



Civil Service India

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NATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL



ART & CULTURE

ECONOMICS



SPORTS

ENVIRONMENT



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

WEEKLY
CURRENT AFFAIR

WEEK- MARCH 15 TO 21

INDIA'S NO.1 PORTAL FOR IAS ASPIRANTS

International

Bangladesh:



It is a country which is bordered by the Indian states of West Bengal to the west and north, Assam to the north, Meghalaya to the north and northeast, and Tripura and Mizoram to the east. To the southeast, it shares a boundary with Myanmar (Burma). The southern part of Bangladesh opens into the Bay of Bengal. Its Capital is Dhaka. The currency used here is

Bangladeshi Taka. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh is Sheikh Hasina.

Recently, Bangladesh celebrated the birth centenary of its founder President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. However any public gatherings were barred for the event due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The day marks the beginning of the yearlong celebration of the birth centenary named 'Mujib Barsho' in Bangladesh and across the world. The video message of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also broadcasted on the occasion. Prime Minister of India was expected to attend as a chief guest but was cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: He was a Bangladeshi politician and statesman. He was a leader in the push for political autonomy for then-East Pakistan, eventually becoming a central figure in the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh. He was known as Sheikh Mujib. He was also known as Bangabandhu or a Friend of Bengal. He served as the first president of Bangladesh and later as its prime minister. He was murdered along with most of his family members in a military coup on Aug. 15, 1975. The current Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina is the eldest daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Iraq:



It is officially the Republic of Iraq. It is a country in Western Asia, bordered by Turkey to the north, Iran to the east, Kuwait to the southeast, Saudi Arabia to the south, Jordan to the southwest and Syria to the west. The capital city of Iraq is Baghdad. The currency used here is Iraqi Dinar. The current President of Iraq is Barham Salih.

Recently, the 8th President of Iraq Barham Salih appointed Adnan al-Zurfi as the new Prime Minister of Iraq. He will replace Mohammed Allawi.

Adnan al-Zurfi (54) is a former governor of the holy Shia city of Najaf heads the Nasr parliamentary grouping of former Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi.

Saudi Arabia:



Saudi Arabia, officially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is a country in Western Asia constituting the bulk of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by Jordan and Iraq to the north, Kuwait to the northeast, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates to the east, Oman to the

southeast and Yemen to the south; it is separated from Egypt and Israel by the Gulf of Aqaba. Its Capital city is Riyadh. The currency used here is Saudi riyal.

Recently, Saudi Arabia accepted has accepted a proposal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to hold an "extraordinary" virtual G20 Summit. His Highness, Mohammed bin Salman agreed to the exercise at the level of G20 leaders. At present Saudi Arabia is the current chair of the G20 bloc. This decision was taken amid the fear of coronavirus pandemic. The G20 leaders' summit will be held in March 2020.

G20 Summit: G20 refers to Group of Twenty. It is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU). The heads of the G20 nations held summits twice in 2009 and twice in 2010. Since the November 2011 Cannes summit, G20 summits have been held annually.

International Day of Happiness:



The International Day of Happiness is celebrated globally on 20 March every year. It was conceptualized and founded by Jayme Illien to advance a new paradigm which achieves the UN's global goals and the happiness, wellbeing, and freedom of all life on earth. The day aims to inspire and advance the global happiness movement. International Happiness Day was celebrated for the first time in 2013.

The theme of International Day of Happiness 2020 is "Happiness For All, For Ever". The Theme aims at focusing on what we have in common, rather than what divides us. The United Nations (UN) on this day called all 206 nations to adopt "Ten Steps to Global Happiness". The United Nations also released the World Happiness Index. Finland topped the ranking.



National

National Vaccination Day:



The National Vaccination Day is also known as the National Immunization Day. The day is observed on the 16th of March every year. The day is celebrated by the Government of India to make people aware of the importance of vaccination. The first dose of an oral vaccine against polio was given in India on 16 March 1995. Since then India has been observing the Pulse Polio Programme. The prime purpose behind the celebration of National Vaccination Day is to

make all people aware of arming against polio and eradicating it completely from the world.

India was certified as a polio-free country along with 11 other countries of the South-East Asia Region of the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the 27th of March 2014. These countries were Indonesia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The last case of polio patients in India was reported on 13 January 2011.

NSM:



It refers to National Supercomputing Mission. The National Super Computer Mission was launched by the GoI in 2015. It was set up to provide the country with supercomputing infrastructure to meet the increasing computational demands of academia, researchers, MSMEs, and start-ups. The main aim of the mission is to create

designs and manufacture supercomputers indigenously in India. Currently India has top 5 Super Computers that are ranked in the top 500 list of Super Computers in the World.

Recently, GoI has approved of three more Super Computers to be installed at IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Hyderabad and JN Centre for Advanced Scientific Research by April 2020. Jointly implemented by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and led by C-DAC and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, the mission supports the government's vision of 'Digital India' and 'Make in India' initiatives.

Indian polity

Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2020:



Lok Sabha on 18 March 2020 passed the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2020 through a voice vote. The Bill was tabled in the lower house for consideration by Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on 4 February 2020 to amend the Aircraft Act, 1934. According to the Civil Aviation Minister, the amendments would fulfill the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The amended Bill also seeks to convert the 3 existing bodies under the Ministry of Civil Aviation which are Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and the Aircraft Accidents Investigation Bureau (AAIB) into statutory bodies. This would enable the three regulatory bodies in the Civil Aviation sector in India to become more effective, which then would lead to enhancement in the level of safety and security of aircraft operations in the country. Under the Act, the Central government may make rules on several matters that include registration of aircraft, regulating air transport services, and prohibition of flight over any specified area. Each of these 3 bodies will be headed by a Director General who will be appointed by the Centre.

Supreme Court:



The Supreme Court of India is the highest judicial forum and final court of appeal under the Constitution of India, the highest constitutional court, with the power of constitutional review. It consists of the Chief Justice of India and a maximum of 34 judges, it has extensive powers in the form of original, appellate and advisory jurisdictions. It is regarded as the most powerful public

institution in India. It was established on 26 January 1950. It's headquartered in New Delhi. The current CJI of the Supreme Court is Sharad Arvind Bobde.

The Supreme Court in a historic judgment, recently, granted permanent commission for women in the Indian Navy. A bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said that there cannot be any gender discrimination and denying permanent commission to women officers who have served the nation would result in a serious miscarriage of justice.

Maintaining that women and men officers should be treated equally, the Supreme Court asked the Centre to complete the modalities within three months.

Earlier the women in the Indian Armed forces like Indian Army, Indian Air force and Indian Navy were only allowed to have Short Service Commission. The Short Service Commission is basically a duty period of 10-14 years only after this one will get retired from the service.

Rajya Sabha:



The Rajya Sabha or Council of States is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of India. It is a permanent body and is not subject to dissolution. At present the Rajya Sabha has a maximum membership of 245, of which 233 are elected by the legislatures of the states and union territories using single transferable votes through Open Ballot while the President has the power to appoint 12 members for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social services. The Upper House was founded on 3 April 1952 by the Constituent Assembly of India. It is headquartered in New Delhi. Its Chairperson is Venkaiah Naidu.

Recently, the former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi took an oath as Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament. He was nominated to Rajya Sabha by the President Ram Nath Kovind on 16 March 2020. He is the first former CJI to be nominated to Rajya Sabha. The President nominated Ranjan Gogoi for the Upper House under "sub-clause (a) of clause (1) of Article 80 of the Constitution of India, read with clause (3) of that article".

Article 80-Clause (3): Article 80-Clause states that the President has powers to nominate persons with special knowledge to the council of states. The person eligible must have special knowledge in Literature, art, science and social service.

Ranjan Gogoi: He was the 46th Chief Justice of India. He was appointed a permanent judge of the Gauhati High Court on February 28, 2001. On 12 February 2011 he was appointed as the Judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court. He was elevated to the top court the following year. He was appointed as CJI by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind on 3rd October 2018, and retired on 17th November 2019. He had retired from the position after delivering the historic Ayodhya Verdict. He was succeeded by SA Bobde.

Supreme Court:



Supreme Court (SC) in a historic judgment, recently, removed the BJP lawmaker and Manipur Forest Cabinet Minister Thounaojam Shyamkumar Singh from the state cabinet. For the first time the Supreme Court invoked its plenary powers to remove him over Disqualification petition. He has also been restrained from entering the Legislative assembly.

Mr Shyamkumar had won the 2017 assembly elections on Congress Ticket but later switched over to BJP to become the minister of Town Planning, forest and Environment. Disqualification petitions were filed against him to the speaker by the other MLAs. The petition filed by them was still pending before the speaker of the Manipur Assembly since 2017. The Speaker also failed to take any decision within the stipulated time period of 4 weeks which was provided by the Supreme Court in the 21st January, 2020 order. When no action was taken then the issue was appealed to Supreme Court. The apex court invoked Article 142 and removed the minister from the cabinet.

Article 142: Article 142 of the Indian constitution states that the Supreme Court can pass an order doing “complete justice” to matters pending before it.

Article 212: Article 212 of the Constitution bars courts from inquiring into proceedings of the Legislature. No members, officers of the state can be subjected to jurisdiction while exercising his duties or regulating procedures, maintaining order. However, if any matters are left unsolved the SC can overrule this Act and invoke Article 142.

Under Anti-Defection law the winning members cannot switch parties. Any member or members involved in such an act according to the law are considered disqualified.

Indian policy News

TRIFED:



It refers to Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India. TRIFED is a national-level apex organization. It functions under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It was founded in 1987. It works towards marketing development of tribal products and provides marketing support to the products made by tribals through a network of retail outlets. The current Managing Director of

TRIFED is Pravir Kumar.

Recently, TRIFED launched “Tech for Tribal” initiative. It was launched on 19th March 2020 by TRIFED along with IIT-Kanpur along with IIT-Roorkee, IIM Indore, Kalinga Institute of Social Science, Bhubaneswar and SRIJAN. This programme is supported by Ministry of MSME. The main objective of the initiative is to provide entrepreneurship skills to the tribal people enrolled under the Pradhan Mantri VanDhan Yojana(PMVDY).

TRIFED has drawn out a Five Year strategy for 10X impact in Tribal development. This initiative in later stages will be linked to Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK). The main aim of VDVKs is to provide capacity building and skill upgradation.

PMVDY: It refers to Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana. PMVDY is an initiative of the GoI that was launched in 2018 in 27 states. The Scheme aims to strengthen tribal producer companies. TRIFED is the nodal agency implementing the scheme.

APEDA:



It stands for Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority. APEDA is an apex body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. It is responsible for the export promotion of agricultural products. It was founded in 1986. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

Recently, APEDA inked a MoU with Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium(SFAC) for the development of agriculture sector. The MoU aims to uplift the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium(SFAC) and create awareness programs, outreach programs and workshops of various stakeholders.

As per the MoU, both APEDA and SFAC will work together to link the FPOs with the exporters. APEDA will also facilitate certification of organic produce/areas by the Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) assisted or identified by SFAC.

National Technical Textile Mission:



The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for creation of National Technical Textiles Mission for a period of 4 years (2020-21 to 2023-24) with an outlay of Rs.1480 crores. The National Technical Textiles Mission will have four components which are research, innovation and development, promotion and market development, export promotion and education, and training and skill development.

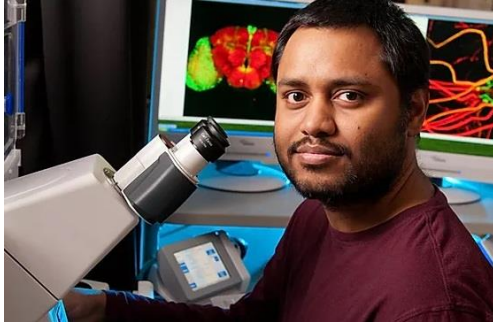
The focus of the Mission is on the development in usage of technical textiles in various flagship missions as well as programmes of the country. The main objective of the mission is an overall improvement in cost economy, water and soil conservation along with better agricultural productivity and higher income to farmers per acre of land.

The mission will also add to the promotion of manufacturing and exports activities in India. The use of geo-textiles in highways, railways and ports will result in robust infrastructure, reduced maintenance cost and higher life cycle of the infrastructure assets.

The work of the Mission is not only the promotion of innovation amongst young engineering /technology/ science standards and graduates along with creation of innovation and incubation centres and promotion of start-up and Ventures but also to generate 2 lakhs jobs in organized/ unorganized sector in the country along with holistic development of entire technical textile sector on pan-India basis.

Science and Technology

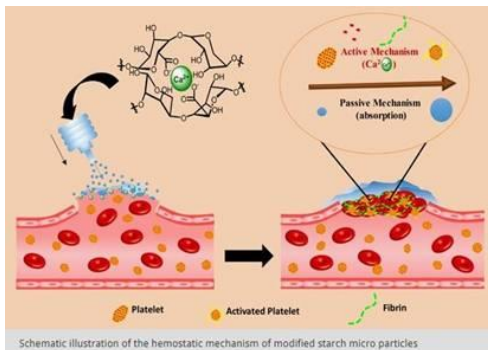
Huntington disease (HD):



It is a progressive genetic disorder that affects the brain. It causes uncontrolled movements, impaired coordination of balance and movement, a decline in cognitive abilities, difficulty in concentrating and memory lapses, mood swings and personality changes. The cause of this disease is due to mutation in a gene called HTT. The main function of HTT genes is the production of a protein called Huntingtin. They provide the instruction for making the protein. The mutation of HTT gene gives faulty instructions and as a result the normal functioning of the brain is disrupted resulting in Huntington disease.

Recently, a team of scientists from National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS) in Pune led by Dr. Amitabha Majumdar unravelled that the pathogenic protein called the Huntingtin Protein causes decrease in overall protein production. They found that Huntingtin protein in a diseased person interfered with the protein production of the cells and how faulty information was sent to the brain. They are also the cause of the reduced level of protein production of a normal cell.

INST:



It refers to Institute of Nano Science and Technology. It is an autonomous institute of Department of Science & Technology, Government of India under the Society Registration Act, 1960. It was established in January 2013 under the National Mission of Nano Science and Technology or NANO mission. The main aim of the mission is to promote growth of nano science and technology. The Chairperson of INST is C. N. Ramachandra Rao.

Recently, INST developed a starch-based 'hemostat' material named calcium-modified carboxymethyl-starch which absorbs excess fluid by concentrating the natural clotting factors in the blood that stops the rapid blood loss.

Starch Based Hemostat possesses increased absorption capacity and improved absorption. It is inexpensive, biocompatible and biodegradable. This product was developed by Dr Ghosh's team developed as a realistic solution for lower-income economies worldwide.

Environment & Climate News

Peatland:



Peatlands refers to the peat soil and the wetland habitat growing on its surface. It's formed when plant material does not fully decay in acidic and anaerobic conditions. It is composed mainly of wetland vegetation which is principally bog plants including mosses, shrubs and sedges. As it accumulates, the peat holds water as a result, this slowly creates wetter conditions that allow

the area of wetland to expand. These lands are a type of wetlands that occur in almost every country on Earth. Peatlands are the world's largest terrestrial carbon stock. It stores atleast 550 Gigatonnes of carbon globally which is more than twice the carbon stored in all the world's forests. At present, it covers 3% of the global land surface. Peatlands in India occupy about 320 square kilo metres to 1,000 square kilo metres area.

Recently, the Food and Agriculture Organization operating under United Nations (UN) released a report on Peatlands. As per the report, the Peatlands which play a crucial role in regulating global climate by acting as carbon sinks are facing degradation and need to be urgently monitored.

The cause of their degradation is mainly due to drainage, fire, agricultural use and forestry. This could trigger release of the stored carbon in a few decades which would lead to emission of green house gases. They have the potential to release up to one giga tonne of carbon. The publication which was authored by 35 experts, highlights essential case studies from Peru, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in their attempts to map and monitor peatlands.

The Indonesian and Indian Governments both have taken corrective measures to restore the peatlands. As Indonesia has forty percent of tropical peatlands, its government has created Peat Ecosystem Restoration Information System (PRIMS), an online platform that provides information about Peatlands and their restoration efforts. Whereas, in India restoration work of highland peatlands was also conducted in the Hindukush Himalayan (HKH) region. It was conducted to ensure water security in the region.

Niue Island:



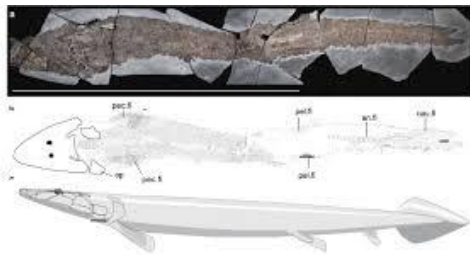
It is an island country in the South Pacific Ocean. The island is commonly referred to as "The Rock", which comes from the traditional name "Rock of Polynesia". It is well known as one of the largest upraised coral atoll in the world situated in the middle of the South Pacific within a triangle boundary of Tonga, Samoan and Cook Islands. Its capital is Alofi. The currency used here is New Zealand Dollar. The

Governor-General of Niue is Dame Patricia Reddy.

Recently, the tiny Niue Island was declared as the World's first 'Dark Sky Nation' by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA). The IDA has approved the island's application for the protection of its sky, land and sea due to the island's efforts to restrict artificial light pollution so the starry sky can be enjoyed.

Dark Sky Place: Dark Sky Places are spaces recognized for responsible lighting policies that keep the night-time environment naturally dark. Over 130 of these accredited dark sites are present across the world. .

Elpistostege watsoni:



Elpistostege is an extinct genus of tetrapod-like vertebrate that lived in the Late Devonian period. The shark-like Elpistostege watsoni is 1.6m-long. It was a slippery predator that lived in what is now eastern Canada.

Recently, Paleontologists from Flinders University in Australia working with a University from Canada have discovered the almost complete skeleton of an ancient fish known as Elpistostege watsoni. Scans of the fish's fins show it had bones that resemble those found in the human hand. The researchers examined a fossil of “Elpistostege” and according to them it is the first fish fossil that is a missing link between fish and reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals. It gives insights into how the human hand evolved from fish fins. It was discovered in Miguasha, Canada.



Sports News

Achanta Sharath Kamal:



Ace Indian paddler Achanta Sharath Kamal won the ITTF Challenger Plus Oman Open. The 37-year-old Indian veteran ended his decade-long wait for a title by defeating top-seeded Marcos Freitas of Portugal 4-2 in the final played in Muscat. Sharanth had bagged his last title in 2010 at Egypt Open.

Since then he has made two semi-final appearances, one in Morocco Open in 2011 and the other in India Open in 2017.

All England Championship:



The All England Open Badminton Championships is the world's oldest badminton tournament. It is held annually in England. With the introduction of the BWF's latest grading system, it was given Superseries status in 2007. It was upgraded to Superseries Premier status in 2011.

Recently, Axelsen of Denmark and Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei won the 2020 All-England Badminton Championships. Viktor Axelsen defeated Chou Tien-chen in men's singles while Tai Tzu Ying defeated world No.1 Chen Yu Fei in Women's singles titles. It was the third All England Open title for Tai Tzu Ying and the maiden All England Open title for Viktor Axelsen.

ISL Trophy:



It refers to Indian Super League trophy. The ISL was founded in 2013 as one of the two top-tier leagues in India, alongside the I-League.

Recently, ATK (Atlético de Kolkata) FC (Football Club) scripted history with a 3rd ISL title after beating Chennaiyin FC 3-1 in the final. In the final match that was held at the Fatorda Stadium in Goa, Javier Hernandez scored two goals and Edu Garcia one goal for ATK FC. The final was held without spectators owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ATK FC: It stands for Atlético de Kolkata Football Club. ATK FC is an Indian Professional football club. It is based in Kolkata, West Bengal. The Kolkata club won the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2014 and then in 2016 by beating Kerala Blasters in the final on both occasions. Apart from ATK, only

two other teams have won the ISL. They are Bengaluru FC (2018-19) and Chennaiyin (2015, 2017-18).

ICC:



It stands for International Cricket Council. ICC is the global governing body of cricket. It was established as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 by representatives from England, Australia and South Africa. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965. It took up its current name in 1989. It organizes world championship events such as Cricket World Cup, Women's Cricket World Cup, ICC T20 World Cup, ICC Women's T20 World Cup, ICC Champions Trophy and Under-19 Cricket World Cup. It is headquartered in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The current Chairman of ICC is Shashank Manohar.

Recently, Two Indian women, Janani Narayanan and Vrinda Rathi were named in the International Panel of ICC Development Umpires. With the inclusion of both Janani Narayanan and Vrinda Rathi, the number of women match officials across different ICC panels has gone up to 12. The announcement was made soon after the launch of 100% Cricket. 100% cricket is a 12-month campaign anticipated to build on the momentum of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020.

34 year old Janani Narayanan has been umpiring in Indian domestic tournaments since 2018 while 31 year old Vrinda Rathi has also been umpiring in Indian domestic cricket since 2018.

Economic News

OIL:



It refers to Oil India Limited. OIL, a Navratna PSU, is a fully integrated Exploration & Production (E&P) company in the upstream sector and is the second largest national oil and gas company of India as measured by total proved plus probable oil and natural gas reserves and production in India. Its operational headquarters is in Duliajan, Assam and the main headquarters is in Noida, New Delhi. It was founded in 18 February 1959. The company is a state-owned Navratna under the administrative control of India's

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Recently, OIL signed the Crude Oil Sales Agreement (COSA) with Numaligarh Refinery. The agreement was signed by the finance directors of the two companies for purchase and sale of crude oil for a term of five years. The Crude Oil Sales Agreement (COSA) will come in effect from 1st April

2020 to 31st March 2025. The agreement will streamline the sale and purchase transactions of crude oil produced from fields in North East India.

Numaligarh Refinery: It is a joint venture (JV) between Bharat Petroleum (61.65%), Oil India (26%), and Government of Assam (12.35%). It is located in Morangi, Assam and is owned by Numaligarh Refinery Limited.

Finance Commission:



The Finance Commission was established by the President of India in 1951 under Article 280 of the Indian Constitution. It was formed to define the financial relations between the central government of India and the individual state governments. It was founded on 22 November 1951. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

Recently, the Finance Commission constituted an 8-member committee under Shri N K Singh in order to build a fiscal consolidation road map for the centre and the states.

The first report by the Finance Commission was submitted to the GoI in February 2020. The Commission will submit its final report covering the financial years 2021-22 to 2025-26 by October 30. NK Singh Committee will not only recommend the definition of deficit and debt but will also define contingent liabilities of PSUs.

FC: It refers to the Fiscal Consolidation. FC is a policy adopted by the Government to reduce the deficits. The objective behind the policy is to reduce debt stocks and deficits in the policies that are undertaken by the Government. The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003 (FRBMA) is the best example for the Fiscal Consolidation measure of the Government of India.

SIDBI:



It refers to the Small Industries Development Bank of India. SIDBI is a development financial institution in India. It was founded on 2 April 1990 through an Act of Parliament. It is headquartered in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. SIDBI also coordinates the functions of institutions engaged in similar activities.

Recently, SIDBI announced its plan to launch Swavalamban Express on 5 June 2020. It seeks to empower budding entrepreneurs under its mission Swavalamban. The aim is to promote budding business aspirants and entrepreneurs. The train is to cover more than 7,000 km in 15 days during which various workshops and programmes are to be organized. The Train is to visit 11 entrepreneurial cities which are Bengaluru, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Delhi, Varanasi and Jammu. The train has been launched to fulfil the goal of India of 5 trillion USD by 2024-25.

Places in News

Maharashtra:



Maharashtra is a state in the western peninsular region of India occupying a substantial portion of the Deccan Plateau. It is bordered by the Arabian Sea to the west, the Indian states of Karnataka and Goa to the south, Telangana to the southeast and Chhattisgarh to the east, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to the north, and the Indian union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu to the north west. It was formed on 1 May 1960. It

was formed by merging the western and south-western parts of the Bombay State, Berar and Vidarbha, and the north-western parts of the Hyderabad State and splitting Saurashtra (in present-day Gujarat) by the States Reorganisation Act. It is famous for its caves and rock-cut architecture as in Ajanta Ellora Caves that is also one of the UNESCO as World Heritage Site. Its capital is Mumbai. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Maharashtra are Uddhav Thackeray and Bhagat Singh Koshiyari respectively.

Recently, the Minister of State (I/C) for Shipping and Chemical & Fertilizers Shri Mansukh Mandaviya launched ROPAX Ferry Vessel and its Terminal at Mandwa in Maharashtra. The vessel was built in Greece and it can carry 200 cars and 1,000 passengers. It is also is capable of plying even during monsoon.

Mumbai Port Trust developed infrastructure for ROPAX service at Ferry wharf while Maharashtra Maritime Board developed infrastructure facilities at Mandwa under the ROPAX project.

Mumbai Central station:



The Maharashtra state cabinet has approved the renaming Mumbai Central Terminus station as Nana Shankarseth Terminus Station or Jagannath Sunkersett. The proposal which was initiated by the transport ministry headed by Anil Parab is sent to the Ministry of Railways for its approval.

Jagannath Shankarseth: Jagannath "Nana" Shankarsheth (1803-1865) was a Maharashtrian philanthropist and educationist. He was a very reliable businessman. He along with Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy founded the Indian Railway Association in 1845. He also founded the Bombay Association which was the first political organization in Bombay Presidency, on 26 August 1852. He is famous for his contribution to Mumbai's development.

Chennai:



Chennai also known as Madras is the capital of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is located on the Coromandel Coast off the Bay of Bengal. It is the fourth largest city of India. It was founded in 1661 by the British East India Company.

Recently, a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's (NCLAT) bench has been established in Chennai to handle matters arising from Southern states. The Central Government had notified the constitution of NCLAT, Chennai Bench as its requirement was felt in there. As per the Notification dated March 13, 2020, the NCLAT, Chennai shall hear appeals from the National Company Law Tribunals having jurisdiction over Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Puducherry and Lakshadweep.

The Notification also added that the NCLAT at New Delhi shall be known as the Pradhan Peeth (Principal Bench). It will continue to hear appeals other than those in the jurisdiction of the Chennai Bench.

NCLAT: It refers to the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal. It was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 for hearing appeals against the orders of the NCLT. It was created to hear the appeals against the orders of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) from June 01, 2016. It is not only an appellate tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by NCLT under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code but also the Appellate Tribunal to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction issued or decision made or order passed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

Madhya Pradesh:



Madhya Pradesh (MP) is the second largest Indian state by area. It borders the states of Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the southeast, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west, and Rajasthan to the northwest. Its capital is Bhopal. The Governor of Madhya Pradesh is Lal Ji Tandon respectively.

Recently, Kamal Nath who was sworn-in as the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh after winning the state Assembly polls held in 2018 resigned. His resignation came ahead of the floor test which was scheduled to be held on 20th March 2020 in the state assembly. He submitted his resignation to the governor of Madhya Pradesh Lal Ji Tandon. Kamal Nath's government was pushed into crisis by Jyotiraditya Scindia, who lost 2019 election in Madhya Pradesh joined BJP ending his association with Congress party along with 22 ruling party MLAs.

Uttarakhand:



Uttarakhand, a state in northern India crossed by the Himalayas. It is known for the natural environment of the Himalayas, the Bhabar and the Terai and also for its Hindu pilgrimage sites. It is often referred to as the "Devabhumi" (literally "Land of the Gods").

Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India On 9 November 2000. it was carved from the Himalayan districts of Uttar Pradesh. Its winter Capital is Dehradun and summer capital is

Gairsain. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttarakhand are Trivendra Singh Rawat and Baby Rani Maurya respectively.

Recently, the Government of Uttarakhand abolished reservation promotion in the state government jobs. This major decision was taken by the Trivendra Rawat government on completion of three years of its tenure.

Following the state government's order, the employees from the General-OBC categories ended their strike who had been staging a protest, demanding the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision on the issue. The state government also issued orders regarding departmental promotion committee (DPC).

The state government's order said that as per the Supreme Court's decision, the government has abolished the promotion ban dated September 11, 2019. Besides, the state government order dated September 5, 2012 banning reservation in promotions has also come into effect. Further action will be taken as per the order.

Defence

CRPF:



It refers to the Central Reserve police Force. The CRPF is largest Central Armed Police Force in India. It functions under the authority of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) of the Government of India. Besides law and order and counter-insurgency duties, the CRPF has played an increasingly large role in India's general elections. Recently, the CRPF signed a deal with a disability support NGO Aditya Mehta Foundation to train its troops, who lost their

limbs in operations, in various skills including cyber operations, artificial intelligence and para-sports. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was formalized between the force and the Aditya Mehta Foundation here in presence of CRPF Director General (DG) A P Maheshwari. The MoU aims to create new opportunities for such personnel who remain an integral part of the force.

As part of the CRPF Divyang Warriors Skill Development Initiative, officers and men will undergo various sports and skill development activities at Hyderabad in coordination with AMF.

The Director General also honoured 5 such specially-abled personnel of the force with DG's commendation disc and certificates for bringing laurels in the field of para-sports.

Ordnance Factory Day:



The Ordnance Factory Day is observed on the 18 March. The Ordnance Factories observed its 219th foundation day across the country. It was on this day in the year March 1801 the first Ordnance Factory was established at Cossipore, Calcutta (now Kolkata). It was known as the Gun Carriage Agency (now known as Gun & Shell Factory, Cossipore). The Ordnance Factories are a conglomerate of

41 ordnance factories. It functions under the aegis of its corporate headquarters OFB, in Kolkata.

OFB: It refers to Ordnance Factory Board. The OFB is an industrial organization, functioning under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Government of India. It works in the field of Research, Development, Production, Testing, Marketing, and Logistics. It is an organization of around 41 ordnance factories, 9 training institutes, 3 regional marketing centers and 4 regional controllers of safety. In 1712, the Dutch Ostend Company's Gun Powder Factory was established at Ichhapur. The OFB came into existence on April 2, 1979 in the new form. It possesses 200 years of experience in defence production. The OFB is headquartered at Kolkata, West Bengal.

Tejas:



It is the smallest and lightest in its class of contemporary supersonic combat aircraft. The Tejas is the second supersonic fighter developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) after the HAL HF-24 Marut. HAL's 83 fighter jets is the new advanced Mk1A version of the Tejas aircraft.

Recently, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved the procurement of 83 indigenous Tejas

fighter aircraft for Indian Air Force (IAF). The proposal which is considered as a major boost to Make in India is to be forwarded for the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS). These aircrafts are expected to be the backbone of Indian Air Force.

The DAC has also approved the acquisition of indigenous defence equipments worth Rs 1,300 crore.

Defence Procurement Procedure 2020:



Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh launched the draft of new Defence Procurement Procedure at a function in New Delhi. It was launched on 20 March 2020 with an aim to increase the indigenous manufacturing and reducing timelines for procurement of defence equipment.

The policy is aligned with the vision of the Indian government

to empower the private industry through the Make in India initiative with the objective of turning India into a global manufacturing hub.

The government has introduced leasing as another category to get defense equipment in various categories at affordable rates.

Art and Culture

Phool Dei:



It is the Pahari harvest festival of the state Uttarakhand. Phool Dei is an auspicious folk festival which welcomes the spring season in the state. This festival is celebrated on the first day of Chaitra in the hindu calender that is March-April according to the Gregorian calendar. The festival is all about flowers and springtime. In some places especially in Pauri Garhwal region, the festival is celebrated as carnival and the celebration goes on for a month. The term 'Dei' refers to a ceremonial pudding

which is the key food in this festival that is made from jaggery. White flour and curd are also offered to everyone. Young girls, on this day, conduct most of the ceremonies.

Recently, the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Trivendra Singh Rawat celebrated the traditional harvest festival “Phool Dei”. The festival also showcases the inner bonding between the communities residing in the hills.

Chaitra Jatra Festival:



It is a festival celebrated in the Indian state of Odisha. It is celebrated in the month of Chaitra in the hindu calender. It is celebrated especially during the Tuesdays of this month. The celebrations takes place at the Tara Tarini hill shrine which is located on the Tara Tarini hill on the banks of Rushikulya River. It is one of the Shaktipeeths in India. There are 51 ShaktiPeeths in

India. The first all-women Indian Navy crew's boat that circumnavigated the globe sailed on sailboat Tarini was named after the shrine.

Recently, the Government of Odisha cancelled the festival due to coronavirus threat. There are big crowd on 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays and as the 2nd Tuesday falls on the 17th of March so the Government cancelled the festival.

Person in News

Chameli Devi Jain Award:



It is an Indian journalistic award named after Chameli Devi Jain who was a legendary freedom fighter and a community reformer. She went to prison during India's freedom struggle. The award was instituted by the Media Foundation in 1980. It is awarded annually to women in the field of journalism who recognize social concern, dedication, courage and compassion all over

India from the print, broadcast and online media category. The Chairperson of Media Foundation is Harish Khare.

Recently, the Chameli Devi Jain Award was jointly awarded to Arfa Khanum Sherwani of "The Wire" and Bengaluru-based freelancer and Rohini Mohan for outstanding woman journalist. Arfa Khanum Sherwani was awarded for her reporting from conflict situations in Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh while Rohini Mohan was awarded for her reportage on the NRC exercise in Assam which set a new benchmark for investigative journalism.

Hirdesh Kumar:



Hirdesh Kumar (47) from Uttar Pradesh is an IAS officer of 1999 batch, who is presently serving as Commissioner Secretary in the School Education Department of Jammu and Kashmir. Earlier, he was the District Magistrate in the districts such as Chitrakoot, Ghazipur and Ghaziabad.

He has been appointed as the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory by the ECI (Election Commission of India). He was appointed on the 16th of March 2020. He will replace Shailendra Kumar with effect from the date he assumes charge.

ECI: It refers to Election Commission of India. The ECI is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. It was formed on 25 January 1950. Its headquarter is in New Delhi. It functions under the jurisdiction of Government of India.

Debasish Panda:



He is a Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, New Delhi. He has been nominated as a Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) by the Central Government. His nomination is effective from March 11, 2020, and until further orders. There are two governments nominated Directors on the board of RBI. The other director of RBI

is Atanu Chakraborty.

RBI: It refers to the Reserve Bank of India. The RBI is India's central bank, which controls the issue and supply of the Indian rupee. It carries out India's monetary policy and exercises supervision and control over banks and non-banking finance companies in India. RBI was set up in 1935 under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It is headquartered in Mumbai. RBI plays an important part in the Development Strategy of the Government of India. The current Governor of RBI is Shaktikanta Das.

Yes Bank:



Yes Bank Limited is an Indian public bank headquartered in Mumbai, India. It was founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. It offers wide range of banking and financial products for corporate and retail customers through retail banking and asset management services.

Recently, the central government has appointed former SBI banker Prashant Kumar as Chief Executive and Managing Director of the Yes Bank. He was earlier appointed as the YES Bank administrator.

Apart from Kumar, Sunil Mehta who is a former Non-Executive Chairman of Punjab National Bank has been appointed as the Non-Executive Chairman of Yes Bank. Other Board members include Atul Bheda and Mahesh Krishnamurthy, both as Non-Executive Directors.

Ravinder Singh Dhillon:



He is currently serving as a Director (Projects, Public Grievance) in Power Finance Corporation (PFC) Limited. He received his graduate degree from Indian Institute of Technology New Delhi and an undergraduate degree from Thapar University. He is also on the board of Power Equity Capital Advisors Pvt Ltd. and Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corp. Ltd.

Recently, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the appointment of Ravinder Singh Dhillon as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director (MD) of Power Finance Corporation (PFC). He will be serving in this post till his superannuation on May 31, 2023.

PFC Ltd: It refers to the Power Finance Corporation Ltd. of India. It is an Indian financial institution that was formed in July 1986. It is headquartered in New Delhi. It is India's largest NBFC and Infrastructure Finance Company. It is the financial backbone of Indian Power Sector. PFC has conferred the title of a "Navratna CPSE" in June 2007.

A. Ajay Kumar:



He is a 2001 batch IFS officer. He is at present posted as the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. He has recently been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Uganda. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

Uganda: Uganda, officially the Republic of Uganda is a landlocked country in East-Central Africa. This East African country is widely known for its agricultural products such as cotton, tobacco, and tea. The landlocked nation encompasses several spectacular mountains, lakes, as well as savannas. However, it is among the poorest countries on the African continent with One-third of the population here lives below the international poverty line. Its Capital is Kampala. The currency used here is Ugandan shilling. The President of Uganda is Yoweri Museveni.

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