

**MARCH**  
**2020**

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# **FOURTH WEEK**

# **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**23 MARCH - 31 MARCH**



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1. Which SAARC member country pledged \$1 million to SAARC Coronavirus Emergency Fund?

- [A] Afghanistan ☒ [B] Bangladesh  
[C] Sri Lanka [D] Pakistan

✓ Afghanistan recently pledged \$1 million contribution to the SAARC Corona Emergency Fund, which was proposed by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India proposed an initial contribution of \$10 million to tackle the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus.

✓ After the announcement, Nepal and Bhutan committed nearly \$1 million & \$100,000 respectively to the SAARC Corona Emergency Fund. Maldives pledged \$0.2 million to the fund.

2. The Government of India launched the 'MyGov Corona Helpdesk' to contain the spread of misinformation on coronavirus on which social media platform?

- [A] Facebook [B] Twitter  
[C] WhatsApp ☒ [D] Instagram

✓ In order to curb the spread of misinformation and fake news on coronavirus and to reduce the panic among the citizens regarding the COVID-19, the Government of India has launched an official chatbot on the social media platform WhatsApp.

✓ This Chatbot is named 'MyGov Corona Helpdesk' and is avail to all WhatsApp users. User can save the number (9013151515) announced and start using the chatbot.

3. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled an updated manual DPP-2020. What does DPP stand for?

- [A] Direct Procurement Procedure  
[B] Direct Promotion Proposal  
[C] Defence Procurement Procedure ☒  
[D] Defence Promotion Proposal

✓ Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled an updated manual DPP-2020 (Defence Procurement Procedure-2020).

✓ For the last 18 years, this DPP is the procurement manual that has been used for governing the purchase of weapons and equipment from the defence capital budget. The 2020 draft version aims to promote more indigenous content in defence equipment which are manufactured in India.

4. According to the World Happiness Report 2020, which is the happiest country in the world?

- [A] United States [B] Norway  
[C] Finland ☒ [D] Switzerland

✓ The World Happiness Report is published by the United Nation's Sustainable Development Solutions Network. This year, the report has ranked Finland as the happiest country for the third time in a row.

✓ People in 156 countries were asked to evaluate their own levels of happiness while measures like GDP, social support, personal freedom and levels of corruption were also considered to arrive at a score. This year, the rankings are based on data collected in 2017-2019. India is ranked 144 in the list of 156 countries.

5. Satyarup Siddhanta, who was sometimes seen in news recently, is associated with which field?

- [A] Space Research [B] Mountaineering ☒  
[C] Sports [D] Business

✓ Bengaluru based mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta was seen in news recently as he has been nominated for the Limca Book of World Records for becoming the first Indian to climb the highest volcanoes of all 7 continents.

✓ He had also been named in the Guinness Book of World Records. He achieved the feat in 2019 and the acknowledgement came recently. He scaled the highest volcano of Antarctica – Mt Sidley as he completes his 7 summits and Volcanic 7 summits. He also holds a world record for being the world's youngest to summit the highest mountains of each continent.

6. What is the name of the initiative launched by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) to promote entrepreneurship among tribal people?

- [A] Tech for Tribals ☒ [B] Tribal Leader  
[C] Start your business [D] Tribal Entrepreneur

✓ Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched an initiative called 'Tech for Tribals' in partnership with Institutes of National Importance to promote entrepreneurship among tribal people.

✓ The initiative, which is supported by Ministry of MSME, aims to impart entrepreneurship skills to tribal forest produce gatherers who are enrolled under the Pradhan Mantri VanDhan Yojana. The programme will be conducted for 30 days.

7. 'RAISE 2020', which was seen in news, is the first global Artificial Intelligence Summit of which country?

- [A] France [B] United States  
[C] India ☒ [D] United Arab Emirates

✓ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is to organise the first Global AI Summit in India (RAISE 2020). This was in news recently, as the AI summit was postponed to October 5–6, 2020 due to the rising number of cases of COVID-19.

✓ It was initially scheduled to be held in the month of April. The summit is to be attended by academics, AI start-ups and big tech firms.

8. Former RBI Deputy Governor R Gandhi and Ananth Narayan have been appointed on the board of which Indian bank?

- [A] State Bank of India [B] Punjab National Bank  
[C] Yes Bank ☒ [D] Bank of Baroda

✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed former RBI Deputy Governor R Gandhi and former banker Ananth Narayan on the board of Yes Bank.

✓ They have been appointed as Additional directors on the board for two years. Ananth Narayan was serving as the regional head of financial markets in the Standard Chartered Bank. Prashant Kumar has been appointed Chief Executive of Yes Bank.

9. On which date, the World Poetry Day is celebrated across the world annually?

- [A] March 15 [B] March 19  
[C] March 21 ☒ [D] March 23

✓ World Poetry Day is celebrated on March 21 every year across the world. During the UNESCO's session held in Paris, in 1999, it was decided that 21 March shall be celebrated as World Poetry Day.

✓ One of the prime objectives of the Poetry Day is to support linguistic diversity through poetry and to provide opportunity to the endangered languages to be heard within their communities.

10. When is the International Day of Happiness celebrated all over the world?

- [A] March 20 ☒ [B] March 21  
[C] March 22 [D] March 23

✓ The International Day of Happiness is celebrated on March 20 all over the world. The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness in 2012.

✓ The resolution to the United Nations was initiated by Bhutan, the country which adopted the goal of Gross National Happiness over Gross National Product.

1. What is the theme of the 'International Day of Forests 2020'?

- [A] Forests and Biodiversity ☒ [B] Forests and Humans  
[C] Sustainable Forests [D] Forests save us

- ✓ The UN General Assembly declared 21 March as the International Day of Forests in 2012. UN Forum on Forests and the Food & Agriculture Organization are the main organisers of the Forest Day.
- ✓ The Day is celebrated to raise awareness about the importance of all types of forests. The theme for 2020 is, "Forests and Biodiversity".

2. Which state government approved distilleries to manufacture and supply sanitisers temporarily, amidst the coronavirus outbreak?

- [A] Andhra Pradesh [B] Maharashtra  
[C] Punjab ☒ [D] Kerala

- ✓ The Punjab govt granted permission to distilleries to manufacture and supply sanitisers in wake of the rise in coronavirus cases in the state.
- ✓ Punjab Food and Drug administration Commissioner recently announced that the permission for a period of 10 days and has been granted purely on a temporary basis. The manufacturers shall supply the sanitisers to government institutions in the state of Punjab only.

3. What is the theme of the 'World Down Syndrome Day 2020'?

- [A] Leaving no one behind [B] We decide ☒  
[C] We and You [D] together we can

- ✓ World Down Syndrome Day is celebrated on March 21 every year, across the world. The United Nations General Assembly declared the day in the year 2011. Down syndrome occurs when a person has an extra partial or whole copy of chromosome 21.
- ✓ The day is celebrated to raise public awareness of Down syndrome. On World Down Syndrome Day 2020, the

forum–Down Syndrome International focuses on the theme "We Decide".

4. Which country successfully conducted a test-flight of a hypersonic missile after Russia?

- [A] United States ☒ [B] France  
[C] South Korea [D] Israel

- ✓ The United States announced that it has successfully tested a hypersonic missile on March 20, 2020. This is a follow-up exercise of the first joint US Army and Navy flight experiment conducted in 2017.
- ✓ The hypersonic missile can travel faster than the current nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles. They travel at low altitudes and switch direction in flight. It is harder to track and intercept them.

5. The Border Roads Organisation opened a 360 feet long suspension bridge over which river?

- [A] Teesta ☒ [B] Dibang  
[C] Manas [D] Lohit

- ✓ The Border Roads Organisation opened a 360 feet long suspension bridge over the Teesta River near Chungthang town in North Sikkim.
- ✓ Under Project Swastik the project of construction of the bridge commenced in October 2019 and completed it in January 2020. The bridge is expected to promote tourism in the state. It also enables the movement of logistics for the Armed Forces easier.

6. Union Cabinet has approved EMC 2.0 Scheme. The scheme is associated with which field?

- [A] Ease of Doing Business  
[B] Electronics Manufacturing ☒  
[C] Electricity Generation  
[D] Election Management

- ✓ The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister of India has recently approved financial assistance to the

Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC2.0) Scheme.

- ✓ The scheme aims at developing world class infrastructure along with common facilities and amenities through Electronics Manufacturing Clusters.
- ✓ The scheme seeks to set up Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs) and Common Facility Centers (CFCs). The total outlay of the EMC 2.0 Scheme is Rs.3, 762.25 cr.

7. P.K. Banerjee, who recently passed away, was a legendary personality associated with which sports?

- [A] Cricket [B] Football ☒
- [C] Hockey [D] Boxing

- ✓ Legendary India footballer P.K. Banerjee (83) recently passed away. He was a member of the 1962 Asian Games gold medal winning India football team.
- ✓ The veteran football player scored 65 international goals in a total of 84 appearances for the national team. The international governing body of Football game, FIFA awarded him the Centennial Order of Merit in 2004.

8. Which state recently announced that the sanitary personnel employed by urban and rural civic bodies shall be called 'cleanliness workers'?

- [A] Tamil Nadu ☒ [B] Kerala
- [C] Karnataka [D] Maharashtra

- ✓ The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu K Palaniswami announced in the Assembly that 64,583 sanitary personnel employed by urban and rural civic bodies in the State shall be called 'cleanliness workers'.
- ✓ This announcement was made to honour their work in maintaining public health. The state government is already implementing several welfare measures for the workers including building residences, periodic health check-ups, employment camps and skill development for their children.

9. When is, 'World Sparrow Day' celebrated every year?

- [A] March 15 [B] March 19
- [C] March 20 ☒ [D] March 23

- ✓ The World Sparrow Day is observed every year on March 20 to highlight the declining population of the bird due to modern infrastructure, pollution by micro-wave towers and pesticides and lesser green spaces.
- ✓ It is an international initiative by the Nature Forever Society of India in collaboration with the Eco-Sys Action Foundation (France) and numerous other national and international organizations across the world.

10. Which space agency is set to send astronauts to the International Space Station for the first time in May 2020?

- [A] NASA [B] ISRO
- [C] SpaceX ☒ [D] European Space Agency

- ✓ America-based Private space agency owned by Elon Musk, SpaceX will send astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) for the first time in May.
- ✓ This was announced by NASA, which also revealed that the first crewed launch from the United States to the ISS platform since 2011 is to be sent through SpaceX.
- ✓ The space company will launch a Falcon 9 rocket to transport NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley to the station.

1. Who is the head of the high level committee of medical experts constituted by the Government of India for prevention & control of COVID-19?

- [A] Dr V K Paul ☒ [B] Amitabh Kant  
[C] Rajiv Kumar [D] Harsh Vardhan

- ✓ The Government of India has recently constituted a high-level committee of medical experts for prevention & control of COVID-19. The committee is headed by Dr V K Paul, a member of the India think tank NITI Aayog.
- ✓ The 21 member high level technical committee comprises of noted public health experts to suggest measures on the prevention and control actions. Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan and Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) are the Co – Chairpersons of the committee.

2. What is the theme of the 'World Water Day' observed annually across the world?

- [A] Sustainable Water [B] Water & Climate Change ☒  
[C] Clean Water for All [D] Water and Women

- ✓ World Water Day is observed every year on March 22, across the world since the year 1993. The theme of the World Water Day this year is 'Water & Climate Change'.
- ✓ In 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution by which 22 March of each year was declared World Water Day from the year 1993. The Day focuses on the importance of freshwater and creates awareness of the people who still live without access to safe water.

3. Lok Sabha has passed the Finance Bill by voice vote. Which article of the Indian constitution defines the Money bill, an important type of Finance Bill?

- [A] Article 102 [B] Article 110 ☒  
[C] Article 119 [D] Article 126

- ✓ As per the Lok Sabha's Rules of Procedure, A Finance Bill is a bill introduced every year to give effect to the financial proposals of the Government for the following financial year. It also includes a bill to give effect to supplementary financial proposals for any period.

- ✓ Recently the Lok Sabha has passed the Finance Bill by voice vote without discussion. An important type of Finance Bill is called Money Bill, which is defined by the Article 110 of Indian constitution.

4. Which state commemorates the Martyr's Day on March 23 as the 'Youth Empowerment Day'?

- [A] Odisha [B] Punjab ☒  
[C] Rajasthan [D] Gujarat

- ✓ On 23 March 1931, young Indian freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged to death at Lahore in today's Pakistan.
- ✓ This day is observed as Martyr's Day throughout the nation. The state government of Punjab has been commemorating the Martyrs Day, which falls on March 23, as the 'Youth Empowerment Day'. January 30, the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi is also observed as Martyr's day in India.

5. Which SAARC member country has committed 5 Million US dollars to COVID-19 SAARC emergency fund?

- [A] Maldives [B] Afghanistan  
[C] Sri Lanka ☒ [D] Bhutan

- ✓ Recently, Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has pledged 5 Million US dollars to the COVID-19 SAARC Emergency fund, which was proposed by PM Narendra Modi. This Emergency Fund will as a security blanket for the SAARC countries, which can be used by the countries for dealing with issues related to COVID-19.

6. The Birth Anniversary of one of the founders of Congress Socialist Party was recently observed on March 23. What is the name of the leader?

- [A] Dr Ram Manohar Lohia ☒ [B] Narendra Dev  
[C] Jayaprakash Narayan [D] Minoo Masani

- ✓ The birth anniversary of Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, was recently observed on March 23. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to the leader.

- ✓ Ram Manohar Lohia was born on 23 March 1910 and was one of the founders of the Congress Socialist Party. He was also the editor of the Congress Socialist journal. He had also as the secretary of the Foreign Department of the All India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C).

7. Which Indian city has deployed drones to sanitize its region against the coronavirus outbreak by sprinkling chemicals?

- [A] Chennai [B] Cochin  
[C] Indore ☒ [D] Nagpur

- ✓ The city of Indore of Madhya Pradesh has become the first city in the country to deploy drones to sanitize city areas against the coronavirus outbreak by sprinkling chemicals. The Municipal Corporation of Indore has hired two drones for sprinkling sanitising chemicals.
- ✓ Public places like vegetables markets and streets of the city are being disinfected by spraying. The chemicals are selected such that they are not harmful to the people.

8. What is the theme of the World Meteorological Day 2020, celebrated across the world?

- [A] Climate and Water ☒  
[B] The Sun, the Earth and the Weather  
[C] Every Drop Counts  
[D] Climate Change

- ✓ World Meteorological Day is celebrated on 23<sup>rd</sup> March of every year, which commemorates the inception of the Convention which established the World Meteorological Organization on the same day in 1950.
- ✓ Since 1961, the Geneva headquartered World Meteorological Organization has been celebrating World Meteorological Day with a unique theme. "Climate and Water" is the theme of this year's World Meteorological Day.

9. SDMC recently launched a website for information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a Disaster Management agency of which bloc?

- [A] BIMSTEC [B] SAARC ☒  
[C] ASEAN [D] OPEC

- ✓ The SAARC Disaster Management Centre has recently launched a website for information related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.
- ✓ The website shows the number of coronavirus cases in the SAARC member states with live updates on the count of active cases. This initiative was earlier proposed by PM Narendra Modi, during the recent video conference with the leaders SAARC member nations.

10. Which is the first country to withdraw from Tokyo Olympics over coronavirus fears?

- [A] Italy [B] Canada ☒  
[C] Germany [D] India

- ✓ Canada became the first major country to pull out of the Tokyo Olympics over coronavirus fears. Australia has also directed its athletes to prepare for the 2021 games, as it could not be held this year.
- ✓ Earlier, the PM of Japan Shinzo Abe has announced for the first time that the Olympic Games might get postponed. The International Olympic Committee is expected to decide about the schedule of the games soon, which had been planned to commence from July 24 this year.

1. What is the theme of the World Tuberculosis Day, 2020?

- [A] Let's win it [B] It's Time ☒  
[C] Leaving no one behind [D] Health for All

- ✓ Every year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) commemorates World TB Day on March 24, to raise awareness among the general public about the disease.
- ✓ On the same day in 1882, Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB. This year, the theme of the World TB Day is "It's Time", which highlights the importance of time.

2. Which drug is recommended by the National Task Force constituted by Indian Council of Medical Research for high-risk cases infected by coronavirus?

- [A] Hydroxy-chloroquine ☒ [B] Chloroquine  
[C] Sulfasalazine [D] Azathioprine

- ✓ The national task force for COVID-19 constituted by Indian Council for Medical Research has recommended hydroxy-chloroquine as a preventive drug for high-risk cases, who are infected by coronavirus.
- ✓ The medication should be given to the asymptomatic healthcare workers, who are under high risk by serving the infected patients. The protocol recommended by the National Task Force is approved by the Drug Controller General of India (DGI) for use in emergency situations.

3. Hillel Furstenberg and Gregory Margulis are the recipients of which prestigious award?

- [A] Booker Prize [B] Abel Prize ☒  
[C] Pulitzer Prize [D] Golden Globe

- ✓ Hillel Furstenberg of Israel and Russian-American Gregory Margulis are the recipients of the prestigious Abel Prize for the year 2020, one of the highest awards in the field of Mathematics.
- ✓ The two mathematicians were selected for introducing the use of methods from probability and dynamics in group theory, number theory and combinatorics.

4. Which Indian film director won the IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020 at the '8<sup>th</sup> India International Film Tourism Conclave'?

- [A] Aditya Dhar [B] Zoya Akhtar ☒  
[C] Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra [D] Ayan Mukerji

- ✓ Bollywood film director Zoya Akhtar was presented the IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020, at the Asia's largest film tourism event, 8<sup>th</sup> India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC), held recently in Mumbai.
- ✓ The Director was selected for her outstanding contribution to the world tourism through her films which were shot in Spain and Turkey.

5. Sumant Kathpalia was recently appointed as the Chief Executive of which bank?

- [A] ICICI Bank [B] HDFC Bank  
[C] IndusInd Bank ☒ [D] Kotak Mahindra Bank

- ✓ Indian private sector lender IndusInd Bank recently announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of Sumant Kathpalia as the Chief executive.
- ✓ Sumant Kathpalia is currently serving as the head of Consumer banking business of the bank. He is to replace the incumbent Chief Executive Romesh Sobti and to take charge from 24 March, 2020 for three years.

6. What is the rank of India in the Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom 2020?

- [A] 87 [B] 95 [C] 103 [D] 120 ☒

- ✓ America based Heritage Foundation released its Index of Economic Freedom last week. Singapore emerged as the top nation in the index and overtook Hong Kong as the world's most independent and free economy.
- ✓ Singapore achieved this feat for the first time since 1995, the report was first published. Hong Kong has ever been placed at the top since then. India is ranked in 120<sup>th</sup> position in the report and It improved its score by 1.3 points from 2019 to score 56.5 in 2020



7. Which Indian author won the 2020 PEN/Hemingway Award of PEN America?

- [A] Ruchika Tomar ☒ [B] Madhuri Vijay  
[C] Arundhati Roy [D] Jhumpa Lahiri

✓ Debut novelist Ruchika Tomar has been selected as the winner of the 2020 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel 'A Prayer for Travelers'. PEN America was founded in 1922, in New York City.

✓ The prize is backed by the Hemingway family and the Ernest Hemingway Foundation. The PEN/Hemingway Award includes a \$25,000 prize, which is proposed to allow significant time and resources to pursue a subsequent work of fiction.

8. Which Indian bank has launched a prepaid card called 'Enkasu', which can be used both online and offline?

- [A] City Union Bank  
[B] Karur Vysya Bank ☒  
[C] Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank  
[D] Tamil Nadu Grama Bank

✓ Tamil Nadu based Karur Vysya Bank has launched a prepaid card called 'Enkasu', which can be used both online and offline, in Karur district of the state. The card aims to reduce the usage of cash in the district of Karur.

✓ The cardholder can make tap & go payments for all small purchases to merchants for a minimum of Re. 1/-. The card can be recharged through their mobile App 'DLite', UPI, NEFT or through any of their branches. The cards are given to both customers and non-customers after KYC verification.

9. The first COVID-19 dedicated hospital of India is set up in which city?

- [A] Mumbai ☒ [B] Pune  
[C] Theni [D] Chennai

✓ Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital along with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), has set up a dedicated COVID-19 centre at Seven Hills Hospital, Mumbai. The 100 bedded hospital will serve patients, who are checked positive for COVID-19.

✓ It is fully funded by Reliance Foundation. It also includes a negative pressure room which prevents cross - contamination and controls infection.

10. A ₹148 crore project of Electric Vehicle Park and ₹500 crore project of Data Centre Park are the recent initiatives of which state/UT?

- [A] Tamil Nadu ☒ [B] West Bengal  
[C] Puducherry [D] New Delhi

✓ The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has proposed two schemes including ₹148 crore project of Electric Vehicle Park and ₹500 crore project of Data Centre Park.

✓ The projects are aimed at attracting new investments into Tamil Nadu. As per his announcement in the Assembly, the electric vehicle park will be set up at Manalur SIPCOT Industrial Estate near Chennai and the data centre park over a 150 acre near Sriperumbudur.

✓ He also announced that a start-up and innovation city with all infrastructure facilities will be established near Chennai, at a cost of ₹350 crore to attract innovative and knowledge based firms.

1. 'Mo Jeeban (My Life)' is an initiative of which Indian state to advice people to stay indoors amid the COVID-19 pandemic?

[A] West Bengal

[B] Odisha ☒

[C] Telangana

[D] Bihar

✓ Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik launched 'Mo Jeeban' programme and advised people to take a pledge for staying indoors to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

✓ The Chief Minister asked people to take oaths of staying indoors and send him those videos. He also asked the people to paste a sticker on the gate of their houses to show their determination to follow this direction.

2. 'Mayiladuthurai' has been created as the 38th district of which Indian state?

[A] Tamil Nadu ☒

[B] Kerala

[C] Andhra Pradesh

[D] Himachal Pradesh

✓ The CM of Tamil Nadu recently announced the creation of a new district 'Mayiladuthurai', for administrative convenience, by bifurcating Nagapattinam district.

✓ This is the 38<sup>th</sup> district of the state. Nagapattinam district is in the Cauvery delta region of Tamil Nadu. Last year, the Tamil Nadu government announced five new districts. Amid coronavirus pandemic, the Chief Minister announced Rs 1,000 cash assistance for ration card holders to compensate for livelihood loss.

3. Whose death anniversary is celebrated as the 'International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims'?

[A] Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero ☒ [B] Rutilio

[C] Mandela

[D] Lincoln

✓ The International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims is observed every year on 24 March, by the United Nations.

✓ This day pays tribute to Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero of El-Salvador, who was murdered on 24 March 1980. Óscar Romero was actively involved in criticising violations of the human rights. He also condemned the practices of social injustice and assassinations. He was declared 'Saint' by Pope Francis in 2018.

4. 'Clara', an Artificial Intelligence (AI) bot, which helps to self-check COVID-19, is introduced by which country?

[A] United States ☒

[B] China

[C] Russia

[D] Italy

✓ The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has introduced an Artificial Intelligence (AI) bot, called 'Clara' to assist people in finding the potential symptoms of COVID-19.

✓ The CDC has collaborated with CDC Foundation and Healthcare Bot service of Microsoft Azure to develop the self-checking bot Clara. It is currently available only in the United States on the CDC website. It provides information about the disease, suggests the course of action and helps to handle the illness at home.

5. As per the recent announcement from the Ministry of Finance to support economy, what is the deadline of filing income-tax return for the year 2018-19?

[A] April 30, 2020

[B] May 31, 2020

[C] June 30, 2020 ☒

[D] August 31, 2020

✓ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently announced various relief measures amid lock-down of the country due to coronavirus scare.

✓ As per the measures, the deadline for filing belated income tax return (ITR) for the financial year 2018-19 and for filing Goods and Services Tax returns for March, April and May has been extended to June 30, 2020.

✓ She also announced waiver of minimum balance maintenance charge and ATM withdrawal charge for next three months. Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme has been extended from April 1 to June 30.

6. The 2024 Summer Olympics is scheduled to be held in which city?

[A] Beijing

[B] Paris ☒

[C] London

[D] Los Angeles

✓ During the International Olympic Committee's session in Peru, Paris was selected as the host of 2024 Summer Olympics. It also simultaneously selected Los Angeles to host the games in 2028.

✓ Amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, which was scheduled for July 24–Aug.9, has been postponed and would be held before the summer of 2021, as per the recent announcement from the IOC. Paris Olympics organisers notified that this delay will not affect the 2024 games.

7. Sameer Aggarwal has been appointed as the Chief Executive officer of the Indian arm of which company?

[A] Amazon

[B] Walmart ☒

[C] Apple

[D] Samsung

✓ The Indian arm of then US based retailer Walmart recently announced the appointment of Sameer Aggarwal as the CEO of its Best Price Modern Wholesale stores in India. Sameer Aggarwal is promoted as CEO and will replace Krish Iyer, who is to retire from the top post. Krish Iyer will continue to serve as the advisor to Best Price, Walmart India.

✓ Sameer had joined Walmart as executive Vice president in 2018 and was made the Deputy CEO in January 2020.

8. Which country, that holds the presidency of G20 bloc, is to chair an emergency virtual summit of G20 leaders?

[A] Germany

[B] Saudi Arabia ☒

[C] Italy

[D] France

✓ The King of Saudi Arabia Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is set to chair an emergency virtual summit of G20 leaders, to accelerate the response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

✓ At present, Saudi Arabia holds the G20 presidency and it called for the Virtual Leaders' summit to be held on March 26. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the G20 leaders after the world has been affected by the outbreak COVID-19.

9. MACS 4028 is a recently developed, biofortified high-protein variety of which crop?

[A] Paddy

[B] Wheat ☒

[C] Maize

[D] Finger Millet

✓ Scientists at Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune, which is an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, have developed a biofortified high-protein wheat variety MACS 4028.

✓ The development of the crop was published in the Indian Journal of Genetics and Plant Breeding. It is a semi-dwarf variety which exhibits a higher yielding ability of 19.3 quintals per hectare. It is claimed to be resistant to several pests & diseases unlike the normal wheat.

10. According to a recent study, the glaciers of which India state are losing mass faster than other parts of the Himalayas?

[A] Uttarakhand

[B] Sikkim ☒

[C] Arunachal Pradesh

[D] Assam

✓ The Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun have recently found that glaciers in Sikkim are melting at a higher magnitude than other Himalayan regions.

✓ The Institute is an autonomous research institute for the study of Geology of the Himalayas, under the Department of Science and Technology.

✓ The study, which has been published in Science of the Total Environment, revealed that glaciers in Sikkim have deglaciated at a higher magnitude from 1991 to 2015. They also revealed that small-sized glaciers in Sikkim are disappearing and larger glaciers are thinning due to climate change.

1. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is observed on which date?

[A] March 23

[B] March 25 ☒

[C] March 27

[D] March 29

- ✓ International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is observed on March 25 every year, across the world. The day honours those who suffered and died due to brutal slavery system. It also aims to raise awareness about the dangers of racism and prejudice.

- ✓ The International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members is also observed on March 25. It marks the anniversary of the abduction of a former journalist named Alec Collett, who worked for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

2. As per the announcement from the CRISIL rating agency, what is their estimate on growth rate of India for 2020–21?

[A] 4.5%

[B] 3.5% ☒

[C] 3%

[D] 2.5%

- ✓ The CRISIL rating agency recently announced its estimate on growth rate of India for 2020–21 as 3.5 %. The agency had earlier projected the growth rate of India to be 5.2 % for the next financial year.
- ✓ The recent pandemic outbreak in India and the resulting 21 day consequent lockdown are the main reasons for the agency to slash the growth rate. It also announced that the dip in growth will be concentrated in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the next fiscal whereas the 2<sup>nd</sup> half would see a mild recovery.

3. What is the current Cash Reserve Ratio, as per the recent announcement from the Reserve Bank of India?

[A] 4%

[B] 3.75%

[C] 3.5%

[D] 3% ☒

- ✓ The Governor of the Reserve Bank of India recently made an announcement after the Monetary Policy committee (MPC) meeting, to tackle the crisis caused by Covid-19 pandemic.

- ✓ RBI had advanced the MPC meeting due on March 31–April 3 to March 24–27. It has announced that the Cash Reserve Ratio has been decreased 100 bps to 3 % and the repo rate has been decreased to 4.4 %.

- ✓ All commercial banks are permitted to allow a 3-month moratorium on repayment of term loan EMIs.

4. The Ministry of Health through a special amendment has categorised hydroxychloroquine (HCQS) under which schedule of Drugs & Cosmetics Rules?

[A] Schedule G1

[B] Schedule H1 ☒

[C] Schedule J1

[D] Schedule K1

- ✓ Under the Drugs & Cosmetics Rules, those drugs classified under Schedule H1 should not be sold over the counter. The schedule was introduced in the year 2013.
- ✓ Earlier, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommended the drug for front line medical workers and high risk-people who were in contact with the coronavirus infected patient. As common people rushed to buy this medicine in large numbers, there were reports of hoarding and shortage of this medicine.

5. Which ratings agency has decreased India's growth in 2020 to 2.5%, as per its Global Macro Outlook 2020–21 report?

[A] CRISIL

[B] S&P

[C] Moody's Investors Service ☒

[D] ICRA

- ✓ Ratings Agency Moody's Investors Service has slashed India's 2020 growth forecast to 2.5% within three weeks of its previous downgrade to 5.3%.
- ✓ According to the Global Macro Outlook 2020–21 recently released by Moody's, the 21-day lockdown announced by the Indian Prime Minister will result in a sharp loss in incomes. Earlier it had reduced the growth rate to 5.3% from 5.4%.

6. In the relief package announced by the centre, the women self-help groups (SHGs) will be given collateral-free loans up to Rs 20 lakh under which scheme?

[A] Deen Dayal National Livelihood Mission ☒

[B] MUDRA Scheme

[C] Gram Swaraj Yojana

[D] Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

- ✓ The Union Finance Minister has recently announced a relief package for the poor & vulnerable people amid the 21 day lockdown of the country announced by the PM.
- ✓ Among the relief measures, women self-help groups (SHGs) will be provided collateral-free loans up to Rs 20 lakh from Rs 10 lakh earlier, under the Deen Dayal National Livelihood Mission. This step is expected to impact 7 crore members through 63 lakh SHGs.

7. In the G20's 1<sup>st</sup> virtual summit, what is the stimulus package the member countries pledged to infuse into the global economy?

[A] \$1 trillion

[B] \$2 trillion

[C] \$5 trillion ☒

[D] \$10 trillion

- ✓ The G20's 1<sup>st</sup> ever virtual summit, chaired by Saudi Arabia, was recently held through video conferencing. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi also attended the virtual meeting.
- ✓ Leaders of the G20 major economies pledged to restore global growth and infuse over \$5 trillion into the global economy. The countries also vowed to take necessary steps to minimize the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Which organisation has launched a campaign called 'StayHomeIndiaWithBooks', to encourage people to stay home amid the COVID-19 pandemic?

[A] National Book Trust ☒

[B] National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

[C] National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)

[D] Press Trust of India

- ✓ National Book Trust of the Union Human Resource Development Ministry has launched a campaign called

'StayHomeIndiaWithBooks', to encourage people to stay home amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ✓ As a part of this initiative, NBT is making its select and best selling books available for free download. More than 100 books are made available in PDF format and can be downloaded from the website of NBT.

9. What is the name of the mobile application launched by the Indian government to track the risk of coronavirus infection?

[A] Corona Suraksha [B] Corona Kavach ☒

[C] Corona Raksh [D] Corona Sevak

- ✓ The Government of India has launched a mobile application to track the risk of coronavirus infection called 'Corona Kavach'.
- ✓ The application is jointly developed by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It uses the person's location to assess if they are in the high risk geographical zone. It is now available in beta version in the Google Play Store.

10. What is the daily wage per person in MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) scheme, after the relief package of the government?

[A] Rs. 182

[B] Rs. 192

[C] Rs. 202 ☒

[D] Rs. 242

- ✓ The Central Government recently unveiled a Rs. 1.7 lakh crore worth fiscal stimulus to help people tackle the lock down amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- ✓ Among various measures announced by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, it was notified that the MGNREGA wages will rise to Rs 202 per day per person from the earlier daily wage of Rs 182. This step is expected to benefit 136.2 million families.

1. 'Operation Namaste' is the initiative of which Indian armed force to combat the spread of COVID-19 in the country?

- [A] Indian Army ☒ [B] Indian Navy  
[C] Indian Air Force [D] Indian Coast Guard

✓ As per the recent announcement of the Army Chief General MM Naravane, the Indian Army has launched its anti-COVID-19 operations in the code-name of Operation Namaste.

✓ Under the operation, Indian Army has established eight quarantine facilities across the country, so far. It has also established command wise helplines to help the Army personnel. The Army Chief General asked the families of the Army personnel and veterans to approach the nearest Army camp in case of problems.

2. Which technological firm launched a COVID-19 chatbot on its messaging platform in partnership with the Union Health Ministry and MyGov?

- [A] Google [B] Facebook ☒  
[C] Microsoft [D] Telegram

✓ Technology major Facebook recently launched a COVID-19 chatbot on its messaging platform, FB Messenger.

✓ The chatbot has been launched in partnership with the Union Health Ministry of India and MyGov, to create awareness around the pandemic in the country. This helpdesk chatbot will provide reliable information about the disease and demystify the rumours and fake news related to the pandemic.

3. A Ramachandran, who recently passed away in Kerala, was associated with which profession?

- [A] Politician [B] Scientist ☒  
[C] Sportsperson [D] Musician

✓ Renowned Scientist in the field of Fisheries and Ocean studies, Dr A Ramachandran passed away in Kerala, at the age of 61. He was serving as the Vice Chancellor of Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies.

✓ He had also served as an expert member in several national and international fisheries organisations. He led the first ever International Blue Economy Congress in the country.

4. Which state has set up inter-departmental committees named "Team-11", to fight the coronavirus spread?

- [A] Odisha [B] Uttar Pradesh ☒  
[C] Maharashtra [D] Gujarat

✓ The CM of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath has set up "Team-11" which comprises of inter-departmental committees headed by bureaucrats to fight the COVID-19 virus spread.

✓ The committees are set up to examine and suggest measures on the multi-lateral effects of the virus outbreak in the state including medical care to victims, supply of essentials and tackle jobless workers.

5. Beni Prasad Verma, who recently passed away, was a founding member of which political party?

- [A] Samajwadi Party ☒ [B] Bahujan Samaj Party  
[C] Rashtriya Janata Dal [D] Rashtriya Lok Dal

✓ One of the Founding members of the Samajwadi Party, Beni Prasad Verma (80) passed away recently. He had served as the Union Telecom Minister from 1996 to 1998 in the cabinet of then Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda.

✓ He has also been the Union Steel Minister. He was closely associated with the party leader Mulayam Singh Yadav.

6. The Indian Government sold its 66.67% stake in Kamarajar Port Ltd for Rs 2,383 crore. The port is located in which state?

- [A] Tamil Nadu ☒ [B] Andhra Pradesh  
[C] Kerala [D] Karnataka

✓ The 12<sup>th</sup> major port of India, Kamarajar Port is located on the Coromandel Coast about 24 km north of Chennai Port, in the state of Tamil Nadu.

- ✓ It was seen in news recently as the Indian Government raises Rs. 2,383 crores by strategically selling its 66.67% stake in Kamarajar Port Ltd to Chennai Port Trust.

- ✓ The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management manages the strategic disinvestments and share sale of the Government in Central Public Sector Enterprises.

7. Which country has launched a military communication satellite called Lockheed Martin Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite?

- [A] France [B] Israel  
[C] United States ☒ [D] South Korea

- ✓ The United States Space Force launched a military communication satellite called Lockheed Martin Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite.
- ✓ The satellite was launched aboard an Atlas V551 rocket, from Cape Canaveral in Florida. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> and final in the Lockheed Martin AEHF constellation. This ultra-secure satellite is launched amid the heavy losses the country is facing due to the coronavirus pandemic.

8. The Government of India sold its stake in THDC India Ltd and NEEPCO (North Eastern Electric Power Corp) to which Indian public sector undertaking?

- [A] NTPC Ltd ☒  
[B] Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)  
[C] Power Grid Corporation of India  
[D] Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited

- ✓ The Indian government has sold its entire 74.49% stake in THDC India Ltd (THDCIL) for Rs 7,500 crore and its 100% in NEEPCO for Rs 4,000 crore to NTPC Ltd through the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM).
- ✓ By the strategic disinvestment of its shares in THDCIL, NEEPCO and Kamarajar Port, the government has raised Rs 13,883 crore.

- ✓ The total disinvestment figures for the current financial year has reached Rs 48,883 crore, which is lower than the Revised Estimates of Rs 65,000 crore.

9. Japanese government funding agency JICA has signed Rs 15,295 crore loan agreements with India, for projects in which sector?

- [A] Railway Infrastructure ☒ [B] Rural Development  
[C] Disaster Management [D] Roadways

- ✓ Japanese government funding agency JICA has signed Rs 15,295 crore loan agreements with India, for three mega rail infrastructure projects.
- ✓ By these agreements, Rs 8,553 crore of the loan is proposed to be used for phase-1 of the Dedicated Freight Corridor, Rs 4,262 crore for Mumbai Trans Harbour Link Project (II) and Rs 2,480 crore for the Mumbai Metro Line 3 Project (III).

10. As per the recent report of SBI Research's Ecowrap, what will be the economic growth of India in 2020-21?

- [A] 3.6% [B] 3.2% [C] 3.0% [D] 2.6% ☒

- ✓ According to a recent report by SBI Research's Ecowrap, the economic growth of India is estimated to fall to 2.6 % in 2020-21. The dip in the growth estimate is mainly due to the lockdown amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- ✓ The organisation also revised its GDP growth of the country for 2019-20 to 4.5% from its earlier estimate of 5%.