach to sSupport in Natural s.
- The collective abilities of this versatile group will support:
- Decision Makers by providing IT, HR & coordination support to enhance their outreach
- Frontline Functionaries in reaching out to the last mile

### Delhi Government's 5 point plan to contain spread of

- Delhi Government on April 7, 2020 launched a 5 point action plan to contain the spread of . The plan includes 5T strategy - Tracing, Testing, Treatment, Teamwork and Tracking & Monitoring.
- The Plan was announced by the Chief Minister Kejriwal through live television address.

### Ministry of Civil Aviation launches "Lifeline UDAN" initiative

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched the initiative called "Lifeline UDAN" to help India fight against . Under Lifeline UDAN initiative of Ministry of Civil Aviation, 132 cargo flights have been operated so far across the country to transport medical cargo including to remote and hilly areas.
- With support from Air India, Alliance Air, IAF and private airlines, medical supplies of more than 184 tons have been delivered till date during period.

### Essential services, medicines delivered at doorstep of patients by Swasth ke Sipahi under PMBJP

- During the 21 days nationwide due to , pharmacists, popularly known as "Swasth ke Sipahi" of Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra are delivering essential services and medicines at doorstep of patients and elderly.
- Swasth ke Sipahi are providing the essential medicines at the doorsteps of patients under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) of the Government of India.
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra are being run under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India by the Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI). The objective of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra was to provide quality and affordable healthcare to anyone in need.

### MHRD declares DigiLocker as National Academic Depository

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development has designated DigiLocker as the sole National Academic Depository (NAD).
- The ministry has directed the University Grants Commission (UGC) 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.

### GoI launches "iGOT" e-learning platform to combat

- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has announced the launch of a

learning platform iGOT- Integrated Government Online Training (<https://igot.gov.in>).

- The e-learning platform has been launched for all front-line workers to equip them with the training and updates in coping with 19.
- The target group is Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Hygiene Workers, Technicians, Auxiliary Nursing Midwives (ANMs), Central & State Govt. Officers, Civil Defence Officials, various Police Organisations, National Cadet Corps (NCC), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), National Service Scheme (NSS), Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Bharat Scouts & Guides (BSG) and other volunteers.

### TRIFED to launch campaign in partnership with UNICEF for SHGs

- Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has collaborated with UNICEF for developing a digital communication strategy for promoting a digital campaign for Self Help Groups (SHGs).
- The partnership aims to highlight the importance of Social Distancing.

### Airtel Payments Bank Rolls out health insurance plan in Partnership with Bharati AXA General Insurance

- Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Bharati AXA General Insurance to launch a health insurance policy, which offer financial protection against .
- Under the partnership, they have rolled out two different health insurance plans which includes:
- Bharti AXA Group Health Assure Policy
- Group Hospital Cash Policy

### SAARC development fund allocates \$5mn for projects

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Development Fund (SDF) has allocated \$5 million for related projects in its member states. This project will be funded by the SDF under its Social Window thematic areas. SDF's social window primarily funds projects on poverty alleviation, social development focusing on education, health, and human resource development, among others.
- SAARC 8 members states include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- Headquarters of SAARC: Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Secretary-General of SAARC: Esala Ruwan Weerakoon.
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SDF: Sunil Motiwal.

### SCTIMST design super absorbent material for safe management of infected respiratory secretions

- The scientists of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) have designed and developed an highly efficient superabsorbent material titled "Chitra Acrylosorb Secretion Solidification System".
- Chitra Acrylosorb Secretion Solidification System is an highly efficient superabsorbent material for liquid respiratory and other body fluid solidification and disinfection for the safe management of infected respiratory secretions.

- Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) is an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt of India.

### Govt extends 7th Economic Census data collection period by six months till Sept 30, 2020

- The government has extended the data collection period for the Seventh Economic Census by six months till 30th September 2020.
- Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation made this announcement. The ministry had put on hold various economic surveys including those to measure unemployment and domestic tourism besides a multiple indicator survey, till March 31 in the wake of the .

### DST funded company develops 'membrane oxygenator equipment' to treat patients

- Genrich Membranes has developed a 'Membrane Oxygenator Equipment' for the treatment of patients. The device has been developed to treat breathlessness which is one of the critical symptoms of .

### GoI sanctions Rs. 15000 crores package to boost health infrastructure

- Government of India (GoI) has announced to allocate Rs. 15000 crores for 'India Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package'.
- The funds sanctioned will be utilized for immediate Emergency Response (amount of Rs.7774 crores) and rest for medium-term support (1-4 years) to be provided under mission mode approach.

### HRD Minister launches Bharat Padhe Online campaign

- The Ministry of Human Resources Development on April 10, 2020 launched a week-long Bharat Padhe Online campaign to crowdsource ideas for improving the online education ecosystem of India. The HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched the campaign.
- The campaign aims to invite the best suggestions and solutions to overcome the constraints of online education while promoting the available digital education platforms.
- The HRD Minister requested the educators across the country to come forward and contribute with their expertise in the field of education.

### Punjab extends till 1st May

- Punjab Government on April 10, 2020 extended the in the state until May 1, 2020. Punjab became the second Indian state to extend the imposed by PM Narendra Modi after Odisha.
- Earlier, the extension of was hinted by Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

### GoI extends validity of expired Driving Licences and Vehicle Registration till 30 June

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has announced an extension on the

validity of documents like driving licenses, permits and registration that are expired since 1 February.

- The Ministry has directed all states and Union Territories (UT) to treat the documents as valid till 30 June.

### Karnataka government launches ' Watch' app

- The state government of Karnataka has launched a mobile application ' Watch'. The mobile application aims to track the movement history of persons tested positive, before their detection in order to take precautions and to contain the .
- The app will also provide the date and time of visit to spots by the patients. ' Watch' app also comprises a list of government designated first response hospitals for where citizen with symptoms can visit.

### GoI launches "AarogyaSetu" app to track

- "AarogyaSetu" is the official tracking app that has been launched by the Government of India. The "AarogyaSetu" app has been developed by the National e-Governance Division of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in association with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The mobile application aims to inform the users of the app regarding the risks, best practices along with the relevant advisories related to the containment of .

### DST sets up rapid response centre CAWACH to combat

- The Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, has approved setting up of a Centre for Augmenting WAR with Health Crisis (CAWACH), to support startups that address challenges.
- CAWACH will be set up at a total cost of Rs 56 Crore.
- 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

- The CAWACH programme of DST will scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that are in the area of novel, low cost, safe and effective ventilators, respiratory aids, protective gears, novel solutions for sanitizers, disinfectants, diagnostics, therapeutics, informatics and any effective interventions to control .

### UP Becomes First State to get ICMR nod for 'Pool Testing' of Samples

- Uttar Pradesh has become the first Indian state to receive the approval of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for conducting "pool testing" of samples of suspects in order to increase the rate of sample testing in the state.
- This decision assumes significance in the wake of the rising cases in state.Pool Testing will fasten the screening process and also bring down cost of testing.
- Under Pool Testing, if 10 samples of test negative, then it's an indicator that each one the samples test negative. On the opposite hand, if the samples tested aren't negative, individual testing is going to be done. Under pool testing, the samples are going to be

mixed and tested. Pool testing increases the testing capacity of a state. The tactic will accelerate the testing process.

### **Dekho Apna Desh: Tourism Ministry launches webinar series; next on City of Kolkata**

- A webinar series titled “#DekhoApnaDesh” has been launched by the Indian Tourism Ministry. This unique series has been launched by the tourism ministry to provide information on many destinations and culture & heritage of Incredible India.
- The first such seminar of the #DekhoApnaDesh webinar series was held with the title “City of Cities: Delhi’s Personal Diary”.

### **extended till May 3, PM Modi hints at graded easing after April 20**

- PM Narendra Modi on April 14, 2020 announced the extension of nationwide till May 3, 2020 to control the spread of . Earlier, the was scheduled to end on April 14 itself.
- While addressing the nation, the Prime Minister announced a few relaxations for daily wage workers who are the worst affected due to this much needed .

### **Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog & National Informatics Centre (NIC) jointly launches CollabCAD**

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and National Informatics Centre (NIC) have come together to jointly launch an innovative platform called CollabCAD for ATL schools to enable students create 3D Computer Aided Designs. It will enable students to utilize indigenous, state-of-the-art made-in-India software for 3D modeling/slicing to use 3D printing.
- CollabCAD is a collaborative network, computer enabled software system to provide a total engineering solution ranging from 2D drafting and detailing to 3D product design.
- The initiative will provide a great platform for students of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across the country to create and modify 3d designs with free flow of creativity and imagination.

### **DRDO develops kiosk “COVSACK” for sample collection**

- The “COVSACK” is a kiosk developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the sample collections. This newly made kiosk can make the process of collecting samples free of infection spread and will help in combatting the ( ).
- The Kiosk is automatically disinfected, once the patient leaves, without the need for human involvement, making the process free of infection spread.

### **E-Gram Swaraj Portal/App & Swamitva Scheme Launched**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 24, 2020 to mark the National Panchayati Raj Day 2020 launched the E-Gram Swaraj Portal/App and Swamitva Scheme for the development of rural areas of the country.
- The E-Gram Swaraj Portal will contain the details of all development works carries out in villaged panchayats and the Swamitva Scheme will contain all the land records of

villages. It will use drones in surveying and mapping of properties in villages and will help in reducing disputes over property.

### CISF launches app 'e-karyalay' for movement of files

- Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has launched an e-office application named 'e-karyalay'. This application helps to enable the movement of files and documents of CISF without physical touch.
- This has been done to prevent infection due to frequent touching of files by many persons.

### MyBookMyFriend campaign launched on World Book Day

- The Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has launched a campaign on Twitter called #MyBookMyFriend, on the occasion of the World Book Day on 23 April.
- He has also urged everyone to read at least one book on the World Book Day and share the same on social media using the '#MyBookMyFriend'.

### Union Cabinet approves Rs. 15,000 Crore for 'India Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package'

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved an investment of Rs. 15,000 crore for 'India Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package' to be utilized in mission mode.
- For immediate Emergency Response, an amount of Rs. 7,774 Crore has been provisioned.
- Rest of the amount will be used for medium-term support (1-4 years) to be provided under mission mode approach.

### Defence Minister launched DRDO mobile testing lab

- Mobile virology research and diagnostics laboratory (MVRDL) can be positioned anywhere in the country and will be able to process over 1000 samples in a day that can speed the diagnosis of the virus.
- Mobile BSL-3 VRDL Lab is India's 1st sample collection mobile Lab. The 1st sample collection mobile Lab is jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization and ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Hyderabad.
- This mobile lab has the capability of processing more than 1,000 samples in a day and hence, can enhance India's capabilities in fighting .

### IITM-K develops AI search engine 'Vilokana' for studies

- The Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management – Kerala (IITM-K) has developed a search engine based on artificial intelligence (AI) named 'Vilokana' to enable researchers in getting deeper insights into scientific studies on the virus.
- The search engine accessed through the website [www.vilokana.in](http://www.vilokana.in).
- Vilokana in Sanskrit means 'finding out'.

## National Shipping Board reconstituted by Government

- The National Shipping Board (NSB) has been reconstituted by the Central government and Malini Shankar has been appointed as the head of the board. Malini is the former Director General of Shipping.
- The National Shipping Board is the premier advisory body for the Indian shipping. The board comprises sixteen members.

## SC rules adoption of 'one nation, one ration card' scheme

- Supreme Court recently directed the central government to adopt the 'one nation, one ration card' scheme. The scheme will benefit the stranded migrant workers who cannot get basic amenities and also help EWS section to get subsidised food.
- The scheme was expected to be launched in June 2020.

## UIDAI permits Aadhaar updation facility through CSC

- The Unique Identification Authority of India has decided to make Aadhaar updation facility available through Common Service Centre (CSCs). The decision has been taken to make the Aadhaar updation process easier for citizens.
- The Common Service Centre are designated banking correspondents of banks. Over 20,000 CSCs will now be able to offer this service to the citizens.
- The CSC Village Level Entrepreneurs have also been urged to start the Aadhaar work with responsibility, as per instructions issued by UIDAI in this regard.

## Airtel partners with Nokia to enhance network capacity

- Nokia and BhartiAirtel has signed a deal of about \$1 billion in order to enhance the network capacity of BhartiAirtel.
- A multi-year agreement has been signed by the two companies to deploy Nokia's SRAN solution across nine circles in India.
- This \$1 billion deal aims to improve customer experience of BhartiAirtel's customers by providing them best-in-class connectivity.

## Maruti Suzuki partners with AgVA Healthcare to make 10,000 ventilators per month

- Automobile giant Maruti Suzuki has developed low-cost ventilators for helping the government. The production is going on in Gautam Buddha Nagar of Uttar Pradesh, where the company is supporting a start-up Agva Healthcare to scale-up ventilator production.

## Madhya Pradesh govt launches Jivan Shakti Yojana for women

- Madhya Pradesh government has launched the "Jivan Shakti Yojana" for women and aims at providing home-based employment for women.
- Under this scheme, women entrepreneurs of urban areas in MP can start the construction of masks by registering themselves on a portal.

## JioMart becomes live of WhatsApp

- Following the Facebook-Jio deal, Reliance Industries has now launched its e-commerce

platform Jiomart on WhatsApp for retail of grocery items. The JioMart WhatsApp number is 8850008000.

- In order to place order through JioMart, customers need to add this number on their phones. As of now, the JioMart services will be available only in suburban areas of Mumbai
- JioMart, introduced in January 2020, is an Online-to-Offline (O2O) e-Commerce platform of Reliance that deals retail of groceries through local Kirana stores. JioMart is a joint venture between Reliance Retail and Reliance Jio Platforms.

### UP becomes 1st state with in-house facility of virtual courts

- Uttar Pradesh has become the 1st state with a software-based in-house facility of virtual courts, where requisite infrastructure in Allahabad High Court and all its courts for hearing cases through video conferencing.
- Based on an Apex Court directive to develop video conferencing system for hearing cases while maintaining the social distance, Allahabad High Court has launched a new software, through which multiple court proceedings at High Court and district courts across the state can be conducted virtually within the court premises without the need of internet service.

### Kerala govt hospital launches 'KARMI-Bot' to serve patients

- A government hospital in Ernakulam, Kerala has deployed a robot to serve food and medicines to patients. The robot has been named 'KARMI-Bot'.
- The robot has been donated to the hospital by Viswasanthi Foundation that is owned by Malayalam star Mohanlal.

## SPORTS

### India lost hosting rights of Men's World Boxing Championship 2021

- Following the failure of the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) to pay host fee to the International Boxing Association (AIBA), India lost its rights to host the 2021 Men's World Boxing Championship.
- The tournament will now be hosted by Serbia.

### FIFA launches #WeWillWin campaign to pay tribute to health workers

- Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has launched a campaign called "#WeWillWin". Through this campaign FIFA tribute a special video to health workers and other professionals who ensure the society continues to function.
- Former India football captain Bhaichung Bhutia who is also featured among 50 past and present football stars.

### Iran's Alireza Firouzja beats Magnus Carlsen in Banter Blitz Cup final

- 16-year-old Iranian refugee, Alireza Firouzja beats World Chess Champion Magnus Carlsen in the final of the Banter Blitz Cup 2020 and to claim the \$14,000 prize.
- Firouzja, an Iranian now living in Paris, is the second-youngest player to reach a rating of 2700 from Fédération Internationale des Échecs (FIDE), the body that governs

international chess competition. He is ranked 21st in the world.

### **National Youth Outdoor Championships 2020 canceled due to**

- The 2020 USATF National Youth Outdoor Championships, which was scheduled to be held from June 23-28, 202, has now been canceled due to the .

### **Hockey India postpones all rescheduled national championships indefinitely**

- Hockey India has postponed all its re-scheduled national championships for an indefinite period.
- The rescheduled tournaments were scheduled to begin on April 29, 2020 and continue till July 3, 2020. The new dates will be announced on the basis of the situation in the country.

### **India will host Asian Boxing Championship in November**

- India will host the 31st edition of the Asian Boxing Championships in November-December 2020.
- This announcement was made by the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) President Ajay Singh on 13 April.
- The host city will be decided by the Boxing Federation of India. India hosted men's Asia boxing championship in Mumbai in 1980. It hosted the women's event in Hisar in 2003.

### **Tour de France postponed**

- Tour de France, world's most famous cycling race has been postponed in the wake of .
- The three-week race was scheduled to begin from June 27 in Nice, France. The race has now been postponed for August. The 2020 race comprises 21 stages, the longest one being for 218 km.

### **BCCI suspends IPL 2020 indefinitely due to**

- The Indian Premier League (IPL) governing council of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided that the IPL 2020 Season will be suspended till "further notice". This decision is taken in the wake of the .
- The IPL was set to start on March 29 and end on May 24, but it was first postponed till April 15 after a surge of positive cases in India.

### **Mascot for Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games unveiled**

- "Feifei" to be the mascot for Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games, China. The 4th Asian Para Games are going to be held from October 9-15, 2022, featuring 22 sports with Taekwondo and Para-Canoe to form their Games debuts. The mascot helps to bring the Games to life for everybody, from the athletes to the spectators.
- Theme 2020- Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility.

## World Games 2021 Postponed to avoid Clash with Tokyo Olympics

- The International World Games Association (IWGA) - the organizer of the World Games 2021 have decided to postpone the mega sporting event by nearly an year to avoid a clash with Tokyo Olympic Games.
- The 11th Edition of the World Games which had originally been planned to take place from 15–25 July 2021 have now be pushed by an year, and will be held from 7th to 17th July 2022.  
The 11th Edition of the World Games 2021 will be hosted by Birmingham, United States.

## Kobe Bryant inducted into NBA's Hall of Fame (Basketball)

- Late basketball player, Kobe Bryant, has been inducted into the NBA's Hall of Fame 2020. He was an American Basketball Player.
- Kobe Bryant, 41 was killed in a helicopter crash in January 2020 in which total of 9 people died.
- A total of 9 people have been inducted into the 2020 NBA's Hall of Fame. The other eight are: MVP Tim Duncan, Kevin Garnett, Eddie Sutton, Rudy Tomjanovich, Tamika Catchings, Kim Mulkey, Barbara Stevens and Patrick Baumann.

## FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup postponed due to

- FIFA, the world's governing body for football announced that it took the decision to postpone the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup tournament due to the .
- The has virtually stopped all sporting activities in the world with mega tournaments like Euro 2020 and Copa America being pushed back, besides the Tokyo Olympics also meeting the same fate.
- President of FIFA: Gianni Infantino; Founded: 21 May 1904.
- Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland.

## Charles Leclerc wins Chinese Virtual Grand Prix

- Charles Leclerc of Ferrari has won the Chinese Virtual Grand Prix. The series will use the official F1 2019 PC video game, developed by Codemasters.
- Due to the ongoing , the actual F1 races are not being held. In its place, Formula 1 has announced new F1 Esports Virtual Grand Prix series. The virtual races will run in place of every postponed Grand Prix.

## Englands Ben Stokes named 2020 Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World

- England's all-rounder Ben Stokes has been named as the leading cricketer in the world by Wisden for the year 2019. He is the first player from England since 2005 to be named for this award.
- In Women's category, Australia's Ellyse Perry has been named the Wisden's Leading Female Cricketer in the World.

## 2021 World Athletics Championships Being Moved to 2022

- The World Athletics has informed that the 2021 world athletics championships in Eugene, Oregon, United States, is now being shifted to 2022 to accommodate the re-

- arranged Tokyo Olympics.
- The 2020 Tokyo Games has been postponed because of the and will now take place on July 23-August 8, 2021.
- The world athletics championships was earlier scheduled to take place in Eugene on August 6-15, 2021. It will now take place in August 2022.

### Wimbledon Championship canceled due to

- The Wimbledon Tennis Championship 2020 has been cancelled due to the novel ( ). The announcement regarding the cancellation of championship was made by the All England lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC). The tennis tournament was scheduled to begin from June 29, 2020 in the United Kingdom.
- It marks the first time that the Wimbledon tournament had been called off since World War II.
- Wimbledon is one of the four Grand Slam tennis tournaments, the others being the Australian Open, the French Open and the US Open. Wimbledon is the only major still played on grass-court.

### Asian Games 2022 "smart triplets" mascots unveiled in digital ceremony

- The Olympic Council of Asia has announced the official mascots of the 19th Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou in 2022. The three robots namely Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen which are collectively known as "The Smart Triplets" will be the official mascots of the 19th Asian Games.
- The mascot was unveiled by Olympic Council of Asia at a digital launch ceremony in Hangzhou, China. The ceremony was held digitally due to the that has brought the whole world to a stand still.
- The robot 'Congcong' represents the Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu City. It derives its name from the Cong jade pendant — the quintessential relic unearthed from the ruins dating back 5,000 years. 'Lianlian' represents the West Lake and the name signifies a lake full of lush lotus leaves. Green stands for life and nature. The third mascot is 'Chenchen', which represents the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### JNCASR scientists develops "Berberine" based Alzheimer inhibitor

- Scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre For Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) has developed "Berberine" based Alzheimer inhibitor.
- To make a natural product based Alzheimer's inhibitor, scientists from JNCASR selected isoquinoline natural product Berberine which is found in India and China.
- The research work of scientists from JNCASR has been published in the scientific journal iScience.

### NASA to launch 1st crewed US mission to International Space Station

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will on May 27, 2020 launch its astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley for the first crewed mission to International Space Station (ISS) since the retirement of Space Shuttle Program in

2011.

### **Jharkhand hospitals employ 'COBOT-Robotics' to serve patients**

- In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, two hospitals in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district has installed Robots to serve food and give medicine to patients, in a bid to protect doctors and health workers from getting infected with .
- The remote-controlled robot dubbed as 'COBOT-Robotics' has been developed by District Deputy Development Commissioner (DDC) Aditya Ranjan and his team of engineers.
- The 20-bed 'high-tech isolation wards' has been inaugurated at the ANM Skill Centre, Chaibasa Sadar Hospital.

### **NASA's Hubble Space Telescope Completes 30 Years in Orbit**

- The Hubble Space Telescope, built by the United States space agency NASA with contributions from the European Space Agency (ESA), has completed 30th year in orbit on 25 April 2020.
- The Hubble Space Telescope was deployed on 25 April 1990.
- This space telescope was named after American astronomer Edwin P Hubble, who confirmed that our universe was constantly expanding.

### **NASA discovers habitable zone planet 300 light years away**

- NASA's Kepler Space Telescope has discovered an Earth-sized planet in a habitable zone around a star that could support liquid water. The exoplanet, named as Kepler-1649c, was discovered by a team of transatlantic scientists.
- The findings are based on the data provided by Kepler as well as Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS).

### **Ladakh to establish first-ever Testing Laboratory**

- Ladakh administration has begun the process of establishing the first-ever Testing Laboratory.
- The health department is currently sending blood samples of the suspected patients to the National Centre for Disease Control in Delhi.
- The testing lab is expected to start functioning from May.

### **Super Pink Moon visible on April 7**

- Super Pink Moon, the biggest supermoon of the year 2020 will be visible in the skies on April 7, 2020. The moon will be at its closest distance from Earth, which is 356,907 km away.
- The Earth, Moon and the Sun will all align, making the Moon look larger and brighter than usual. This particular moon was named 'Super Pink Moon'.

### **NASA to land human on moon by 2024**

- US space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) recently announced to land human on moon by the year 2024 under its ambitious 'Artemis

Program’.

- The NASA has been constantly working on this program to build a Artemis Base Camp.

### **Everest sized Asteroid 1998 OR2 to fly-by Earth Today**

- According to the details shared by NASA's Center for Near-Earth Object Studies, an Everest sized Asteroid 1998 OR2 will fly-by Earth today i.e. on 29th April 2020.
- NASA and other researchers have ruled out any potential threat to the planet due to the asteroid.

## **OBITUARY**

### **Former Australian all-rounder Graeme Watson passes away**

- Former Australian cricketer Graeme Watson passed away. He was a middle-order batsman and a medium-pace bowler. He featured in five Tests from 1966-67 to 1972 and two ODIs in 1972.
- The all-rounder earned a national call up during the 1966-67 tour of South Africa.

### **Padma Shri award winning Actor Irrfan Khan passes away**

- One of the finest actors of Bollywood, Irrfan Khan passed away at the Kokilaben Dhiru bhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai on 29 April 2020. He was 54.
- The actor was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer in 2018, for which he was undergoing treatment.
- During his over 30 years film career, Irrfan had worked across Indian, Hollywood and British films. He was last seen in comedy drama Angrezi Medium that hit screens before the nationwide in mid-March.
- In 2011, Khan was awarded the Padma Shri, India’s fourth highest civilian honour for his contribution to the field of arts.

### **Veteran Bollywood actor Rishi Kapoor passes away**

- Veteran Bollywood Actor Rishi Kapoor Passes Away: As per media reports, Veteran Bollywood Actor Rishi Kapoor passed away today morning at the age of 67.
- Rishi Kapoor was been known in the Indian Cinema for giving blockbuster hits such as Bobby, RafooChakkar , Karz, PremRog, Chandni, Heena and BolRadha Bol.

### **BMW India CEO & President Rudratej Singh passes away**

- BMW Group President and CEO Rudratej Singh has passed away. Rudratej was the first Indian to lead the BMW India operations. He was appointed as the head of India operations from August 1, 2019.
- He had also held multiple leadership positions in the automotive as well as non-automotive industry.

### **Father of modern Iraqi architecture dies of**

- Father of modern Iraqi architecture Rifat Chadirji passed away due to . He was credited to design some of Iraq’s most valuable structures and iconic “Freedom

Monument” in the now protest hub of Baghdad’s Tahrir Square.

- He was studied in London and returned to Iraq in the 1950s to design his magnum opus, elegant arch entitled “The Unknown Soldier” as well as the capital’s post office and other public buildings.

### Former Liverpool player Michael Robinson passes away

- Former Liverpool striker, Michael Robinson passed away. He was born on July 12, 1958, in Leicester, England. He has featured in more than 300 official matches in England for five clubs, including Liverpool.
- Robinson was part of the Liverpool squad that captured the league, League Cup and European Cup treble in 1984.

### Actor Ranjit Chowdhry passes away

- Actor-writer Ranjit Chowdhry passed away at the age of 65 years on April 15, 2020 in Mumbai. He was the son of veteran theatre artiste Pearl Padamsee and stepson of Theatre and ad world stalwart Alyque Padamsee.
- Chowdhry will be remembered for his roles in Hrishikesh Mukherjee's 'Khubsoorat', Mira Nair's 'Mississippi Masala' starring Denzel Washington, Basu Chatterjee's 'Khatta Meetha' and 'Baton Baton Mein'.

### Former US Baseball Player Glenn Beckert Dies at 79

- America’s former professional baseball player Glenn Alfred Beckert, has passed away at the age of 79.
- He played in Major League Baseball as a second baseman for the Chicago Cubs for nine seasons from 1965 to 1973 before ending his career with the San Diego Padres in 1975.

### Legendary driver Stirling Moss passes away

- The legendary motor-racing driver, Sir Stirling Moss has passed away. Moss was widely regarded as the greatest driver never to win the Formula One drivers’ world championship.
- The British driver took part in Formula One from 1951 to 1961 and also made 67 starts in the F1 World Championship, claiming victory winning 16 races and claiming 16 pole positions and 24 podium positions.

### National Football League’s Hall of Famer Willie Davis Passes Away at 85

- Former American football defensive player, Willie Davis, passed away. He was 85.
- Davis was inducted into the National Football League’s Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1981. He spent 12 seasons in the National Football League (NFL) and played for the Cleveland Browns (1958-59) and the Green Bay Packers (1960-69).
- Davis become the first African-American captain in Green Bay Packers’ history in 1965.

### Oscar-winning Animator and Film director Gene Deitch passes away at 95

- Oscar-winning animator, film director and producer, Gene Deitch passed away. His movie “Munro” won the Oscar award in the animated short film category in 1960.

- He directed some episodes of “Tom and Jerry” and also some episodes of “Popeye the Sailor” series. He received the Winsor McCay Award for his lifelong contribution to animation in 2004.

### **Freedom Fighter RV Bhuskute passes away at 94**

- Freedom fighter R V Bhuskute, who had participated in the Quit India Movement, has passed away of prolonged illness. He was 94
- Hailing from Maharashtra’s Raigadh district, Bhuskute has also written several books on land laws.

### **Former Honduras President Rafael Callejas, Disgraced by FIFAgate Scandal, Passes Away at 76**

- The former President of Honduras, Rafael Callejas, has passed away of heart attack. He was 76.
- Callejas served the country from 27 January 1990 to 27 January 1994, representing the National Party of Honduras (PNH).
- He was the head of country’s football federation from 2002 to 2015 and was also accused of the vast football corruption scandal known as FIFAgate.

### **Former Libya Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril Passes Away Due to at 68**

- Former Prime Minister of Libya, Mahmoud Jibril passed away in Egypt after contracting the . He was 68.
- Jibril served as the interim Prime Minister of Libya for seven and a half months during the Libyan Civil War, from 5 March to 23 October 2011.

### **Usha Ganguly, veteran theatre actor passes away**

- Eminent theatre director, actor and activist, Usha Ganguly passed away. She was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for direction in 1998.
- She has also been honoured by the West Bengal Government as the best actress for the play Gudia Ghar.
- She was credited for introducing an alternative Hindi theatre in West Bengal, in the 1970s and 1980s.

### **Veteran anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg passes away**

- Veteran South African anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg passed away. He was the ally of late South African President Nelson Mandela. He played a key role in South African liberation struggle.
- He was the only white member of the African National Congress’s military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).

### **Kannada comic actor 'Bullet' Prakash passes away**

- Kannada actor “Bullet” Prakash passed away. He was known for his comic roles and performances in films like Aithalakkadi and Aryan.
- He was named ‘Bullet’ because of his love for Royal Enfield Bullet motorbikes which he

used to ride.

- He had been a part of more than 300 films and had recently signed a couple of projects in Kannada.
- He was also a member of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2015.

### Senior Politician Hazarilal Raghuwanshi passes away

- Senior politician Hazarilal Raghuwanshi passed away at the age of 93 years following a prolonged illness.
- He was a former Madhya Pradesh minister and a senior Congress leader.

### Padma Shri classical singer Shanti Hiranand passes away at 87

- Renowned Hindustani classical singer Shanti Hiranand Chawla passed away at the age of 87 years.
- She was a Padma Shri awardee and trained in thumri, dadra and ghazal singing.
- She had also penned a book titled "Begum Akhtar: The Story of My Ammi." which depicts her journey with her music guru, Begum Akhtar.

### Legendary historian Arjun Dev passes away

- The legendary historian and educationist, Professor Arjun Dev passed away. He was born on November 12, 1938, in Leiah, West Punjab (now in Pakistan).
- He served as a historian at the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT).

### Gurbani maestro Nirmal Singh Khalsa passes away

- Nirmal Singh Khalsa, a noted singer of Sikh 'Gurbani' hymns, passed away on April 2, 2020 due to COVID-19. He was detected with the infection just a day before his death. He was 62.
- Nirmal Singh Khalsa was a former priest at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. He was known to have the knowledge of the 31 'raags' in the Gurbani of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- He was honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri in 2009 for his outstanding contribution to the field of Gurbani music.

### Prominent virologist Gita Ramjee dies from COVID-19

- World renowned virologist Gita Ramjee passed away after contracting the novel coronavirus. The South African "Vaccine" scientist and an HIV prevention research leader was working as the chief scientific officer at the Aurum Institute.
- In 2018, the European Development Clinical Trials Partnerships (EDCTP) awarded Gita Ramjee with the Outstanding Female Scientist Award in Lisbon for her lifetime commitment towards finding new HIV prevention methods.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### Sanjay Kothari Sworn in as Central Vigilance Commissioner

- Sanjay Kothari has been appointed as the new Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC), the anti-corruption watchdog of India, on 25 April 2020.

- Mr Kothari, a 1978 batch (retired) IAS officer of Haryana cadre, was the Secretary to the President of India, before being nominated to the new role.
- The post of the chief of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) was lying vacant since June 2019 after completion of K V Chowdary's tenure.

### **Shiv Das Meena becomes new CMD of HUDCO**

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, additional secretary, Shiv Das Meena has been appointed as chairman and managing director of Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) for a period of six months with immediate effect.

### **Former finance secretary Rajiv Kumar becomes new chief of PESB**

- The former finance secretary Rajiv Kumar was appointed as the Chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board(PESB) for a period of 3 years.
- He is a 1984-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre. He will replace KapilDevTripathi who took over as the Secretary to the President Ram NathKovind.

### **Eminent Banker Suresh N. Patel Takes Oath as Vigilance Commissioner of India**

- Suresh N Patel took oath as the Vigilance Commissioner in the anti-corruption watchdog CVC. He took the oath of office by Central Vigilance Commissioner Sanjay Kothari through video conference.
- He will have a tenure of over two years, till late December 2022, in the CVC. Sharad Kumar is working as the other vigilance commissioner. The tenure of a vigilance commissioner is of four years or till the incumbent attains the age of 65 years.

### **Kapil Dev Tripathi appointed Secretary to the President of India**

- Kapil Dev Tripathi has been appointed as the Secretary to the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. He will replace Sanjay Kothari, who was selected as the Chief Vigilance Commissioner in February.
- The appointment of Kapil Dev Tripathi has been approved by Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

### **N Kamakodi to be reappointed as the MD & CEO of City Union Bank**

- N Kamakodi will be reappointed as the MD&CEO of City Union Bank. He has been reappointed for a period of three years with effect from May 1, 2020.
- City Union Bank has received approval for this reappointment from the Reserve Bank of India.

### **David Li becomes new CEO of Huawei India**

- David Li has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Huawei Telecommunications India. He has replaced Jay Chen who has been promoted to handle Asia Pacific level business role.

### **Bajaj Auto's Rakesh Sharma becomes new President of IMMA**

- Rakesh Sharma, the Executive Director (ED) at Bajaj Auto, has been appointed as the

new President of International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA) on 22 April 2020.

- Sharma succeeds Johannes Loman and will hold the office of IMMA President for two years
- He had been holding office as vice-president in IMMA, since May 2019.

### **Mahabaleshwara M S Reappointed as MD & CEO of Karnataka Bank**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the reappointment of Mahabaleshwara M S as MD and CEO of private sector lender Karnataka Bank for a period of three years.
- The regulator has also approved for reappointment of P Jayarama Bhat as Part Time (Non Executive) Chairman of the bank.

### **Birupaksha Mishra becomes new Executive Director of Union Bank of India**

- Birupaksha Mishra becomes new Executive Director of Union Bank of India, after its amalgamation with Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank. Prior to this, Birupaksha Mishra was Executive Director at Corporation Bank.
- He started his banking career as a Probationary Officer in the year 1984. He has worked in various parts of the country and has handled Credit and Credit Monitoring Portfolio of the Bank and headed IT vertical of the Bank.

### **Vineet Arora becomes new MD & CEO of Paytm General Insurance Ltd**

- Paytm has appointed Vineet Arora as new managing director and chief executive officer of Paytm General Insurance Ltd. Prior to this, he has served as managing director and chief executive officer of Aegon Life Insurance Company.
- The appointment is a step for Paytm to further its journey into the insurance sector with an instantaneous specialise in general insurance.

### **Ajay Mahajan becomes news MD & CEO of "CARE Ratings"**

- Ajay Mahajan has been appointed as the managing director and chief executive of Care Ratings.
- Ajay Mahanjan earlier worked at IDFC First Bank.He replaces Rajesh Mokashi, who resigned in December 2019.

### **BSNL CMD P K Purwar takes additional charge of MTNL**

- P. K. Purwar, the chairman and managing director of BSNL has been given the additional charge as CMD of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited.
- He has been given the additional charge w.e.f April 13, 2020. In the last 6 years, this is the third time that Purwar has been given charge of MTNL CMD.

### **Nasscom appoints Infosys' COO Pravin Rao as chairman**

- Vice-Chairperson 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 the year 2020-21. He was appointed Rekha Menon of Accenture.

- Rekha M Menon is the Chairman and Senior Managing Director, Accenture in India. Menon will be the Vice-Chairperson for Nasscom. Pravin Rao, along with President Debjani Ghosh, will help Nasscom to achieve its 2025 vision for the industry.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Intellectual Property Day

- The World Intellectual Property Day is observed annually on 26 April 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
- The event was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000.
- The World Intellectual Property Day 2020 is 'Innovate for a Green Future.'

### World Day For Safety And Health At Work

- Every year the International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrates the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally, and raise awareness to ensure health and safety at workplace.
- The theme for 2020 is Stop the : Safety and health at work can save lives.

### Workers' Memorial Day

- The Workers' Memorial Day, also known as International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers occurs every year on 28 April.
- The day has been organized worldwide by the trade union movement since 1996. Theme 2020: 'Stop the in the Workplace.'

### International Jazz Day

- The International Jazz Day is celebrated on 30 April every year to highlight the importance of jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.
- This Day was declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 2011.
- The day was introduced by jazz pianist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock.

### International Dance Day

- The International Dance Day is organised globally on 29 April to celebrate the value and importance of the art form dance.
- The day was created in 1982, by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.

### UN Chinese Language Day

- UN Chinese Language Day is observed on April 20 annually. The UN Department of

Public Information established the day in 2010 to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization.

- The day has been chosen to pay tribute to Cangjie, who is a mythical figure who is presumed to have invented Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago.

### World Creativity and Innovation Day

- World Creativity and Innovation Day is observed globally on 21 April every year. This day is celebrated to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem-solving with respect to advancing the United Nations sustainable development goals, also known as the “global goals”.
- The main objective of the day is to encourage people to use new ideas, make new decisions, and do creative thinking. Creativity is what makes the world go ‘round.

### Earth Day

- On 22nd April 2020, World Earth Day will be celebrated across the globe via ‘digital means’ amid the on-going .
- PM Narendra Modi expressed his gratitude towards Mother Earth for the abundant gifts given by her. He also lauded the warriors who are leading humanity's fight against the in the challenging times.

### Manipur commemorates “Khongjom Day”

- Manipur commemorated the “Khongjom Day” on April 23, 2020. The day is observed to pay tribute to the state’s warriors who fought in the 1891 Anglo-Manipur war.
- The Anglo-Manipur war was fought between the Kingdom of Manipur and the British Government.

### World Malaria Day

- World Malaria Day (WMD) is commemorated every year on 25 April to recognize global efforts to control malaria. It is a grassroots campaign with an objective to keep malaria high on political agenda, mobilize additional resources and empower communities to take ownership of malaria prevention and care.
- Theme 2020: Zero Malaria Starts with Me.

### April 13, 2020 marked the 101st anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

- 13 April 2020 marked the 101st anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.
- On this day, the martyrs who were killed mercilessly in Jallianwala Bagh are remembered.

### First Edition of World Chagas Disease Day Observed on 14 April 2020

- The first-ever World Chagas Disease Day is being held on 14 April 2020 and henceforth, it will be held annually.
- The aim of the day is to raise the visibility and public awareness of people with Chagas

Disease (also called American trypanosomiasis) and the resources needed for the prevention, control or elimination of the disease.

- The WHO approved the designation of Chagas Disease Day on May 24, 2019 at the 72nd World Health Assembly.

### World Art Day: 15 April

- World Art Day is observed every year on 15 April to celebrate fine arts and promote awareness of creative activity around the world.
- The day was declared by the International Association of Art (IAA), an NGO working in official partnership with UNESCO.

### National Panchayati Raj Day

- Nation celebrates National Panchayati Raj Day on 24 April every year. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj organizes the National Panchayati Raj day or the National Local Self Government Day.
- The first National Panchayati Raj Day was declared by the then Prime Minister of India Shri Manmohan Singh, on 24 April 2010.

### International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

- The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace observed globally on 24 April. 'International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace' was first observed by the United Nations (UN) on April 24, 2019.

### World Hemophilia Day

- World Hemophilia Day is an international day held annually on April 17 to raise awareness for hemophilia and other bleeding disorders and bring understanding and attention for proper care for these rare inherited bleeding disorders community.
- The theme of World Hemophilia Day 2020 is "Get+involved".

### International Day For Monuments and Sites

- The International Day for Monuments and Sites (World Heritage Day) is observed on 18 April each year to promote awareness about the diversity of cultural heritage of humanity, their vulnerability and the efforts required for their protection and conservation.
- Theme 2020- Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility.
- The International Day for Monuments and Sites was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.

### International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

- The United Nations celebrates 6th of April every year as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.
- Sport has historically played an important role in all societies, be it in the form of competitive sport, physical activity or play.

- Sports also presents a natural partnership for the United Nations (UN) system.

### International Day of Conscience is observed on 5 April

- International Day of Conscience is observed on 5 April.
- The day aims to promote a culture of peace with love and conscience.
- The day reminds the people to self-reflect, follow their conscience, and do the right things.

### International Day of Human Space Flight 2020: History of Human in Space, Background and Other Details

- International Day of Human Space Flight 2020: The International Day of Human Space Flight 2020 was observed on April 12, 2020. The day is to celebrate the beginning of the space era for mankind, the contribution of space science and technology and to ensure the realization to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes.
- The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution on April 7, 2011, had declared April 12 to be celebrated as International Day of Human Space Flight.
- On April 12, 1961, the first human space flight was carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen, who became the first person to journey into outer space. The mission opened several pathways for space exploration, which benefited the next generations.

### World Health Day

- World Health Day is celebrated on 7 April each year since 1950, to draw worldwide attention to a specific theme of major importance to global health each year.
- The Theme of 2020 World Health Day is Support Nurses and Midwives.
- The World Health Day also marks the establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) on 7 April 1948

### World Homoeopathy Day

- World Homoeopathy Day observed globally on 10 April every year to mark the birth anniversary of the founder of Homoeopathy, Dr Samuel Hahnemann.
- Samuel Hahnemann was a physician born in Germany, who was a great researcher, linguist and applauded scientist.
- The theme of 2020 is "Linking research with education and clinical practice: Advancing scientific collaborations"

### World Book and Copyright Day

- World Book and Copyright Day is observed globally on 23 April every year. The purpose of this day to pay tribute to all those writers and authors who have respectable contributed to the social and cultural progress of humanity.
- World Book Capital for 2020: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The slogan for 2020- "KL Baca – caring through reading".

### UN English Language Day

- The UN English Language Day is observed annually on 23 April. It is one of the six official languages used by the United Nations throughout the Organization.
- Each language has been assigned a day of celebration by UN's Department of Public Information in 2010 to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization.
- For English, 23 April has been chosen to mark both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare.

### UN Spanish Language Day

- UN Spanish Language Day is observed annually on 23 April. For Spanish Language, the Day was chosen because the day is also observed as Hispanic Day in Spain, meaning the Spanish speaking world.

### International Transgender Day of Visibility

- International Transgender Day of Visibility observed globally on 31st March every year.
- The day is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, as well as a celebration of their contributions to society.

### Utkal Divas or Odisha Day is celebrated on 1 April

- Utkal Divas (Odisha Day) is celebrated every year on 1st April all over Odisha. Odisha Day is celebrated in the memory of the formation of the state as a separate province on 1 April 1936.
- This year marks the 83rd Utkal Divas or the foundation day of Odisha. Odisha was born as a separate state on April 1, 1936, on a linguistic basis.
- The state was carved out of the combined Bengal-Bihar-Orissa province.

### International Mine Awareness Day observed globally on 4 April

- International Mine Awareness Day observed globally on 4 April every year. On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. It was first observed on 4 April 2006.

## SUMMITS AND MOU'S

### Reliance increases its stake to 26.3% in US-based tech company SkyTran

- Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited(RSBVL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited(RIL), has increased its stake to 26.3% on a fully diluted basis in US-based SkyTran Incorporated(Inc), a venture-funded technology company which develops modern transport modes including personal rapid transit system.
- RIL has invested in SkyTran to play an active role in advancing solutions, especially in telecom, digital platforms and services, advanced materials, electric batteries and also to develop India's first pod taxi prototype, a next-generation transportation system.

### Facebook buys 9.99% stake in Reliance Jio platform

- Facebook has announced the investment of Rs. 43,474 crores in Reliance Jio for 9.99 per cent stake on April 22. It is the largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India's tech sector.
- The announcement of signing a binding agreement for an investment of Rs. 43,474 crore was made by Jio Platform Ltd, Reliance Industries Ltd. and Facebook.
- As per a statement by Reliance Industries Ltd., the investment by Facebook translates into a 9.99% of the equity stake in Jio on a fully diluted basis. The declared investment now values Jio Platforms at Rs. 4.62 lakh crore pre-money enterprise value.

### Arogya Sanjeevani Policy Cigna launched with IRDAI guidelines

- Manipal Cigna Health Insurance company has announced the launch of its Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, ManipalCigna. This standard health cover policy in line with IRDAI from one of the 29 insurers who have received the go-ahead to launch such policies in the industry.
- Every general insurance company has to launch a standard health plan and has to have an official name Arogya Sanjeevani Policy (name of insurer) for easy comparison by the buyers.

### L&T signs agreement with Indian Army for advanced IT-enabled network

- Larsen & Toubro(L&T) signs agreement with the Indian Army for setting up an advanced IT-enabled system to operate the Armed Forces network under the Network of Spectrum (NFS).

### Ministry of Tourism launches 'Stranded in India' portal

- The Ministry of Tourism has launched a portal 'Stranded in India' to help foreign tourists who are stuck in various parts of the country.
- Its web address is strandedinindia.com. The helpline number for foreign tourists stuck in India is +91-11-23978046 or 1075.

### UN Cop26 Climate Change Summit in Glasgow Postponed until 2021

- The 2020 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UN COP26), which was scheduled to be held in Glasgow, Scotland from 9 to 20 November 2020 under the presidency of the UK government, has been postponed due to the .
- The Cop26 Climate Change Summit has now be pushed back to 2021 and the new dates for the conference would be decided in due course.
- The announcement was made by the Cop26 president-designate and UK Business and Energy Secretary Alok Sharma.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Viswanathan Anand Joins WWF India As Ambassador For Environment Education

- Five-time world chess champion Viswanathan Anand has joined WWF (World Wide Fund) India as its ambassador for environment education programme.
- WWF India is celebrating its 50 years of conservation in India and it is delighted to see

Anand lend his support to conservation and protection of the environment.

- In the midst of the , governments, development organisations, corporates and individuals around the world are doing their bit to prevent the spread of the disease.

### **Naveen Patnaik awarded with 'Hero to Animals Award' by PETA India**

- Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik has been conferred with 'Hero to Animals Award' by animal rights body PETA India.
- He has been awarded by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) for allocating funds to feed community animals in Odisha during the over the novel .

## **RANKING**

### **India third-largest military spender after US, China in 2019: SIPRI report**

- India has become the third-largest military spender in the world after the United States and China, as per Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) report. India and China were for the first time among the top three military spenders.
- India's military spending grew by 6.8 percent to \$71.1 billion in 2019, as per the SIPRO report on "Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019". This was the highest expenditure on the military in South Asia.
- The total global military expenditure rose to \$1,917 billion in 2019, an increase of 3.6 percent from 2018, the largest annual growth since 2010. The five largest military spenders, including Russia and Saudi Arabia, accounted for 62 percent of the global military expenditure in 2019.

### **India ranks 142 in World Press Freedom Index 2020**

- World Press Freedom Index has ranked India 142 out of 180. Reporters without borders released the report on April 21. The analysis by the nonprofit organisation acknowledged no reported murders of journalists in India in 2019 which shows the improvement in the security system in India.
- Reporters without borders is a non-profit organisation that works to promote independent, free, and pluralistic journalism.

### **India ranks high on "Oxford Government Response Tracker".**

- The "Oxford Government Response Tracker" has identified India's response to as one of the most stringent in the world. This data are based on tracking 73 countries.
- This tracker is created by researchers from Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford. The tracker is designed to systematically record government responses worldwide and aggregate the scores into a common 'Stringency Index'.

### **Tamil Nadu Tops in micro-irrigation coverage under PMKSY in 2019-20**

- The Tamil Nadu state has finished on top at the all-India level for micro-irrigation coverage in the financial year 2019-20, as part of implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).
- Karnataka is at second place with 1,41,103.56 ha area under micro-irrigation while

Gujarat is at third spot with 1,08,322.00 ha under micro-irrigation.

- During 2019-20, the overall coverage of the state under micro-irrigation stood at 2,06,853.25 hectares (ha). The total area brought under micro irrigation at the all-India level in 2019-20 stands at 7,72,350.63 ha.
- PMKSY is a programme aimed at promoting the “more crop per drop” concept by focussing on water-saving technologies.

### Jeff Bezos tops Forbes billionaires list “The Richest in 2020”

- Forbes has launched the 34th annual world’s billionaires list named as “The Richest in 2020”. The list titled “The Richest in 2020” has been topped by the Amazon Founder and Chief Executive Officer Jeff Bezos.
- This was 3rd time in a row that he has topped the annual world’s billionaires list released by Forbes. He has topped the list with a net worth of \$113 billion.

### FIFA’s ranking: India at 108th

- India football team retained its 108th spot in the latest FIFA rankings. While Belgium ranked first and world champion France is in 2nd place and Brazil is at 3rd spot.
- In the wake of the ( ) the qualifier tournaments have been postponed for the FIFA World Cup and other major games at the international level.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

### ‘Shuttling to the Top: The Story of P.V. Sindhu’ Authored by V. Krishnaswamy Released

- The book titled “Shuttling to the Top: The Story of P.V. Sindhu”, written by sports journalist V. Krishnaswamy, was released on 13 April 2020.
- The book narrates the journey of badminton player PV Sindhu, from her early life to becoming a world champion, and what lies ahead.
- The book has been published by HarperCollins Publishers India.

## BANKING AND ECONOMY

### SIDBI to provide emergency working capital to MSMEs

- The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will facilitate Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with emergency working capital of up to Rs 1 crore against their confirmed government orders.
- The SIDBI’s new loan product i.e. SIDBI Assistance to Facilitate Emergency response against (SAFE) plus will be provided collateral free and disbursed within 48 hours at an interest rate of 5%.
- Under its flagship scheme called SIDBI Make in India Soft Loan Fund for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (Smile), SEBI has opened an additional financial window for the healthcare sector.

**Mega merger of 10 PSU Banks comes into effect**

- The mega merger of 10 PSU banks into 4 comes into effect from April 1, 2020. As per the merger, the Oriental Bank of Commerce and the United Bank of India have now been merged with the Punjab National Bank with the latter being the Head Bank.
- In another merger, Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank are merged into Union Bank of India. The branches of the merged banks will work as the branches of Head or Anchor bank.

**As per the consolidation scheme, the details of 10 state-run banks into 4 are mentioned below-**

- United Bank of India and Oriental Bank of Commerce will merge into Punjab National Bank
- Syndicate Bank will merge into Canara Bank
- Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank
- Corporation and Andhra Banks will be merged in Union Bank of India

**The objective behind the merger:**

The major objectives of the merger are:

- To help India make a USD 5 trillion economy
- Reducing the lending cost
- Enhancing the capacity in order to increase credit
- To bring next-generation technology for the banking sector
- Banks that have strong national and international reach
- To improve the ability to raise market resources.

**Government cuts Interest Rates on Small Saving Schemes**

- The Central Government recently slashed the interest rates on small saving schemes such as PPF for the April-June quarter of 2020-2021.
- The Small Saving Schemes include Public Provident Fund (PPF), Kisan Vikas Patra, Senior Citizen Saving schemes (SCSS) and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana.

**UN report states India, China will stay away from world recession**

- The United Nations Trade report titled “The Shock to Developing Countries: Towards a whatever it takes program” stated that the world economy will go into recession in 2020 with a predicted loss of trillions of dollars of global income due to the .
- It also predicted serious problems for developing countries with the likely exception of India and China.

**DGCA allows cargo operations using passenger category aircraft**

- The Director General of Civil Aviation on April 1, 2020 granted special permission to conduct cargo operations using passenger category aircraft in the wake of the crisis.
- The decision was taken to meet the increasing demand for cargo operations for transportation of essential goods and medical equipment during the period.

**IIT Kanpur to develop low-cost portable ventilator**

- Amidst the rising cases of in the country, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Kanpur is developing portable ventilators which will be significantly cheaper than the

ones available in the market.

- The prototype of this ventilator will be ready very soon and just after assembling, it can be used as a life support system.
- The ventilator is a very important medical equipment for Patients, especially those who are old and the virus can prove fatal to them.

### **Goldman Sachs cuts real GDP growth forecast for India in FY21 to 1.6%**

- Goldman Sachs has predicted India's Real GDP growth projection for FY21 at 1.6%.
- Goldman Sachs has predicted the Global GDP growth at -1.8% in 2020.

### **Customs Duty on surgical masks, test kits, PPE waived off**

- The Central Government has waived off the customs duty on import of ventilators, test kits, surgical masks and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).
- The customs duty has been extended till September 30, 2020 and will also be applicable for import of material used in the manufacturing of these items.

### **RBI launches twitter campaign for Digital Payment**

- The Reserve Bank of India on April 09, 2020 launched a twitter campaign urging bank customers to adopt digital modes of payment that are convenient and safe.
- The face of the campaign is Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan.
- The RBI, through the campaign, reiterated the multiple digital payment options such as NEFT, IMPS, UPI and BBPS that are available 24\*7.

### **Nomura lowers India's 2020 GDP growth forecast to -0.5%**

- Nomura has predicted India's GDP growth rate for the year 2020 at -0.5%. The earlier prediction was 4.5%.
- The announcement was made by Sonal Varma, MD and chief India economist at Nomura.

### **BhartPe & ICICI lombard tie up to launch insurance**

- BharatPe inks partnership with ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited to introduce 'Protection Insurance Cover'.
- This Insurance cover for shopkeepers, who are most affected financially due to ( )

### **Centre Extends Foreign Trade Policy for One Year till March 2021**

- The government has extended the existing foreign trade policy (2015-20) for one year till March 2021.
- The foreign trade policy 2015-20 was earlier valid up to March 31, 2020.
- The extension has been given amid and the to contain the virus spread.

### **S&P Further Slashes India's GDP Forecast to 3.5% from 5.2% for FY21**

- S&P Global Ratings has further slashed India's growth forecast to 3.5% from a previous downgrade to 5.2% for the fiscal year 2020-21.

- The latest downgrade is due to the slump in demand, because of the , which is leading to declining credit quality and rising defaults particularly among non financial corporates with weaker credit profiles.
- For the Financial year 2019-20, the rating agency has estimated growth forecast of 5%.
- However the S&P expects the Indian economy to bounce back to 5% in FY20, 3.5% in FY21 and 7.3% in FY22.

### PhonePe launches 'hospitalisation insurance policy' 'Care'

- PhonePe has launched a unique hospitalization insurance policy named " Care."
- PhonePe has partnered with Bajaj Allianz General Insurance for this " Care".
- " Care" plan is priced at Rs 156 with an insurance cover of Rs 50,000 for a person aged under 55 years.

### Fitch Ratings cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 2% for FY21

- Fitch Ratings has cut its GDP growth forecast for India to 2% for the fiscal year 2021.
- This will be the slowest growth in India over the past 30 years.

### ADB Estimates India's GDP for FY'21 at 4 Percent; 6.2% for FY'22

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) released its latest Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2020 for financial year 2020-21 on 3rd April 2020.
- As per ADB, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in India is likely to slow down to 4 percent in FY21 (2020-21) on the back of the current global health emergency.
- However, ADB expects the Indian economy to further strengthen to 6.2 percent in the FY22 fiscal (2021-22).

### India's GDP projected at 4.8% for 2020-21; to adversely impact Global Economy

- India's GDP is projected to grow at 4.8 percent in the financial year 2020-21, as per the 'Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) 2020: Towards sustainable economies' report of the United Nations. The prediction was made on the basis of data available up to March 10, 2020.
- India's GDP for 2019-20 was projected at 5 percent and the growth is projected to slowdown in 2020-21 to 4.8 percent. The report predicts the GDP growth at 5.1 percent for 2021-22.

### RBI increases the number of days for which a State/ UT can be in overdraft

- The Reserve Bank of India allows State Government to tide over their cashflow mismatches (consider it as a loan) in form of Special Drawing Facility (SDF) and Normal Ways and Means Advances.
- Now RBI has increased the number of days or which a State/ UT can be in overdraft continuously as under:
- The number of days for which States/UTs can be in overdraft continuously has been increased to 21 working days from the previous 14 days.
- The number of days for which a State/ UT can be in overdraft in a quarter has been

increased to 50 working days from the previous 36 days.

### **Madhabi Puri Buch gets 6-month extension as WTM at SEBI**

- The term of Madhabi Puri Buch as a Whole Time Member (WTM) at Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has been extended by 6 months.
- Madhabi Puri Buch is the first woman Whole Time Member (WTM) of SEBI and also the first from the private sector to be appointed as a board member in SEBI.

### **After SBI, Govt nominates IOB for collecting donations for PM Cares Fund**

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), has been nominated by the government for the collection of funds of PM-Cares Fund. Till now only State Bank of India was the nominated bank for the same.
- PM Cares stands for Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM-Cares Fund).
- The contributions can be made by ECS, RTGS, NEFT, IMPS, cheques and demand drafts drawn in favour of PM-Cares Fund.

### **RBI cuts reverse repo rate by 25 bps to 3.75%, announces Rs 50,000 crore TLTRO 2.0**

- On 17 April 2020, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das took several important decisions to ensure adequate liquidity in the system to ease the financial stress caused by the .
- RBI has decided to undertake targeted long-term repo operations (TLTRO-2.0) for total amount of Rs 50,000 crore to begin with in tranches of appropriate sizes. RBI might increase this amount in future as per requirement.
- The funds availed by banks under TLTRO-2.0 should be invested in grade bonds, Commercial Papers, Non-Convertible Debentures of NBFCs with at least 50% going to mid-sized NBFCs and MFIs.
- RBI has announced the allocation of Rs 50,000 crore as special refinance facilities to All India financial institutions (AIFIs) such as NABARD, SIDBI, NHB to enable them to meet sectoral credit needs. These advances to the above organizations will be charged as per the RBI policy repo rate of 4.40%.
- Out of total allocation of Rs 50,000 crore, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) will receive the amount of Rs 25,000 crore for the refinancing of Regional Rural Banks, cooperative banks and microfinance institutions.
- Out of total allocation of Rs 50,000 crore, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will receive Rs 15,000 crore or on-lending and refinancing to scheduled commercial banks, non-banks and microfinance institutions.
- The National Housing Bank will receive Rs 10,000 crore to support housing finance companies.
- RBI has also decided to reduce the reverse repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by 25 basis points from 4% to 3.75% with immediate effect while the policy repo rate will remain unchanged at 4.4%, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank rate will remain unchanged at 4.65%.
- To provide greater comfort to the states for undertaking containment and mitigation

efforts, the RBI has increased the ways and means advances (WMA) limit of states by 60% over and above the level as on March 31, 2020. The increased limit will be available till September 30, 2020.

- In respect of all accounts for which lending institutions decide to grant moratorium or deferment, and which were standard as on March 1, 2020, it has been decided that the 90-day NPA norm shall exclude the moratorium period. It indicates that there would be an asset classification standstill for all such accounts from March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2020.
- RBI decides to extend the period for resolution plan by 90-days, citing the challenges faced during the resolution of stressed assets in the current volatile environment.
- In view of the related economic shocks, the RBI has refrained the scheduled commercial banks and cooperative banks from making any further dividend payouts from profits pertaining to the financial year ended March 31, 2020 until the further instructions.
- To ease the liquidity position at the level of individual institutions, the RBI has brought down the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) requirement for Scheduled Commercial Banks from 100% to 80% with immediate effect.

### Goldman Sachs downgrades India from 'overweight' to 'marketweight'

- Goldman Sachs has downgraded its stance on the Indian market from 'overweight' to 'marketweight' due to "delayed recovery and extended valuations."
- Goldman Sachs says that the domestic equities could underperform, unless India unleashes a big stimulus package.

### Equitas Small Finance Bank launches Selfe FD and Selfe Savings Account

- Equitas Small Finance Bank has launched two new digital banking services- Selfe FD and Selfe Savings Account. This would enable the customers of the bank to avoid visiting branches.
- Under the "Selfe FD" option- customers can open Selfe Fixed Deposit online for value upto Rs 90,000 by providing Aadhar and PAN details. It will provide an interest rate of 7.75% for one year.
- Under the "Selfe Savings Account" option, a person can open savings account with Equitas Small Finance Bank by web based interactive video form by registering one's Aadhaar number, PAN and other basic details. The interest rate is 7.5% and no minimum balance.

### Global Economy to shrink in 2020, India to grow at 1.9%

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) on April 14 has mentioned that the world economy is expected to shrink by 3.0% in 2020. Due to the ongoing impact of the , it will be the steepest downturn since the Great Depression of 1930.
- In its 2020 World Economic Outlook, IMF predicted the partial rebound in 2021 with the world economy growing at a rate of 5.8%. But it mentioned that the predictions are marked with uncertainty.
- While projecting the economic growth of countries, the IMF has forecasted the Indian economy to grow by 1.9% in 2020-2021. Its estimate for India is in the line with

forecasts made by other International agencies.

### **Barclays predicts India's GDP growth for CY2020 at 0%; For FY21 at 0.8%**

- Barclays has predicted the GDP growth for India in Calendar Year 2020 at 0%. It means no economic growth.
- For FY21, Barclays has predicted GDP growth for India at 0.8%.

### **ADB increases response package to \$20 billion from \$6.5 bn**

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has increased the size of its response to novel disease ( ) to 20 billion dollars from its earlier size of 6.5 billion dollar.
- ADB has added 13.5 billion dollars in resources to help ADB's developing member countries counter the severe macroeconomic and health impacts caused by .

### **World Bank Projects India's GDP Growth at 1.5-2.8 pc in 2020-21**

- The World Bank has estimated India's economy to grow 1.5 percent to 2.8 percent in the 2020-21 fiscal in its South Asia Economic Focus report, released on 12 April, 2020.
- This is the worst growth performance to be recorded by India since the 1991 liberalisation, as the severely disrupts the economy.
- For 2019-20, India will grow 4.8 percent to 5 percent. Growth is expected to rebound to 5% in Fiscal 2021-22 as the impact of dissipates.

### **Jana Small Finance Bank launches "DigiGen" digital banking platform**

- Jana Small Finance Bank has launched "DigiGen" a digital banking platform where customers can digitally open a savings account and fixed deposit instantly, any time, anywhere.
- DigiGen onboarding is a three-step process to open an account.
- Bank customers are eligible for 4.5 per cent interest rates on savings account with no minimum balance and up to 7.5 per cent interest on fixed deposits.

### **ACC approves extension of Bank Board Bureau members' tenure by 2 years**

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the extension of tenure of all members and the current part-time chairman of the Bank Board Bureau(BBB) by 2 years, which is coming to an end on April 11,2020.
- The former Secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training, Bhanu Pratap Sharma, will continue to hold the post of part-time member of the board.

### **RBI permits banks to issue Electronic Cards for Overdraft Accounts**

- The Reserve Bank of India has allowed banks to issue electronic cards to natural persons having Overdraft Accounts. Such accounts must be of the nature of personal loan without any specific end-use restrictions.
- Earlier banks were allowed to issue debit cards to customers having Saving Bank/Current Accounts but not to cash credit/loan, account holders.

**Remittances to India likely to decline by 23% in 2020 due to : World Bank**

- Remittances to India are likely to drop by 23 percent from \$83 billion last year to \$64 billion this year due to the **COVID-19**, which has resulted in a global recession, the World Bank has said.
- Similarly, the global remittances are projected to decline sharply by about 20 percent this year, due to the economic crisis induced by the **COVID-19** and shutdowns.
- Remittances to low and middle-income countries (LMICs) are projected to fall by 19.7 percent to \$445 billion, from \$554 billion in 2019.

### **Fitch Ratings sees global economy shrinking by 3.9% in 2020**

- The Rating agency Fitch Ratings has slashed the global growth forecast and expects the world GDP to fall by 3.9 percent in 2020, citing **COVID-19**-induced recession is crushing the global economy.
- The sharp downward revision is driven by a massive decline in Asian economies, led by China and India, both of which are estimated to post growth rate of less than 1 percent this year.

### **RBI increases deployment time limit under TLTRO 2.0 to 45 days from 30 days**

- RBI has extended the time available for banks for deployment of funds under the TLTRO 2.0 scheme from 30 working days to 45 working days from the date of the operation.
- Under TLTRO 2.0 the banks which have borrowed the funds are required to deploy this fund in specific sectors as advised by RBI. The time limit for this deployment of the fund is now 45 days from the date of borrowing.

### **ICICI Bank launches voice banking services on Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant**

- Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) bank starts a new feature of voice banking services on Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant for their customers.
- The service will enable customers to #BankWithTheirVoice and get answers to banking queries, check account balance & transactions, credit card due date and more.

### **Fitch slashes India's GDP growth forecast to 1.8%**

- Fitch solution has reduced its GDP growth forecast for India for FY21 to 1.8% from 4.6% earlier.
- Fitch solution expects large scale loss of income across the economy in the face of a worsening domestic **demand** of **goods**.

### **HDFC Bank launches Safety Grid campaign to reinforce #socialdistancing**

- HDFC Bank has started #HDFCBankSafetyGrid campaign to encourage social distancing in Public places. The bank has created physical markers of HDFC Bank logo on the ground using the outer grid logo. This campaign helps people waiting in the queue at a shop or an establishment.
- The Safety Grid will be painted in front of the space leading to various retail outlets such as pharmacies, grocery stores, and ATMs. The safety grid distance of 1 metre is prescribed by the World Health Organization.

### UBS predicts India GDP growth for FY21 at -0.4%

- UBS has predicted India's GDP growth rate for FY21 (2020-21) at -0.4%. Earlier it had predicted the same at 2.5%.
- For FY22, UBS has predicted India's GDP to grow at 7.0%.

### Moody's slashes India growth forecast to 0.2 pc for 2020

- Moody's Investors Service slashed India growth forecast for calendar year 2020 to 0.2 per cent, from 2.5 per cent projected in March.
- For 2021, Moody's expects India's growth to rebound to 6.2 per cent.
- In its report titled — Global Macro Outlook 2020-21 (April 2020 update), Moody's has lowered G-20 advanced economies as a group to contract by 5.8 per cent in 2020.

### ADB approves USD 1.5 bn loan to India

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on April 28, 2020 approved USD 1.5 billion loan to India.
- The loan has been sanctioned to support immediate priorities such as containment, prevention and social protection of the poor and economically vulnerable sections, especially and disadvantaged groups.
- The fund is part of a larger package of support that ADB will provide in close coordination with the government and other development partners.

### Axis Bank to pick about 30 per cent stake in Max Life Insurance for Rs 1,600 crore

- Axis Bank would acquire a 29% additional stake in Max Life Insurance for an estimated price of Rs 1,592 crore. The deal will increase the Axis Bank's stake in Max Life to 30%. Max Financial Services will hold the remaining 70% in the joint venture.
- The acquisition may be completed in 6-9 months & Post the deal, Max Financial Services and Axis Bank will get to nominate four and three directors respectively on the Max Life board. The total premium generated from both companies exceeded Rs 38,000 crore.

### CRISIL cuts India's GDP growth forecast for FY21 to 1.8%

- Rating agency CRISIL has cut the GDP growth rate forecast for India for 2020-21 (FY21) to 1.8% from the previous prediction of 3.5%.
- CRISIL has projected a total losses of Rs 10 lakh crore or Rs 7,000 per person.

### RBI announces Rs 50,000 crore special liquidity support to mutual funds

- The Reserve Bank of India recently allocated Rs 50000 crore funds as a special liquidity facility for mutual funds to ease of the liquidity strains imposed by the recent . The closure of some debt Mutual Funds has intensified the liquidity pressure on mutual funds.
- Banks can use the funds available under the SLF-MF for meeting the liquidity requirements of MFs by:
- extending loans, and

- undertaking outright purchase of and/or repos against the collateral of
- investment-grade corporate bonds,
- commercial papers (CPs),
- debentures and
- certificates of Deposit (CDs) held by MFs.

### Ind-Ra cuts India's FY21 GDP growth further to 1.9%, lowest in 29 yrs

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has predicted India's GDP growth rate for 2020-21 (FY21) at 1.9%. Earlier this was 3.6%.
- According to Ind-Ra, India's GDP growth rate has been in contraction (means negative) for 5 times. These 5 years are-> in 1957-58 was negative 0.4%, in 1965-66 it was negative 2.6%, in 1966-67 it was negative 0.1%, in 1972-73 it was negative 0.6%, and in 1979-80 it was negative 5.2%.

### HDFC acquires 6.43% stake in Reliance Capital

- HDFC has acquired 6.43% stake in debt-trapped Reliance Capital by invoking pledged shares.
- Apart from this, Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd (HDFC) has acquired 8.21% stake in Reliance Infrastructure Ltd, and 6.97% stake in Reliance Power Ltd.

### Transcorp becomes the 1st non-bank company to receive RBI nod to enter into co-branding arrangements

- The Leading forex and payment solutions provider Transcorp International Ltd(TIL) becomes the 1st non-bank company to receive Reserve Bank of India(RBI) nod to enter into co-branding arrangements for prepaid Instruments.
- It has also launched its multi-wallet RuPay-powered prepaid cards which allow corporate houses to pay wages, incentives, reimbursements & recurring payments to their employees or beneficiaries.

### Singapore's Caladium increases its stake in Bandhan Bank to 4.49%

- Caladium Investment PTE Ltd, an affiliate of GIC, Singapore, has increased its stake in Kolkata-based private sector lender Bandhan Bank by 1.1% to 4.49% as on March 31, 2020.
- Caladium Investments held 7.22 crore shares in Bandhan Bank at the end of the fourth quarter of FY20.
- It had a stake of 3.39 percent in the bank at the end of the third quarter as on December 31, 2019.