

Eazyprep

**MONTHLY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS**

COMPILATION

APRIL 2021

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1st April

1) Important Days

31st March: International Transgender Day

International Transgender Day of Visibility observed globally on 31st March every year.

This day is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide.

The day was founded by US-based transgender activist Rachel Crandall of Michigan in 2009.

Quick Fact: This day has been spearheaded by the U.S.-based youth advocacy organization Trans Student Educational Resources.

2) Awards

Dr Sharankumar Limbale to receive Saraswati Samman 2020

Noted Marathi writer Dr Sharankumar Limbale will receive Saraswati Samman, 2020 for his book Sanatan.

The award carries fifteen lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque.

Saraswati Samman, instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991, is recognised as the most prestigious and highest literary award in the country.

Quick Fact: Dr Limbale's Sanatan has been published in 2018

3) Awards

Maggie O'Farrell's 'Hamnet' wins book critics award for fiction

Maggie O'Farrell's Hamnet, an imagined take on the death of Shakespeare's son from the bubonic plague, has won the National Book Critics Circle prize for fiction.

Hamnet, an unfortunately well-timed story for the current pandemic, explores the impact of the boy's illness and death on his family.

He was Shakespeare's only son, and scholars have long speculated about his influence on 'Hamlet', which Shakespeare worked on in the years following Hamnet's death.

Quick Fact: Maggie O'Farrell is an Irish-British novelist and her debut novel, After You'd Gone, received international acclaim and won the Betty Trask Award in 2000.

4) National Affairs

The Union Bank of India launches “UNI – CARBON CARD”

Union Bank of India has launched “UNI – CARBON CARD”, an HPCL co-branded credit card on the Rupay platform of NPCI.

It will create an opportunity to create value for the customers.

The card is offered to salaried and others. The card limit offered is 20% of gross annual income with a minimum of Rs 50,000/- with no upper limit.

Quick Fact: The Union Bank's CEO is Rajkiran Rai G. and its tagline is 'Good People to Bank with'.

5) Sports Affairs

India tops the medals tally with 15 gold at Delhi ISSF Shooting World Cup

India finished at the top of the medals table at the 2021 ISSF World Cup New Delhi, held from 18 to 29 March 2021.

India secured 30 medals which included 15 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze.

The USA came second with eight medals including four gold, three silver and one bronze.

Quick Fact: The ISSF Presidency is held by Mr. Vladimir Lisin, a Russian steel tycoon and President of the European Shooting Federation.

2nd April

1) Miscellaneous - Discovery

New Butterfly species discovered in Western Ghats

This is the first time that a butterfly species was discovered by an all-Indian research team.

A new taxon of Lycaenid butterfly belongs to the Nacaduba genus.

The name of the butterfly species was suggested as Ramaswami's Six Line blue and 'Ceylon Varayanneeli'.

Quick Fact: Till now, the butterfly species is limited to Agasthyamalais in Western Ghats and Sri Lanka.

2) Awards

Rajinikanth to be honoured with prestigious 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award

Legendary Indian actor Rajinikanth will be honoured with the 51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his outstanding contribution to Indian cinema.

As informed by Union Minister Prakash Javadekar on April 1, 2021, Rajinikanth has now become the 12th South Indian to win the coveted award.

This award is India's highest honour in cinema and is presented annually at the National Film Awards by the Directorate of Film Festivals.

Quick Fact: The first-ever recipient of the award was actress Devika Rani in 1969.

3) Sports News

Lewis Hamilton won bahrain Grand Prix 2021

Mercedes star Lewis Hamilton got his bid for an eighth world title off to a thrilling start with victory in the Bahrain Grand Prix 2021.

This is Hamilton's 96th career win.

Max Verstappen (Red bull) and V Bottas (Mercedes) stand 2nd and 3rd Position Respectively.

Quick Fact: The event is officially known as the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2021.

4) Important Days

Utkal Divas or Odisha Day: April 1st

Utkal Divas or Utkala Dibasha is celebrated to remember the formation of the Odisha state after a struggle to be recognised as an independent state.

Under British rule, Odisha was part of the Bengal presidency, which consisted of the present-day Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha.

The state was originally called Orissa but the Lok Sabha passed the Orissa Bill, and Constitution Bill (113rd amendment), in March 2011 to rename it Odisha.

Quick Fact: The capital of Odisha is Bhubaneswar and the Chief Minister is Naveen Patnaik. The Governor of Odisha is Ganeshi Lal.

5) Book Publishings

A book titled “Names of the Women” by Jeet Thayil

This book talks about the women whose roles were suppressed, reduced, or erased in the Gospels.

Jeet Thayil is a renowned author, best known for his book ‘Narcopolis’ which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2012 and won the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.

His most recent book, ‘Low’, was released in 2020.

Quick Fact: Thayil's poetry collection ‘These Errors are Correct’ was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for English in 2012.

3rd April

1) Economy

Updates on New Rates on PPF and Small Savings Scheme

The government had declared a reduction of 40-110 base points in the interest of Small Savings Scheme like PPF, and National Savings Certificate.

Other schemes in this category are Sukanya Samridhi Account Scheme, Senior Citizen Savings Scheme and Kisan Vikas Patra.

In view of the large public outcry, the decision was then rescinded.

2) Economy

Global Gender Gap Index 2021

India has ranked 140 among 156 countries and the third worst among South Asian nations.

Largest decrease has been seen in the political empowerment subindex with female ministers decreasing from 23.1% in 2019 to 9.1% in 2021.

The top 10 most gender-equal countries in the world are Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Rwanda, Sweden, Ireland, and Switzerland. Iceland has topped the index 12 times, including 2021.

Quick Fact: Global Gender Gap Index is published by World Economic Forum.

3) Environment

Odisha Proposes Second Biosphere Reserve

The state government of Odisha has proposed a second Biosphere Reserve in Mahendragiri of southern Odisha.

Mahendragiri is also the second highest peak of the state

The region is a transitional zone between the flora and fauna of southern India and the Himalayas and is thus an ecological estuary of genetic diversity.

4) Science and Technology

World's first and only COVID animal vaccine developed in Russia

The world's first animal vaccine against COVID-19 has been named Carnivac-Cov and has been registered in Russia

It will prevent the virus mutating in animals

It has been developed by a unit of Rosselkhoznadzor, Russia's agriculture safety watchdog.

5) Awards

National Book Critics Awards declared

The winners of the National Book Critics Awards are:

1. Hamnet, by Maggie O'Farrell's book in the Fiction category
2. Island on Fire: The Revolt That Ended Slavery in the British Empire, by Tom Zoellner in Non Fiction
3. Stranger in the Shogun's City: A Japanese Woman and Her World, by Amy Stanley in biography
4. Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning, by Cathy Park Hong in Autobiography category

6) Awards

Dr Sharankumar Limbale wins Sarawati Samman 2020 Award

Dr. Sharankumar Limbale is a noted Marathi writer.

He has won the award for his book Manthan

Sanatan is an important social and historical document of the Dalit struggle.

Quick Fact: Saraswati Samman, instituted by KK Birla Foundation in 1991, is the most prestigious and highest literary award in India.

5th April

1) Science and Technology

First image of black hole magnetic field created

Scientists working on the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) have created an image showing the magnetic field around a black hole.

This blackhole is located in the M87 galaxy.

The image will help scientists in understanding how powerful jets of radiation are emitted by black holes.

2) Environment

India to set up its biggest floating solar power plant in Telangana

India will be setting up its biggest floating solar power plant in Ramagundam, Telangana.

The plant is scheduled to be ready by May 2021.

The current largest floating solar power plant is located in Banasura Sagar reservoir in Wayanad, Kerala.

Quick Fact: India's first floating solar power plant was set up in 2014 in Kolkata

3) National Affairs

Gol announces National Register for Driving Licenses

Ministry of Road Transport has announced creation of a National Register for Driving Licenses.

It aims to:

- a. Remove the duplication of driving licences in India
- b. Create a deterrent for rash driving by showcasing the names of revoked license-holders and red-flagging them

4) National Affairs

Indian Railways achieves record electrification

Indian Railways has achieved its highest ever electrification of sections during the year 2020-21.

In 2020-21, 6015km of electrification was done.

This electrification is 37% higher than that achieved in the previous year.

5) Sports

Men's Boxing World Championship 2023 to be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan will be hosting the 22nd edition of the Men's Boxing World Championship in 2023.

This will be its first time hosting the event on its soil.

Uzbekistan is one of the most active members of the International Boxing Association.

6) Economy

Labour Bureau launches surveys on domestic migrant workers

The surveys launched are All-India Survey of Migrant Workers and All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES).

The survey methodology is path-breaking due to its 'no-paper data collection' approach which would decrease time taken for survey by 30-40%

The surveys aim to study working and living conditions faced by migrant workers and impact of COVID 19 on their worklife.

6th April

1) Economy

World in 2030: Public Survey Report published

The World in 2030: Public Survey Report was published by UNESCO

As per the report, some of the biggest challenges to peaceful societies of 2030 are:

- a) Climate Change,
- b) Violence and Conflict,
- c) Loss of Biodiversity
- d) Discrimination and inequality
- e) Lack of food, water and housing

15000 people all over the world were surveyed for this report.

Quick Fact: Headquarters of UNESCO is located in Paris, France.

2) Economy

Women and Men in India, 2020 report published by NSO

This report is published annually by the National Statistical Office and consolidates the crucial socio-economic indicators that portray gender situation in India.

As per the report:

- a) The projected population of India in 2021 is 136.13 crores.
- b) The gender gap in literacy rates is the highest in Rajasthan, Bihar, UP
- c) The Central Council of Ministers consisted of 9.26% female ministers in 2020.

Quick Fact: The National Statistical Office operates under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

3) Economy

West Bengal Becomes Highest Contributor to Small Savings Schemes

As per the National Savings Institute, West Bengal is the highest contributor to Small Savings Scheme

It contributes 15% of the total corpus.

After West Bengal, the top contributing states are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

Quick Fact: India's Small Savings Schemes consist of twelve instruments including National Savings Certificate, Public Provident Fund, Kisan Vikas Patra and Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme.

4) Economy

India tops in global digital payments

As per UK based payments system company ACI, India has the highest number of real-time online transactions in 2020.

As per RBI, India does around 100 million digital transactions in a day.

The increase in digital payments is seen as a result of the JAM trinity, i.e. linking of Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhar cards and mobile numbers.

Quick Facts: Major players of the digital payment market of India are Paytm, PhonePe, BharatPe and Pine Labs.

5) National Affairs

Shanghai Rankings Released

Shanghai Rankings, also known as Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) for the year 2020 has been released.

No Indian university was featured in the top 100 universities. However, 15 Indian universities have made it to the 501-600 category.

The top 3 universities for 2020 rankings are: Harvard University, Stanford University and Cambridge University.

Quick Fact: Shanghai Rankings are published by the independent research organisation called Shanghai Ranking consultancy

6) Environment

Japan sees its earliest Cherry Blossoms ever

Cherry Blossoms are famous trees which bloom in Japan in April when the temperature is high enough.

In Japan, the Cherry Blossom is called Sakura.

This year, the blooming started 10 days earlier, as a sign of climate change and global warming.

Quick Fact: Japan has an ancient practice of flower-viewing, or Hanami, during Cherry Blossom season.

7th April

1) Environment

India achieves new record in ethanol fuel blending

Ethanol is added to fuels like petrol as it helps easy and complete combustion of the fuel and is a renewable fuel.

India aims to achieve 10% blending by 2022.

In this year, it has achieved its highest level of 7.2%.

Quick Fact: The Ethanol Blended Programme was launched in 2003.

2) Economy

WazirX launched India's first marketplace for NFT

WazirX is one of the leading cryptocurrency exchanges in India.

It has launched a marketplace for auctions of Non-Fungible Tokens.

A non-fungible token is a unit of data on a digital ledger called a blockchain, where each NFT can represent a unique digital item..

Examples of NFT include graphics, videos or music created online.

3) National Affairs

India completes world's highest bridge

India has constructed the world's highest bridge over Chenab river, with a height of 359 metres..

The bridge is a part of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project.

It is located in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

4) Science and Technology

Ingenuity Helicopter reaches Mars successfully

NASA's Ingenuity Helicopter has landed on Mars surface successfully.

It is a technology demonstration of powered flight in another planet.

The main challenge to be overcome by Ingenuity is withstanding the low temperature of the Mars surface.

Quick Fact: NASA headquarters is located in Washington DC, USA.

5) India and the World

E9 Education Meeting Held

E9 is a group of nine countries created to achieve the goals of the "Education for All" initiative of UNESCO.

India was represented by Minister of State for Education Sanjay Dhotre in this meeting of Education Ministers.

The theme for the meeting was: Scaling up digital learning to accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4

Quick Fact: The E9 members are Brazil, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Mexico and Nigeria.

6) International Affairs

Putin signs legislation to stay in power till 2036

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a legislation that will allow him to stay in power till 2036

Originally, Article 81 of the Russian constitution says that the same person cannot hold the office of President more than two terms in a row.

After its amendment, the 'two terms' clause stands true, but 'in a row' has been deleted.

Quick Fact: The term of the President in Russia is 6 years.

7) Person in News

Justice N V Ramana becomes news Chief Justice of India

Justice N V Ramana has been appointed the new Chief Justice of India

He shall be succeeding CJI Sharad Arvind Bobde.

NV Ramana will be India's 48th CJI.

Quick Fact: The CJI is appointed by the President of India

8th April

1) Economy

RXIL achieves record monthly throughput

RXIL is the Receivables Exchange of India.

Recently it has become the first TReDS platform to cross a monthly throughput of Rs 1000 crores. TReDS is an electronic platform that supports financing of MSMEs through multiple financiers.

The increase in monthly throughput indicates economic recovery in India, especially that of MSMEs.

Quick Fact: RXIL is a joint venture between Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and National Stock Exchange of India Limited.

2) Science and Technology

ADHD Drug approved by FDA

United States' FDA has recently approved a drug for treating ADHD patients in the age group of 6 to 17 years.

The drug, called Qelbree, is the first ADHD drug to receive approval from the FDA in ten years.

By nature, the drug is a brain stimulant.

Quick Fact: ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

3) Science and Technology

Xenobots to be made of frog stem cells

Scientists are developing extremely small living robots called xenobots from the living stem cells of the *Xenopus laevis* frog.

The self-healing robots will be used to detect diseases and deliver drugs to specific areas of the body.

The robots are less than 1 millimetre long and are made up of 500-1000 cells.

4) Miscellaneous

World Health Day observed on 7th April

World health day is observed annually on 7th April.

The day is formally observed by the World Health Organization.

The theme for this year's World Health Day was 'Building a fairer, healthier World for everyone'

5) Economy

IMF releases latest World Economic Outlook

The latest World Economic Outlook is named, "Managing Divergent Recoveries".

As per the report:

- a) Global economic recovery will be skewed for various nations, depending on individual countries' fiscal support and vaccination drives
- b) Good recovery is expected in North America, India and China
- c) US and UK are frontrunners on vaccination front, while Asia is lagging behind.
- d) Tourism and hospitality sectors have suffered huge losses due to COVID-19.

Quick Fact: IMF was established in 1945.

6) Economy

Forbes releases list of India's top 10 richest billionaires

Forbes is an American business magazine owned by the Integrated Whale Media Investments and the Forbes family.

The ten richest billionaires in India are: Mukesh Ambani, Gautham Adani, Shiv Nadar, Radhakishan Damani, Uday Kotak, Lakshmi Mittal, Kumar Birla, Cyrus Poonawalla, Dilip Shanghvi and Sunil Mittal.

The Forbes list of richest World Billionaires includes Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg.

Quick Fact: The motto of Forbes Magazine is 'Change the World'

9th April

1) Environment

India H2 Alliance formed

Major players of the global energy industry have come together to form a new coalition called the India H2 Alliance to boost hydrogen technologies in India.

It will aim to boost the hydrogen economy and supply chain in India.

The initiative was started by Reliance industries and Chart Industries.

2) Person in News

S Ramann appointed new Chairman and Managing Director of SIDBI

S Ramann has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Small Industries and Development Bank of India by the government

He is currently the CEO of National E-Governance Services Limited, and was recommended for the SIDBI role by the Banks Board Bureau

His term will be three years in duration.

3) Economy

RBI announces G-sec acquisition programme

Reserve Bank of India has recently announced a G-sec acquisition programme, i.e., G-SAP 1.0

Under the programme, the central bank will purchase government bonds of worth Rs 1 trillion

This move is being done to stabilise bond markets.

Quick Fact: Government Securities are debt instruments that are issued by Gol to borrow money and include short-term and long-term instruments.

4) Economy

RBI Consumer Confidence Index released

The Reserve Bank of India has released the report of Consumer Confidence Survey based on the survey of 5000 respondents.

It measures consumer perception on five economic variables such as employment, economic situation, price level, spending and income.

Two major parameters measured are current situation index and future expectations index, both of which declined in this report.

Quick Fact: The RBI Consumer Confidence Index is conducted every two months.

5) International Affairs

WB and IMF launch Climate Change platform for poor countries

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have joined hands to create a climate change platform for poor countries.

This platform will have the dual agenda in helping poor countries deal with their heavy debts, as well as reduce fossil fuel emissions causing climate change.

This will be done through negotiating in reducing the debt of poorer countries citing climate change and COVID-19 crisis.

Quick Fact: The headquarters of both IMF and WB are in Washington DC.

6) Economy

IMF introduces Solidarity Tax

The International Monetary Fund has introduced a temporary tax called solidarity tax.

Countries who have fared well during the covid-19 pandemic would pay additional tax as a solidarity measure to countries who have not.

This will help reduce global social inequities.

10th April

1) Science and Technology

Scientists Develop Robo Plant technology

Scientists in Singapore have developed Robo Plant, a technology to interact with plants

It interacts with plants by linking plants to electrodes.

Through this technology, plants can be controlled through the smartphone and used by farmers to detect diseases and various other functions.

2) Science and Technology

New bird species in India recorded in India

Bombay Natural History Society scientists have recorded a new species of bird, the three banded Rosefinch.

The new bird species was identified in the high-altitude coniferous forests of Arunachal Pradesh.

This new bird species belongs to the finch family of birds.

Quick Fact: Bombay Natural History Society was founded in 1883

3) Government Schemes

Project RE-HAB a huge success: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Project RE-HAB is a project of the KVIC which stands for Reducing Elephant Human Attacks using Bees.

The project uses bee boxes as a fence to prevent elephants from entering human habitation and thus reduce human-animal conflicts.

The method was first used in the Nagarhole National Park and has proven to be very useful and cost-effective.

Quick Fact: Nagarhole National Park is located in Karnataka

4) National Affairs

Govt launches ULPIN: Unique Land Parcel Identification Number

Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) scheme is set to be implemented in India by March 2022.

ULPIN will work as an Aadhar for Land and will identify every surveyed parcel of land.

It will help in digitising land records in India and curbing land fraud.

Quick Fact: ULPIN will be a fourteen-digit Alpha Numeric ID based on latitude and longitude coordinates of the land parcel.

5) India and the World

US Navy conducts Freedom of Navigation Operation in Indian Ocean Region

US Navy recently conducted Freedom of Navigation Operation in Indian Ocean Region without seeking prior permission from India.

This is India's Exclusive Economic Zone and as per Indian law, any foreign military must inform before conducting any activity in the EEZ of India. However, as per UNCLOS, countries cannot prevent ships from using Exclusive Economic Zone.

This difference is a contentious point between developed and developing countries where developed countries seek more freedom of navigation, while developing countries seek to protect their hitherto unexplored offshore resources and their independence.

Quick Fact: UNCLOS is an acronym for the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea and became active in 1982.

6) Person in News

Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II, passes away

Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II and Duke of Edinburgh passed away.

He was aged 99 and was the longest-serving consort of a reigning British monarch.

He was also the longest-lived male member of the British royal family.

12th April

1) Art and Culture

Hindi Translation of Odisha Itihaas Released

Hindi translation of “Odisha Itihaas” was released by PM Modi

The book was written by Utkal Keshari Dr Harekrushna Mahatab when he was in Ahemadnagar jail.

He was a freedom fighter and the first Chief Minister of Odisha.

2) Science and Technology

AI for Agriculture Hackathon held by Google, GoI

Google, HUL and MyGov have jointly held an Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Agriculture Hackathon.

This initiative aims to boost AI solutions in the field of Agriculture.

The initiative was launched on World Water Day.

Quick Fact: Sundar Pichai is the CEO of Google.

3) Geography

Volcano erupts in Southern Caribbean Island

A volcano called La Soufriere volcano erupted recently.

It is located on the eastern Caribbean island.

It has erupted 5 times in recent history, with the last eruption in 1979.

Quick Fact: La Soufriere means “Sulphur Outlet” in French

4) Environment

Endemic species in danger due to GHG emissions rise

As per a study published in the journal Biological Conservation, many animals and plants might face extinction if the level of greenhouse gas emissions continues to rise.

As per the report,

- a) By 2050, the islands in Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka, Philippines, and the Western Ghats will lose most of their endemic plants if current trends continue
- b) All islandic endemic species in islands are at high risk of extinction
- c) 4 out of every 5 endemic species in mountains are at the high risk of extinction
- d) In tropical regions, > 60% of endemic species are facing extinction

5) Miscellaneous

World Homeopathy Day Celebrated on 10th April

World Homeopathy day is celebrated on 10th April every year.

It commemorates the birth anniversary of the founder of Homeopathy, Dr Samuel Hahnemann.

The theme for this year’s World Homeopathy Day in India was, ‘Homeopathy: Roadmap for Integrative Medicine’

Quick Fact: The basic ideology behind homeopathy is ‘Like Cures Like’.

13th April

1) National Affairs

Gol to launch National Programme on Artificial Intelligence

A National Programme on Artificial Intelligence is going to be launched by the Government of India.

In this programme, high value datasets in PSUs will be identified and put under an Artificial Intelligence control framework to increase their safety and accessibility.

Digital India 2.0 will be launched to support this programme.

2) Person in News

Noura al Matroushi becomes first Female Astronaut of UAE

Noura al-Matroushi has been selected as the first female astronaut of UAE She will be trained by NASA for future space exploration programmes

Her training will take place in Johnson Space Centre of NASA in Texas.

Quick Fact: Hazza al-Mansoori was the first UAE astronaut to enter space

3) Science and Technology

World's first gamified Sanskrit Learning Application created

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has partnered with the Gamapp Sportswizz Tech Private Limited to launch 'Little Guru' application

It is a gamified application for interactive teaching of Sanskrit

It is the world's first Gamified Sanskrit learning application.

4) Environment

Increase in number of endangered Irrawaddy dolphins in Chilika Lake

The Irrawaddy dolphin population in Odisha's Chilika lake has increased from 146 to 162 in 2021.

The count was made during an annual dolphin census in the world's second largest lagoon..

The dolphin distribution in Chilika lake is the highest single lagoon population in the world.

Quick Fact: Irrawaddy Dolphins are listed under the Endangered category in the IUCN Red List.

5) Science and Technology

NASA's Artemis Programme

The Artemis Programme is an international human space flight programme which aims to launch a manned mission to the south pole region of the moon by 2024.

It plans to land the first person of color as well as the first woman of the moon.

Indian American astronaut Raja Chari is one of the finalised 18 astronauts of the programme.

6) Awards

AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020 Presented

AICTE Lilavati Awards, 2020 were presented by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank

The main theme of the awards was 'Women Empowerment'.

The awards are presented every year as a part of AICTE Innovative education programme to empower women.

Quick Fact: The awards are named after mathematician Bhaskara II's 12th Century book, 'Lilawati'.

7) International Affairs

Bhutan vaccinates 93% of adults in 16 days

Bhutan has completed vaccinating 93% of its adult population in a record time of 16 days.

The success of the vaccination programme has been attributed to:

- a) Bhutan's small population
- b) Its unique Dessuup programme under which trained volunteers helped in the vaccination drives.

Quick Fact: Dessuup is the highest form of voluntary act in Bhutan.

14th April

1) Art and Culture

Nomadland wins 4 awards at BAFTA Awards

BAFTA stands for British Academy of Film and Television Arts.

Nomadland won the BAFTA award for best picture, best director, best actress and best cinematography.

Chloe Zhao became the first woman of colour and the second woman to win a BAFTA award for best director.

Indian Netflix film, The White Tiger, was nominated for the categories of best actor and best adapted screenplay.

Quick Fact: BAFTA was founded in 1947 as the British Film Academy

2) Environment

Scientists study Antarctica's Doomsday Glacier

Thwaites Glacier in Antarctica is known as Doomsday Glacier because of its potential to speed up global sea level rise.

Scientists were mapping the ocean currents underneath the glacier in the recent study.

According to researchers, the melting of the glacier is worse than expected.

3) Science and Technology

Expert panel recommends approval to third vaccine in India

An expert panel of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has approved emergency use of Russia's COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik-V in India.

This will be the third vaccine to be available in India after COVAXIN of Bharat Biotech and COVISHIELD of AstraZeneca.

Final decision will be taken by the Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI).

4) Person in News

Sushil Chandra appointed as Chief Election Commissioner

Sushil Chandra has been appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner by the President.

He was earlier the Election Commissioner.

He has also served as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

Quick Fact: As per Article 324 of the Indian Constitution, Chief Election Commissioner and other Election commissioners are appointed by the President of India.

5) Economy

Global food policy report 2021 released

Global Food Policy Report 2021 has been published by the International Food Policy Research Institute.

The theme for this year's report was "Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19".

As per the report, the number of poor people living under poverty will increase by 150 million as compared to the pre-pandemic levels.

15th April

1) Science and Technology

NASA's Odyssey completes 20 years

Odyssey is NASA's spacecraft which is the longest lasting spacecraft in Mars till date.

On the 20th anniversary of Odyssey, NASA released an image taken by it titled, "Blue Dunes on the Red Planet".

The dunes captured by the spacecraft were bigger in size than Texas.

Quick Fact: Odyssey entered the Mars orbit in 2001.

2) Government Schemes

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launches Mission AAHAAR Kranti

Mission Aahaar Kranti aims to spread the message of the importance of nutritionally balanced diet.

It also aims to promote the importance of accessibility to local fruits and vegetables.

Towards this end, teachers will be trained to spread this information to students, who in turn will spread this information to society.

Quick Fact: The motto of the mission is, 'Good diet, good cognition'.

3) Government Schemes

e-Santa platform launched for marine products

National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture has launched a platform called e-Santa to connect farmers to customers.

It will help in empowering aqua farmers by helping them market their produce directly to customers for fair prices.

4) Miscellaneous

Ambedkar Jayanti observed on 14th April

India celebrates Ambedkar Jayanti, Bhim Jayanti, Equality Day or Ambedkar Remembrance Day on 14th April every year.

His birthday was celebrated in Canada in 2020, as Dr B R Ambedkar Day of Equality and in 2021, by the Government of British Columbia as Dr B R Ambedkar Equality Day.

He was the chairperson of the Drafting Committee of Constituent Assembly and founder of the Independent Labour Party.

Quick Fact: Some of the books written by Babasaheb Ambedkar are Thoughts on Pakistan and Who were the Shudras?

5) Environment

Bohag Bihu Bird Count 2021 begins in Assam

Bohag Bihu Bird count has been launched by Bird Count of India (BCI) for the first time.

During this time, many migratory bird species who migrated to Assam and nearby areas during winters fly back.

Bohag Bihu, also known as Xaat Bihu, is a festival of Assam.

Quick Fact: BCI is an NGO.

6) India and the World

Raisina Dialogue 2021 held

Raisina Dialogue was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation.

It is an annual geo-political event where India works towards Asian integration and asserting its influence over the Indian Ocean Region.

It is a conference on geoeconomics and Geopolitics.

Quick Fact: The theme for Raisina Dialogue 2021 was Viral World: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control.

7) National Affairs

NITI Aayog launches Poshan Gyan

NITI Aayog has launched a digital repository known as Poshan Gyan along with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University.

Poshan Gyan is a National Digital Repository on health and nutrition.

Anyone looking to improve nutritional outcomes can access this repository for online resources on health and nutrition.

16th April

1) Economy

IMF releases World Economic Outlook report

IMF has recently released its latest World Economic Outlook report.

As per the report:

- a) the outlook for South Asian countries has been downgraded
- b) the outlook for Asian and Global economies has been higher than expected
- c) India is expected to grow at 12.5% in 2021, however the current wave of COVID may hamper this.

Quick Fact: The IMF also publishes the Global Financial Stability Report.

2) Economy

Hallmarking of Gold made mandatory

Gold Hallmarking, i.e. providing purity certification to gold jewellery and artefacts, has been made mandatory as per BIS Act 2016.

Only 14-carat, 18-carat and 22-carat gold will now be hallmarked.

Hallmark will contain four points including purity in carat, BIS mark, assay centre's name and the identification mark of the jeweller.

3) Environment

New Zealand becomes first country to have Climate Change law for Financial firms

New Zealand has introduced a one-of-its-kind bill on Climate Change for financial firms.

Financial firms will now have to:

- a) evaluate client companies based on environmental impact
- b) report the impacts of their funding on the effect of climate change

New Zealand plans to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Quick Fact: Javinda Ardern is the Prime Minister of New Zealand.

4) Environment

Porsche and Siemens Energy partner to produce eFuel

eFuel is a complex hydrocarbon formed by splitting water into oxygen and hydrogen using wind-generated electricity. It is an electro fuel.

Electro fuels are carbon neutral synthetic fuels.

This project of eFuel is called Haru Oni project. It will be based in Chile due to its windy climate.

Quick Fact: Electro fuels are made by storing electrical energy from renewable sources in the chemical bonds of liquid or gas fuels.

5) International Affairs

US to withdraw troops from Afghanistan

US President Biden has announced withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan.

The expected date coincides with the twentieth anniversary of 9/11 attacks.

Quick Fact: The capital of Afghanistan is Kabul.

17th April

1) National Affairs

India launches MANAS app

Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India has launched an app called MANAS.

MANAS stands for Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System.

It is a comprehensive and national digital wellbeing platform.

2) Economy

Flipkart to acquire Cleartrip

Flipkart is an E-Commerce company.

It has announced that it will be acquiring Cleartrip, a leading online travel and technology company.

Cleartrip offers travelling services like booking train and flight tickets, hotel reservations and etc. in India and in middle east countries.

Quick Fact: Cleartrip was founded by Hrush Bhatt, Matthew Spacie and Stuart Crighton.

3) Environment

Facebook's signs up for first renewable project in India

Facebook has signed a deal to buy renewable energy in India from an Indian firm called CleanMax.

The energy purchased from CleanMax will be used to power its data centre in India.

The project will be located in Karnataka.

4) Science and Technology

CNES to help in India's first Human Space Mission

CNES stands for Centre National d'études Spatiales. It is France's space agency, its National Centre for Space Studies.

ISRO has signed an agreement with CNES to help India in its first Human Space Mission called the Gaganyaan.

The agreement includes help in training, equipment and information exchange from CNES.

Quick Fact: Gaganyaan mission aims to send a three-member crew to space for five to seven days by 2022

5) Economy

UNFPA release study on Female Bodily Autonomy

United Nations Population Fund released a report “My Body is My Own”.

This report talks about how much autonomy females have over their own bodies, as well as how respective countries’ laws enable this autonomy.

% of women who have bodily autonomy are:

- a) 76% in southeastern and eastern Asian countries.
- b) 50% in sub-Saharan Africa and south and central Asian countries.
- c) 10% in Niger, Mali and Senegal.

6) Environment

Change in Forest Fire season in Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand usually sees a surge in forest fires from mid-February to June, however recently the fires started in October 2020 and are still burning in April 2021

Forest fires require oxygen, fuel (dry leaves) and temperature, all of which are easily available in Uttarakhand forests in Summer.

Steps are being taken to include local communities in forest preservation efforts and help in recharging of groundwater to keep the soil moist.

19th April

1) Geography

Lyrid Meteor Shower expected on 19th April

Every year the Lyrid meteor shower happens in the month of April

This year the phenomenon is expected to occur from 19th April onwards

The count of Lyrid Meteor Showers range between 5-20/hr and it has been classified as the medium strength meteor shower.

Quick Fact: The Lyrid meteor shower is also known as April Lyrids.

2) Science and Technology

Double Mutant Coronavirus Variant in India

61% of samples from Maharashtra COVID cases have shown the presence of Double Mutant Coronavirus.

This variant of Coronavirus carries two mutations E484Q and L452R, the latter increasing the transmission and replication rate of the virus.

If this new variant shows immune escape, or tendency to escape the immunity responses of humans, it can have a serious impact of India's vaccination drives.

3) National Affairs

Gol launches EatSmart challenge and Transport 4 All challenge

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the EatSmart Cities Challenge and Transport 4 All Challenge.

EatSmart Cities Challenge aims to create an environment of right food practices and habits.

The Transport 4 all challenge aims to make public transport safe, comfortable, affordable and reliable.

Quick Fact: EatSmart challenge is part of Gol's Eat Right India initiative.

4) Economy

First meeting of National Startup Advisory Council held

Piyush Goyal, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, recently chaired the first meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council.

The council was constituted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

It's mandate is to advise the Gol on creating a strong ecosystem to nurture startups in India.

Quick Fact: India is the third largest technology startup hub in the world

5) Economy

RBI establishes Regulations Review Authority 2.0

RBI has established Regulations Review Authority 2.0 (RRA 2.0) to function for a year.

The RRA 2.0 will collect feedback and suggestions and review regulatory prescriptions, as well as decrease compliance burdens of the same.

Deputy Governor Rajeshwar Rao has been appointed as the head of RRA.

Quick Fact: The first RRA was established in 1999-2000.

6) Miscellaneous

Facebook Inclusive Internet Index published

The Economist Intelligence Unit and Facebook have released the Facebook Inclusive Internet Index.

The index looked at 120 countries, representing 96% of global population and 98% of global GDP.

India is at the 49th spot in internet inclusion and gender equality in accessing the internet.

Quick Fact: The first three rank holders were Sweden, US and Spain.

7) Special Days

World Hemophilia Day observed on 17th April

World Haemophilia Day is celebrated on 17th April every year.

The day is celebrated by the World Federation of Haemophilia.

The theme of World Haemophilia Day 2021 was: Adapting to Change.

Quick Fact: Hemophilia is a rare genetic disorder where the human blood doesn't clot normally due to lack of clotting proteins.

20th April

1) Miscellaneous

Four books released by PM Modi on Ambedkar Jayanti 2021

At a virtual event, PM Modi addressed the 95th annual meet of the association of Indian Universities and celebrated the 130th birth anniversary of Dr. B R Ambedkar.

He launched four books written by Shri Kishore Makwana while paying his tribute to Dr. Ambedkar.

The books are:

- Dr. Ambedkar Vyakti Darshan
- Dr. Ambedkar Aayam Darshan
- Dr. Ambedkar Jivan Darshan
- Dr. Ambedkar Rashtra Darshan

Quick Fact: Dr. B R Ambedkar was the first Law Minister of Independent India, a social reformer and an economist.

2) India and the World

The first-ever mega food park launched in India by Italy

The mega food park project is launched at Fanidhar, Mehsana district, Gujarat.

The main aim of this project is to focus on R&D of upcoming and more efficient technologies in the sector for both the countries.

Italy aims to explore various opportunities served in the Indian market.

Quick Fact: Italy's Capital city is Rome and the national Currency is Euro.

3) Sports News

A new Clean & Jerk world record by India's Mirabai Chanu in Tashkent

In the women's 49 kg Clean and Jerk, with a lift of 119 kgs, Mirabai Chanu set a new world record at Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent.

She bagged a bronze medal for India at the event.

Asian Games is held once in 4 years and is the second largest multi-sport event after the Olympics.

Quick Fact: Tashkent is the capital city of Uzbekistan.

4) Important Days

World Liver Day observed on April 19 globally

This day is observed to spread awareness about the second largest organ of our body.

Liver diseases can be caused by Hepatitis A, B, C, alcohol and drug consumption.

With the exception of the brain, our liver is the most complex organ of the body.

5) Sports News

India sets the seal on 14 medals at the Senior Asian Wrestling Championship 2021

The 34th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships was held in Almaty.

With 14 medals, India stood in the third spot on the medal table.

The 14 medals include 5 gold, 3 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Quick Fact: Almaty is Kazakhstan's largest metropolis and served as its capital till 1997. The current capital is Nur-Sultan.

6) Science and Technology

\$2.9 billion worth of contract to Elon Musk's SpaceX by NASA

NASA launches its Artemis Programme to develop the first commercial lander and take two US astronauts to the moon.

They have joined hands with Elon Musk's SpaceX which will develop a spacecraft called 'SpaceX Starship' for them.

NASA is aiming to bring the first person of colour to the moon's surface as part of their Artemis Programme.

Quick Fact: The US had brought 12 astronauts to the moon between 1969 and 1972.

7) Important Days

Global World Heritage Day: April 18

This day is observed to raise awareness about a nation's cultural heritage.

The nation aims at promoting historical monuments and sites through which a country can preserve the cultural integrity of a community.

The theme of World Heritage Day 2021 was 'Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures' which aims to reflect on the need to allow global calls for greater inclusion and recognition of diversity.

Quick Fact: The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was founded in 1965 and its headquarters is in Paris, France. The President of the ICOMOS is Toshiyuki Kono.

21st April

1) National News

COVID-19 vaccine available for all adults from May 1st

The central government has decided to make the COVID-19 available for citizens above the age of 18 from May 1, 2021.

The eligible adults to get injected under the 'liberalised and accelerated' phase 3 strategy of vaccination.

Vaccine manufacturers are incentivized to scale up their production and declare prices in the open market.

Quick Fact: World's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive is taking place only in India.

2) India and the World

Release of the Henley Passport Index 2021

On April 17, Henley Passport Index released its list of most powerful passports where India stands at number 84.

Indian citizens can travel Visa-Free or Visa-on-Arrival at more than 58 countries.

The HPI releases a list which measures the world's most travel-friendly passports.

Quick Fact: The International Air Transport Association Leader is William M. Walsh. Henley & Partners Chairman is Christian Kalin.

3) National News

Startup India Seed Fund Scheme launched by Piyush Goyal

The SISFS aims to provide financial assistance to startups.

The fund is to be provided based on the prototype development, product trials, market-entry, and commercialization.

A sum of Rs. 945 Crore has been approved to support an estimated 3,600 startups through 300 incubators over the next 4 years.

Quick Fact: Piyush Goyal is the Union Minister of India.

4) Important Days

Global UN Chinese Language Day: April 20

This day is observed globally to pay tribute to a mythical figure, Cangjie, presumed to have invented the Chinese characters.

The day celebrates multilingualism and cultural diversity and promotes equal usage of all six official working languages.

The 1st Chinese Language Day was celebrated in 2010.

Quick Fact: The premier (president) of China is Li Keqiang.

5) Literature

J K Rowling to release a new children's book in October

JK Rowling has a new book coming this autumn, a festive children's story with all new characters.

The story is about a boy named Jack and his toy Dur Pig, who goes missing on Christmas Eve.

The Christmas Pig is set to be released worldwide on October 12, 2021.

Quick Fact: This is Rowling's first novel for children after the Harry Potter series.

6) International News

Russia plans to revisit the moon after 45 years

Russian Space Agency 'Roscosmos' is all set with its mission to launch the spacecraft 'Luna 25' on October 1, 2021.

Russian scientists are taking up the project to study the water beneath the surface at the South pole of the Moon.

The last spacecraft 'Luna 24' was launched in August 1976 by the Soviet Union.

Quick Fact: The administrator of Roscosmos is Dmitry Rogozin and this organisation is owned by the Russian government.

7) National News

Punjab to become 'Har Ghar Jal' state by 2022

The State plans to provide 8.87 lakh tap connections including every rural household by 2021-22.

Punjab has set up a well-equipped digital 24×7 call centre with Interactive Voice Response System.

The pending complaints daily monitoring is done by sending reminders to the Executive Engineers.

Quick Fact: The CM of Punjab is Captain Amarinder Singh and the Governor is V.P.Singh Badnore.

22nd April

1) Important Days

India observed National Civil Services day on April 21

This day is celebrated to appreciate the work done by the officers engaged in public administration.

On this day in 1947, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the newly appointed Administrative Services Officers.

In his speech, he called the Civil Servants, the 'Steel Frame of India'.

Quick Fact: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was India's first Home Minister

2) National News

First Indian woman to scale Mt. Annapurna - Priyanka Mohite

Priyanka Mohite from Satara in western Maharashtra has scaled Mt Annapurna, becoming the first Indian woman climber to achieve this.

Mount Annapurna is a massif in the Himalayas located in Nepal that includes one peak over 8,000 metres.

It is considered to be one of the toughest mountains to climb.

Quick Fact: Mt. Annapurna is the 10th highest mountain peak in the world.

3) International News

NASA's Ingenuity Helicopter Takes Flight On Mars

NASA successfully flew its tiny helicopter Ingenuity on Mars, the first powered flight on another planet.

Data and images from the autonomous flight were transmitted 173 million miles (278 million kilometres) back to Earth.

The mini 4-pound (1.8-kilogram) copter even carried a bit of wing fabric from the Wright Flyer that made similar history at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903.

Quick Fact: The Acting Administrator of NASA is Steve Jurczyk and the headquarters of NASA is located at Washington D.C., United States.

4) National News

Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme launched in Andhra Pradesh

The CM of AP recently released the first tranche of Rs 672 crores under the Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme for the year 2021-22.

This amount reimbursed the fees for 10.88 lakh students.

The main objective of this scheme is to provide scholarships to all the students who are unable to pay their fees because of their financial burden.

Quick Fact: The Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh is Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy and the Governor is Biswabhusan Harichandan.

5) Important Days

World Creativity and Innovation Day observed globally on April 21

This day is celebrated to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem-solving.

In order to advance 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.

Quick Fact: This day was founded on May 25, 2001 in Toronto, Canada, by the Canadian Marci Segal.

6) International News

Miguel Díaz-Canel officially sworn as the President of Cuba

Díaz-Canel has been officially sworn in as the 'First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba', following the resignation of Raul Castro.

The Secretary of the Communist Party is the most powerful position in one party ruling Cuba.

Díaz-Canel now holds Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state.

Quick Fact: Cuba Capital: Havana; Cuba Continent: North America; Cuba Currency: Cuban peso.

7) India and the World

An agreement to prevent plastic waste entering oceans: India & Germany

The GOI and Germany have signed an agreement for Technical Cooperation in enhancing practices to prevent plastic from entering the marine environment.

The project titled 'Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment' will be implemented for a period of three and a half years.

The outcome of the project is completely in line with the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission.

Quick Fact: Germany Capital: Berlin, Currency: Euro, Chancellor: Angela Merkel.

8) National News

First-ever online exhibition on Ramayana inaugurated in India

The Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture virtually inaugurated the first-ever Online Exhibition on Ramayana.

This event took place on the occasion of World Heritage Day 2021.

The online exhibition has been titled 'Rama Katha: The Story of Rama Through Indian Miniatures'.

Quick Fact: The Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture is Prahlad Singh Patel.

23rd April

1) Important Days

International Mother Earth Day: April 22

This day was observed all over the world to spread awareness for the wellbeing of the planet.

World Earth Day 2021 marked the 51st Anniversary of the day since it started being observed in 1970.

The theme of 2021 International Mother Earth Day was 'Restore Our Earth'.

Quick Fact: The United Nations Environmental Programme is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya and its founder is Maurice Strong.

2) Miscellaneous

68th Indian Chess Grandmaster - Arjun Kalyan

Arjun Kalyan from Tamil Nadu became India's 68th Chess Grandmaster when he crossed the 2500 ELO mark.

He beat Dragan Kosic in the fifth round of GM Round Robin "Rujna Zore-3" in Serbia.

Viswanathan Anand became the country's first Grandmaster, in 1988.

Quick Fact: The World Chess Federation, known as FIDE headquarters in Lausanne (Switzerland).

3) India and the World

Australia partners with India for Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative

Australia has announced a grant of Rs 81.2 million (AUD 1.4 million) under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

IPOI was proposed by Indian Prime Minister Modi at the East Asia Summit in November 2019.

Australia is co-leading New Delhi in the marine ecology pillar of the initiative.

Quick Fact: The Capital of Australia is Canberra and the PM is Scott Morrison; Australia Currency: Australian dollar.

4) Miscellaneous

Puma signs Washington Sundar and Devdutt Padikkal as brand ambassadors

Global sportswear brand Puma has signed long-term endorsement deals with cricketers Washington Sundar and Devdutt Padikkal.

Puma India recently announced its partnership with Royal Challengers Bangalore and has consistently been investing in India's sports ecosystem.

The duo will be joining the company's roster of brand ambassadors that includes various Indian cricketers.

Quick Fact: The MD of Puma India is Abhishek Ganguly.

5) India and the World

India elected to 3 bodies of U.N. Economic and Social Council

India has been elected by merit to three bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2022.

They are :-

- Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)
- Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP)

Quick Fact: The UN Economic and Social Council President is Munir Akram and it is headquartered in New York, USA.

6) Important Days

International Girls in ICT Day: 22 April

This day is marked annually on the fourth Thursday in April. This year International Girls in ICT Day was observed on 22nd April 2021.

International Girls in ICT Day aims to inspire a global movement to increase the representation of girls and women in technology.

The UNITU highlighted the need to promote technology career opportunities for girls and women in the world's fastest-growing sector.

Quick Fact: The secretary-general of the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (UNITU) is Houlin Zhao.

7) International News

US Parliament passes No Ban Act

The No Ban Act was passed in response to the controversial "Muslim ban" passed by the former US President Donald Trump.

The Muslim ban barred the travel from Muslim-majority countries to the US. The President shall impose the ban only after getting approval from DHS And the Secretary.

Quick Fact: Full form of the NO BAN Act is the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Non-Immigrants Act. The current President of the US is Joe Biden.

24th April

1) National News

Free COVID-19 vaccine for adults: Jharkhand Government

The government of Jharkhand will provide free COVID-19 vaccine to people above 18 years of age.

This came in after the central government's 'Liberalised Pricing and Accelerated National COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy' policy.

State government is allowed to purchase the vaccine doses directly from manufacturers.

Quick Fact: The CM of Jharkhand is Hemant Soren.

2) Important Days

World Book and Copyrights Day: April 23

It is an annual event organized by UNESCO to promote reading, publishing, and copyright.

April 23 is chosen because it marks the birth and death of several prominent authors.

The World Book Capital for 2021 is Tbilisi, Georgia.

Quick Fact: The Director-General of UNESCO is Audrey Azoulay and it is headquartered in Paris, France.

3) Important Days

UN English and UN Spanish Language Day observed on April 23

For English, 23 April has been chosen to mark both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare.

For the Spanish Language, the day was chosen because it is also observed as Hispanic Day in Spain, meaning the Spanish speaking world.

Each of the six official languages have been assigned a day to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity throughout the Organization.

Quick Fact: The six official languages used by the UN are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

4) Finance News

Sambandh Finserve license to be cancelled by the RBI

RBI has issued a show-cause notice prior to cancelling the licence of fraud-hit Sambandh Finserve Pvt Ltd.

Its net worth dissolved below the regulatory minimum and the financial situation worsened beyond redemption over months.

The MD was allegedly the main offender of the fraud, and has been arrested by Economic Offence Wing, Chennai.

Quick Fact: The Managing Director and CEO of Sambandh Finserve is Deepak Kindo and it is headquartered in Odisha.

5) Miscellaneous

First woman chairperson of Nasscom - Rekha Menon

Accenture India's chairperson, Rekha M Menon has been appointed as chairperson of NASSCOM.

She became the first woman to take the top role in the software lobby group's 30-year history.

She succeeds U B Pravin Rao, COO of Infosys as Nasscom's chairperson. TCS President Krishnan Ramanujam will be the vice-chairperson.

Quick Fact: National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) is headquartered in New Delhi.

6) International News

PM Modi's participation in Leaders' Summit on Climate

PM Narendra Modi participated in the 'Leaders' Summit on Climate', hosted by the President of the U.S.A. Joe Biden.

The two-day conference was organised virtually on the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement on climate change for signature.

The theme of the summit was 'Our Collective Sprint to 2030'.

Quick Fact: The Summit will take place in person in November 2021 in Glasgow, Scotland.

7) Technology

Perseverance by NASA Mars rover extracts first oxygen from Red Planet

As per NASA, its newest six-wheeled robot on the Martian surface called the MOXIE accomplished the task.

Mars' atmosphere is 96 percent carbon dioxide and MOXIE converts this into oxygen.

MOXIE is expected to extract oxygen at least nine more times over the course of a Martian year (nearly two years on Earth).

Quick Fact: The Acting Administrator of NASA is Steve Jurczyk and it is headquartered in Washington D.C., United States.

26th April

1) Important Days

World Veterinary Day: April 24

This day is observed on the Fourth Saturday of April every year. In 2021, the day falls on April 24, 2021.

The theme of the 2021 World Veterinary Day is 'Veterinarian response to the COVID-19 crisis.'

The day was created by the WVA in 2000 to celebrate the contributions of veterinarians to the health of animals and society.

Quick Fact: The CEO of the World Veterinary Association is Dr. Zeev Noga.

2) Important Days

International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

'International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace' was first observed by the UN on April 24, 2019.

This day aims to spread knowledge about the advantages of multilateralism and diplomacy for peace.

The Day is a reaffirmation of the UN Charter and its principles of resolving disputes among countries through peaceful means.

Quick Fact: The President of the UN is Volkan Bozkir.

3) Important Days

National Panchayati Raj Day observed on April 24

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj organizes the National Panchayati Raj day or the National Local Self Government Day.

India celebrated the first National Panchayati Raj Day or the National Local Government Day in April 2010.

Rajasthan was the first state that carried the Panchayati Raj System in 1959 during the times of late PM Jawarharlal Nehru.

Quick Fact: The 73rd Constitutional Amendment came into force on the same date as the National Panchayati Raj Day, i.e., April 24.

4) International News

2021 Boao Forum Annual Conference for Asia

The opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 was held in Boao, south China's Hainan Province.

The theme of the conference was 'A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation'.

The forum has engaged countries in addressing global issues and promoting world development and prosperity.

Quick Fact: The Chairman of the Boao Forum is Ban Ki-moon.

5) Literature

‘Climate Change Explained – For One And All’: E-book by Aakash Ranison

The climate activist-author, Aakash Ranison has come out with a new e-book on the occasion of Earth Day.

In this e-book, the author emphasizes on the impact of climate change and suggests simple yet sustainable solutions to control the same.

The book is a mix of facts, data, and information about climate change and their effects on earth in the near future.

6) Finance News

Atanu Chakraborty as HDFC’s new part-time chairman

RBI has approved the appointment of Atanu Chakraborty, as the part-time chairman and additional independent director of HDFC.

He retired as Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs in April 2020.

Chakraborty has been appointed for a period of three years with effect from May 5, 2021 or the date of his taking charge, whichever is later.

Quick Fact: The MD and CEO of HDFC Bank are Sashidhar Jagdishan(Succeeds Aditya Puri). The tagline of HDFC Bank is ‘We understand your world’.

7) Person in News

Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021 won by Rumana Sinha Sehgal

Rumana Sinha Sehgal is a Software engineer turned entrepreneur from Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

She won the Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021 by the Diplomatic Mission Global Peace.

She contributed to the field of developing innovative and functional green products by recycling varied materials and non-biodegradable materials.

Quick Fact: She was crowned as the 'Mrs Universe Successful 2018' and won the ReXKarmaveer Chakra (silver) and Global Fellowship award 2019 for her work in the zone of women and child empowerment.

8) Important Days

April 24 marks World Day for Laboratory Animals

WDAIL, also known as World Lab Animal Day or World Day for Laboratory Animals, is observed every year on 24 April.

The day was instituted in 1979 by the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS), as an "international day of commemoration" for animals in laboratories.

This day aims to end the suffering of animals in laboratories around the world and promote their replacement with advanced scientific non-animal techniques.

Quick Fact: The Executive Director of the National Anti-Vivisection Society is Peggy Cunniff.

27th April

1) National News

48th CJI - Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana takes oath

Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana was sworn in as the 48th Chief Justice of India (CJI) on April 24, 2021.

He was apportioned the oath of office by the nation's President during a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Justice Ramana will serve as the Chief Justice till 26 August 2022.

Quick Fact: India's President is Ram Nath Kovind.

2) Finance News

Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank's license cancelled

The RBI cancelled the licence of Maharashtra-based Bhagyodaya Friends Urban Co-operative Bank Limited due to inadequate capital.

The bank has failed to follow the requirements and the continuance of the bank will harm the interests of its depositors.

The bank with its present financial position would be unable to pay its present depositors and public interest would be adversely affected.

Quick Fact: The chairperson of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation, RBI, is Michael Patra (also the deputy chairman of the RBI).

3) Important Days

International Delegate's Day observed globally on 25 April

This day is observed to raise awareness of the role of the representatives and delegates of the Member States to the UN.

On 25 April 1945, delegates from 50 countries came together for the first time in San Francisco.

The delegates aimed to set up an organization that would restore world peace and impose rules on the post-war world order after the 2nd world war.

Quick Fact: On 2 April 2019, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) announced 25th April as International Delegate's Day.

4) Finance News

Government Extends 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme Deadline till 30 June 2021

The government has extended the deadline to make payment under the direct tax dispute settlement scheme by two months.

This is the fourth time that the deadline is being extended by the Ministry of Finance, since the launch of the scheme.

This scheme states that a taxpayer would be required to pay only the amount of the disputed taxes and will get a complete waiver of interest and penalty if he pays by 31st March.

Quick Fact: The Finance Minister of India is Nirmala Sitharaman.

5) Important Days

World Malaria Day observed on April 25

WMD is observed globally on 25 April each year to recognize the efforts of the people worldwide to control malaria.

The Day was established in May 2007 at the 60th session of the World Health Assembly, WHO's decision-making body.

The theme of WMD 2021 is 'Reaching the zero malaria target'.

Quick Fact: The Director-General of WHO is Tedros Adhanom and it is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

6) National News

PM Modi Launches Extension of 'SVAMITVA scheme' Across India

PM Modi virtually launched the distribution of e-property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme on National Panchayati Raj Day.

SVAMITVA stands for Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas.

About 4.09 lakh property owners were given their e-property cards during the event, in more than 5 thousand villages.

Quick Fact: This scheme was launched on pilot basis in the 6 states - Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh.

7) Important Days

World Intellectual Property Day: 26 April

It was established by the WIPO in 2000 to raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life.

Another reason was to celebrate creativity and the contribution made by creators and innovators to the development of societies across the world.

Theme 2021: 'Intellectual property and small businesses: Taking big ideas to market'.

Quick Fact: Headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organization: Geneva, Switzerland; CEO of World Intellectual Property Organization: Daren Tang.

8) Important Days

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day

This day is observed to raise awareness of the consequences of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster and the risks of nuclear energy in general.

The UN proclaimed the day on April 26, 2016, that marked the 30th anniversary of the 1986 nuclear disaster.

On this day in 1986, a reactor exploded at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine with devastating consequences.

Quick Fact: The cause of the disaster was reactor design flaws and serious breach of protocol during simulated power outage safety test.

28th April

1) Finance News

Tenure of Private Banks MD & CEO Capped by the RBI at 15 Years

The RBI has capped the tenure of MD and CEO of commercial banks to 15 years.

This will also be applicable to whole-time directors (WTD), i.e., they cannot hold the post for more than 15 years.

The upper age limit for MD & CEO and WTDs in private banks has been retained at 70 years.

Quick Fact: 25th Governor of the RBI is Shaktikant Das.

2) Finance News

India's GDP Growth Forecast Downgraded to 10.5% for FY22

Goldman Sachs revised the GDP growth forecast of India for FY 2021-22 to 10.5% from the earlier estimate of 10.9%.

The downward revision is due to the increasing number of pandemic cases in the country.

Also, a host of key states announced stricter lockdowns, thus affecting economic activities.

Quick Fact: The Founders of Goldman Sachs are Marcus Goldman and Samuel Sachs.

3) Literature

'Living Mountain' by Amitav Ghosh to be launched in 2022

This is a new story book by internationally renowned author Amitav Ghosh, written during the course of the pandemic.

It is a cautionary tale of how humans have systematically exploited nature, leading to an environmental collapse.

HarperCollins Publishers India will publish this as a special standalone edition in January 2022.

Quick Fact: Amitav Ghosh was awarded the Padma Shri in 2007. Apart from this, he has received several awards including the Sahitya Akademi Award, Ananda Puraskar, and Jnanpith Award.

4) International News

UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham leads global vaccination drive

UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, David Beckham, is fronting a global initiative to inspire confidence in vaccines.

He encourages parents around the world to vaccinate themselves and their children against deadly diseases.

In a video released ahead of World Immunization Week, Beckham talks about the loss of everyday activities due to COVID-19.

Quick Fact: The Executive Director of UNICEF is Henrietta H. Fore and it is headquartered in New York, USA.

5) International News

China's first-ever Mars gypsy named 'Zhurong'

China named 'Zhurong' after an ancient fire God ahead of a landing attempt on Mars in May.

The China National Space Administration (CNSA) revealed the name at the sixth China Space Day held in Nanjing.

The rover carries panoramic and multispectral cameras and instruments to analyze the composition of rocks.

Quick Fact: China President: Xi Jinping; China Capital: Beijing; China Currency: Renminbi.

6) Awards

Oscars Awards 2021

The 93rd Academy Awards ceremony, also known as the Oscars Awards, took place in Los Angeles on April 25, 2021.

American drama 'Nomadland' won most honours with three awards. Chloe Zhao, who directed "Nomadland", was crowned best director.

Indian film personalities Irrfan Khan and Bhanu Athaiya were honoured in the 'In Memoriam' collage showcased at the event.

Quick Fact: The award is presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). The President of AMPAS is David Rubin.

7) India and the World

India joins Rescue Ops For Missing Indonesian Submarine 'KRI Nanggala-402'

Indian Navy has joined the rescue operation for an Indonesian submarine with a 53-person crew that went missing more than 4 days ago.

Indonesia had asked for help from India after its 44-year-old submarine, KRI Nanggala-402, went missing near the island of Bali.

The Navy's Deep-Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSVR) has left from Visakhapatnam.

Quick Fact: Indonesia President: Joko Widodo; Indonesia Capital: Jakarta; Indonesia Currency: Indonesian rupiah.

8) Sports News

League Cup football tournament won by Manchester City

Manchester City won the League Cup making a record for the fourth time against Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley.

City's victory equalled Liverpool's achievement in the early 1980s of winning the competition four years in a row.

Manchester City beat Tottenham by 1-0 in front of 8,000 people at Wembley in the UK's biggest post-COVID football crowd.

Quick Fact: The owner of Manchester City F.C. is the City Football Group.

29th April

1) National News

E-panchayat award to Uttar Pradesh

The UP government won the 'E-Panchayat Puraskar 2021', ranking first in Category I.

It was followed by Assam and Chhattisgarh at the second position, while Odisha and Tamil Nadu stood third.

The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj awards states that ensure maximum use of IT to keep a tab on the work done by gram panchayats.

Quick Fact: UP Capital: Lucknow; UP Governor: Anandiben Patel; UP Chief minister: Yogi Adityanath.

2) Finance News

Shivalik Small Finance Bank Limited starts its Operations

The UP-based Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank started operations as a Small Finance Bank (SFB) with effect from April 26, 2021.

SMCB is the first urban co-operative bank (UCB) in India to receive licence from RBI to operate as an SFB.

The bank has received the licence from RBI under Section 22 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to carry on the business of SFB in India.

Quick Fact: Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank MD and CEO: Suveer Kumar Gupta.

3) Important Days

April 28 marks World Day for Safety and Health at Work

The day raises awareness to ensure health and safety at the workplace.

The theme for 2021 is “Anticipate, prepare and respond to crises – Invest Now in Resilient Occupational Safety and Health Systems”.

This day has been observed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2003.

Quick Fact: Headquarters of ILO: Geneva, Switzerland; President of ILO: Guy Ryder.

4) National News

Third highest military spender in 2020: India

India has retained its position as the third biggest military spender in the world, according to new data titled ‘SIPRI Military Expenditure Database’.

As per the new report, the top five biggest spenders in 2020 were the US, China, India, Russia and the UK respectively.

These five nations together accounted for 62 per cent of global military expenditure.

Quick Fact: The Founders of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) are Tage Erlander and Alva Myrdal

5) Literature

New Novel ‘Whereabouts’ by Jhumpa Lahiri

The book is an English translation of the Italian novel ‘las Dove Mi Trovo’ by the author Jhumpa Lahiri herself and published in 2018.

The novel has been translated into English by the author herself.

The book is about an unnamed female protagonist over 45 years as she looks at her life.

Quick Fact: Renowned American writer Jhumpa Lahiri has won the O. Henry Award in 1999 and Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000.

6) Important Days

Workers’ Memorial Day observed on 28 April

Also known as International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers, it occurs every year on 28 April.

Its purpose is to remember workers killed in incidents at work or by diseases caused by work by organizing worldwide awareness campaigns on this day.

Theme 2021: 'Health and Safety is a fundamental workers' right.'

Quick Fact: The day has been organized worldwide by the International Trade Union Confederation since 1996. It is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

7) Finance News

New MD & CEO of NCDEX - Arun Raste

SEBI has given approval to the appointment of Arun Raste as MD and CEO of NCDEX for a period of 5 years.

Raste is currently associated with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) as an Executive Director.

He has also worked with organisations like IDFC First Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, NABARD, ACC Cement, and a non-profit NGO IRFT.

Quick Fact: NCDEX Headquarters: Mumbai; NCDEX Owner: Government of India

8) Person in News

CMD of BEML titled to Amit Banerjee by PESB

PESB selected Amit Banerjee as CMD of BEML, an Indian Public Sector Undertaking.

Currently, he is serving as Director (Rail & Metro), BEML Limited.

Over three decades in BEML, Shri Banerjee has worked in R&D and manufacturing functions.

Quick Fact: Bharat Earth Movers Limited Headquarters: Bengaluru; Bharat Earth Movers Limited Director: Ajit Kumar Srivastav.

30th April

1) India and the World

Chandler Good Government Index 2021 ranks India 49th

India has been placed at 49th position among 104 nations in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) 2021.

Finland has topped the CGGI Index 2021 and Venezuela is the last ranked country at 104.

The index is prepared based on seven pillars: leadership and foresight, strong institutions, robust laws and policies, attractive market place, financial stewardship, helping people rise, global influence and reputation.

Quick Fact: The Executive Director of Chandler Institute of Governance is Wu Wei Neng.

2) International News

China Launches Robot Prototype 'NEO-01' to Clear Space Debris

The Chinese government has launched a robot prototype named as 'NEO-01', in the Earth's low orbit, on its Long March 6 rocket.

The 30kg robot prototype has been developed by Shenzhen-based space mining start-up 'Origin Space'.

Its aim is to observe small celestial bodies in deep space and to experiment with space debris removal techniques.

Quick Fact: The President of China is Xi Jinping.

3) Miscellaneous News

ASICS brand ambassador: Cricketer Ravindra Jadeja

Japanese Sportswear brand ASICS has appointed Ravindra Jadeja, the all-rounder of the Indian cricket team, as its brand ambassador.

The company focuses on sporting gear for the running category.

ASICS has been working with young and fresh athletic talent across various genres of sports.

Quick Fact: The Founder of ASICS is Kihachiro Onitsuka and it is headquartered in Kobe, Japan.

4) Important Days

International Dance Day: 29 April

The day celebrates the value and importance of dance and encourages participation in this art form through events and festivals.

The day 29 April marks the birth anniversary of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810), known as the creator of modern ballet.

The theme of International Dance Day 2021: 'Purpose of dance'.

Quick Fact: The day was created in 1982, by the Dance Committee of the ITI, the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.

5) Finance News

India's GDP to grow 11% in FY22 as projected by ADB

The Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) has projected the growth rate of India's economy as: FY22 (2021-22): 11% ; FY23 (2022-23): 7%.

ADB has based the rate on the strong vaccine drive being undertaken across the country.

However, it has also cautioned that the recent surge in COVID cases may put the country's economic recovery at risk.

Quick Fact: President of ADB: Masatsugu Asakawa; Headquarters: Manila, Philippines.

6) Awards

1st Indian woman to get 'Wild Innovator Award': Krithi Karanth

Dr. Krithi K Karanth, Chief Conservation Scientist at CWS, becomes the first Asian woman to get the 2021 'Wild Innovator Award'.

This award is given by the 'Wild Elements Foundation' to identify solutions to global sustainability and conservation.

The Foundation's approach to addressing climate change is the 'Power of Three' - animal-kind, humankind, and plantkind.

Quick Fact: The Founder and CEO of Wild Elements Foundation is Nikki Eslami.

7) National News

Ladakh Ignited Minds project update: Indian Army signs MoU with HPCL & NIEDO

The project Ladakh Ignited Minds has been conceptualized to secure a better future for the youth of Ladakh.

The programme under the aegis of Fire and Fury Corps of the Indian Army would be executed by NIEDO, a Kanpur-based NGO.

The Army would oversee the overall operations to include administration and logistics with requisite funding support through HPCL.

Quick Fact: Governors & Administrators of Ladakh: Radha Krishna Mathur.