

<u>Current Affairs Today – 04.04.2020</u>

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS

International Day of Mine awareness



- Every year, **April 4** is celebrated as the **International Day for Mine Awareness** in order to spread awareness about the dangers and threats caused by landmines to the safety, health and lives of civilian population.
- The day also encourages all governments to develop mine clearing programmes.
- On December 8, 2005, the UN General Assembly declared April 4 as International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. It was first observed on April 4, 2006.
- This year's theme "together for mine action"

CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL

MoS HRD and IT, Sanjay Dhotre launches 'Hack the Crisis-India' hackathon

- Minister of State Human Resource Development and IT Sanjay Dhotre launched Hack the Crisis -India, an Online Hackathon to find working solutions for overcoming COVID-19 pandemic.
- This hackathon is part of a global initiative and is being organised by 'Hack A Cause India' and 'FICCI Ladies Organization Pune' and supported by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The aim of this hackathon is to strengthen fight against COVID-19.
- Mr Dhotre stated that over 2,000 teams and over 15,000 participants will be enhancing their working prototypes in 48 hour hackathon.

Home Minister Amit Shah approves release of Rs 11,092 Cr under SDRMF to all States



• Home Minister Amit Shah has approved the release of Rs 11,092 crore under the State Disaster Risk Management Fund, SDRMF to all States. Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his video conference meeting with the Chief Ministers had assured about it.

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- The Centre has released in advance its share of first installment of State Disaster Risk Management Fund for the year 2020-21 with a view to augment funds available with the State Governments.
- With a view to make additional funds available to the State Governments for taking preventive and mitigation measures for containment of COVID-19, Centre on 14th March has already made a special dispensation for utilization of State Disaster Response Fund, SDRF.
- This Fund was allowed to be utilized for setting up quarantine facilities, sample collection and screening, setting up additional testing laboratories, cost of consumables, purchase of personal protection equipment for healthcare, municipal, police and fire authorities, purchase of thermal scanners, ventilators, air purifiers, and consumables for Government hospitals.
- Central Government is sensitive to the need for providing food and shelter to homeless people including migrant labourers, who are stranded due to lockdown measures.

About Home Ministry

- The Ministry of Home Affairs or Home Ministry is a ministry of the Government of India. As the interior ministry of India, it is mainly responsible for the maintenance of internal security and domestic policy.
- Union Minister of Home Affairs : Amit Shah.
- Ministry executive: Ajay Kumar Bhalla, IAS, Home Secretary Headquarters: New Delhi

DST sets up rapid response centre at SINE, IIT Bombay to combat COVID-19



- **Department of Science & Technology, Government of India** in a rapid response to combat COVID-19 global pandemic approved setting up of a **Centre for Augmenting WAR** with COVID-19 Health Crisis **(CAWACH)** at a total cost of Rs 56 Cr to scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that address COVID-19 challenges.
- The **Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE)**, a technology business incubator at **IIT Bombay** supported by DST has been identified as the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH.
- Given the impact of Covid-19 as a pandemic globally that has jolted countries across the world to take immediate actions and scale up responses to detect, treat and reduce transmission to save people's lives, DST is playing a critical role to pace up India's efforts to fight the crisis.
- While the nation is under a health emergency, various solutions to address the pandemic are being undertaken at research institutions & laboratories.
- The CAWACH's mandate will be to extend timely support to potential startups by way of the requisite financial assistance and fund deployment targeting innovations that are deployable in the market within next 6 months.
- CAWACH will identify upto 50 innovations and startups that are in the area of novel, low cost, safe and effective ventilators, respiratory aids, protective gears, novel solutions for sanitizers, disinfectants, diagnostics, therapeutics, informatics and any effective interventions to control COVID-19.
- It will provide access to pan India networks for testing, trial and market deployment of these products and solutions in the identified areas of priority COVID-19 solutions. This will help to address various challenges faced by country due to severe impact of Covid-19.

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About Department of Science and Technology (DST) :

- The Department of Science and Technology is a department within the Ministry of Science and Technology in India.
- Headquarters location: New Delhi
- Founded: May 1971
- Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan is head of the department
- Ashutosh Sharma is its present secretary

Finance ministry releases Rs17,287 crore to states to fight Covid-19 outbreak



- Finance ministry released Rs.17,287 crore to different states on account of Centre's share of state disaster response mitigation fund (SDRMF) as well as revenue deficit grants in order to enhance financial resources of states to fight the Covid-19 outbreak.
- While the first installment of SDRMF amounts to **Rs.11,092 crore**, the initial disbursement of post-devolution revenue deficit grant for 14 states as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission (FFC) comes to Rs6,195 crore.
- Under the SDRMF, Maharashtra received the highest amount of Rs1,611 crore, followed by Madhya Pradesh (Rs910 crore) and Odisha (Rs802 crore), while under the revenue deficit grants, Kerala received Rs1,277 crore followed by Himachal Pradesh (Rs953 crore) and Punjab (Rs638 crore).
- Many states have been demanding the Centre to release more funds as it is the states that are fighting the escalating Covid-19 outbreak on the ground.
- States like Kerala had earlier objected the finance ministry's move to allocate only 40% of the Rs74,340 crore revenue deficit grants for FY21 recommended by the FFC despite accepted the recommendation. Of the Rs74,340 crore revenue deficit grants, the largest beneficiaries of the recommendation are Kerala (Rs15,323 crore), Himachal Pradesh (Rs11,431 crore), Punjab (Rs7,659 crore), Assam (Rs7,579 crore), Andhra Pradesh (Rs5,897 crore), Uttarakhand (Rs5,076 crore) and West Bengal (Rs5,013 crore). The Centre later clarified that it will allocate the rest of the amount through demand for grants at a later stage.

About Finance Ministry:

- Union Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman,
- Deputy Minister: Anurag Thakur, Minister of State for Finance
- Ajay Bhushan Pandey ,IAS, Finance Secretary & Revenue Secretary

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

World Bank to roll out USD 160 billion emergency aid to help nations deal with Covid-19

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- The **World Bank** approved a plan to roll out **USD 160 billion** in emergency aid over 15 months to help countries deal with the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic.
- The board of the Washington-based development lender announced the first set of fast-track crisis funding, with an initial **\$1.9 billion** going to projects in 25 countries, and operations moving forward in another 40 nations, the bank stated in a statement.
- The bank also is working to redeploy **USD 1.7 billion** of existing funding, including the use of "**catastrophic drawdowns**," a type of emergency credit line.
- India will be the largest beneficiary of the first wave of programs with a facility for **USD 1 billion**, followed by **Pakistan with USD 200 million** and Afghanistan with a little over USD 100 million, but funding is going to countries on nearly every continent, the bank stated.
- In addition, the World Bank's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation, is providing \$8 billion in financing "to help private companies affected by the pandemic and preserve jobs."

About World Bank:

- Head quarters: Washington, D.C., U.S
- President :David Malpass
- MD and CFO : Anshula Kant Chief Economist : Penny Goldberg

UNGA adopts resolution calling for global solidarity in fight against COVID-19



- The **United Nations General Assembly** has unanimously adopted a resolution on COVID-19, calling for intensified international cooperation to defeat the pandemic.
- Co-sponsored by 188 nations including India, the resolution titled **Global solidarity** to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is first such document on the global pandemic to be adopted by the world organization.
- The resolution stated the General Assembly notes with great concern the threat to human health, safety and wellbeing caused by the disease. It highlighted the unprecedented effects of the pandemic, including the severe disruption to societies, economies, global travel and commerce, and the devastating impact on the livelihood of people.
- The resolution called for intensified international cooperation in exchanging information, scientific knowledge and best practices and applying guidelines recommended by the World Health Organization.

About United Nations General Assembly:

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- The United Nations General Assembly is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, the only one in which all member nations have equal representation, and the main deliberative, policy-making, and representative organ of the UN.
- President: Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
- Headquarters: New York, United States

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

RBI reduces trading timings of currency and debt markets



- In view of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Reserve Bank of India has notified a change in market timings.
 Beginning April 7th, markets dealing with government securities, call/notice/term money, corporate bonds, foreign currency, Indian Rupee Trades, commercial paper and Certificates of Deposit will be working from 10 AM to 2 PM.
- RBI has stated that lockdowns, social distancing, restrictions on movement of staff, work from home arrangements and business continuity plans is posing operational and logistic risks. It further stated that thinning out of activity is impacting market liquidity and increasing volatility of financial prices.
- RBI has stated that these revised timings will remain in effect till **17th April**. The apex bank has clarified that all regular banking services for customers, including RTGS, NEFT, e-kuber and other retail payments systems will continue to be available as per extant timings. It may also be noted that timing for equity markets has not be revised.

About Reserve Bank of India (RBI):

- Headquarters- Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Formation 1 April 1935
- Governor– Shaktikanta Das
- Deputy Governors- 3 (Bibhu Prasad Kanungo, Mahesh Kumar Jain, Michael DebabrataPatra)

Fitch slashes India growth forecast to 30-year low of 2 per cent for FY21



- Fitch Ratings stated it has slashed India's growth forecast for the current fiscal to a 30-year low of 2 per cent, from 5.1 per cent projected earlier, as economic recession gripped global economy following the lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- The initial disruptions to regional manufacturing supply chains from a lockdown in China as the coronavirus spread have now broadened to include local discretionary spending and exports even as parts of China return to work.

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- Fitch now expects a global recession this year and recently cut our GDP growth forecast for India to **2 per cent** for the fiscal year ending March 2021 after lowering it to 5.1 per cent previously, which would make it the slowest growth in India over the past 30 years, it stated in a statement.
- Fitch had projected India's GDP growth for 2020-21 at 5.1 per cent, lower than 5.6 per cent estimated in December 2019.

About Fitch ratings:

- Headquarters: New York City, U.S.
- Paul Taylor, CEO of Fitch Group

India seeks \$6 billion loans from AIIB, ADB to combat COVID-19: Report



- India is seeking loans worth **\$6 billion** from multilateral institutions including the **Asian Development Bank** to combat COVID-19.
- The central government is in talks with **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and ADB** to secure these loans to further the testing and infrastructure facilities in the country.
- India has already secured \$1 billion funding from the World Bank to better its health sector for fighting against the coronavirus pandemic according to previous reports.
- The World Bank approved a fast-track **\$1 billion** "India COVID Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project" to help India prevent, detect, and respond to the pandemic and better its public health preparedness. It was the largest ever healthcare sector support from the World Bank.
- This funding will cover all states and union territories. It will help in managing the requirements of infected people, at-risk populations, medical and emergency staff, medical service providers, medical and testing facilities, and national and animal health agencies.

About Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Headquarters: Mandaluyong, Philippines
- President: Masatsugu Asakawa
- Membership: 68 countries
- Founded: 19 December 1966

About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

- President : Jin Liqun
- Headquarters: Beijing, China
- Membership: 76 Members

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

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Odisha government, UNICEF launch 'Mo Prativa' to engage young minds amid COVID-19 lockdown



- Odisha government in collaboration with the UNICEF has launched an online competition programme 'Mo **Prativa**' to engage the children and youth who are staying at home during the lockdown.
- Two themes, **'Being at home during lockdown'** and **'My responsibility as a young citizen during Covid-19'.** Those in the age group of 5 to 18 years can participate in art, slogan writing, short story writing (within 500 words), poem writing and poster making, winning entries will get certificates and may be used in IEC materials.
- The participants will be divided into three groups, from 5 to 10 years, 11 to 16 years and 16 to 18 years. The entries will have to submitted online between 10 am to 6 pm. Sources stated more information about the competition can be obtained from www.sportsodisha.gov.in and www.wcdodisha.gov.in.

About Odisha

- Capital– Bhubaneswar
- Chief Minister- Naveen Patnaik
- Governor– Ganeshi Lal

About UNICEF (United Nations Childrens Emergency Fund)

- Headquarters- New York, United States
- Executive Director- Henrietta H. Fore

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS

Geo-Fencing App To Locate Quarantine Violators



- **Geo-fencing** is a location-based service in which an app or other software uses GPS, RFID, Wi-Fi or cellular data to trigger a pre-programmed action when a mobile device or RFID tag enters or exits a virtual boundary set up around a geographical location.
- The Centre is using powers under the Indian Telegraph Act to "fetch information" from telecom companies every 15 minutes to track COVID-19 cases across the country.
- The States have been asked to seek the approval of their Home Secretaries under the provisions of **Section 5(2)** of **the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885**, for the specified mobile phone numbers to request the DoT to provide information by email or SMS in case of violation of "geo-fencing".
- The mobile application works via geo-fencing feature. The application would allow government authorities to 'register the asymptomatic carriers and track them to effectively monitor their movement.

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• The movement of potential carriers would be monitored and tracked using geo-fencing feature.

IBM offers 'Watson Assistant for Citizens' to quickly address covid-19 queries



- **IBM** is offering its AI platform **'Watson Assistant for Citizens'** free of cost for **at least 90 days**, which will provide reliable information on covid-19 related queries.
- The platform that brings together Watson Assistant, Natural Language Processing, and AI search capabilities, that help in understanding and responding to common questions about coronavirus.
- IBM developed the 'Watson Assistant for Citizens' to provide an AI-powered virtual agent that helps governments deliver accurate information to their citizens without overwhelming contact centres where human agents are needed to help those who truly need them.
- **'Watson Assistant for Citizens'** leverages currently available data from external sources which include the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other government sources for prevention & treatment related guidance, citizen welfare schemes in India, as well as global resources such as World Health Organization (WHO) and US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).
- Watson Assistant for Citizens is available in English and Spanish and 11 other languages.
- In India, Watson Assistant will respond to answer queries in English and Hindi.

About IBM

• CEO- Arvind Krishna

AICTE comes out with unique helpline portal to support students during lockdown



- All India Council for Technical Education, AICTE has come out with a unique MHRD AICTE COVID-19 Student Helpline Portal to address the issues. The website with URL https://helpline.aicte-india.org was launched by Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.
- The portal is essentially to connect those who are willing to provide help with those who need help. The nature of support includes accommodation, food, on line classes, attendance, examinations, scholarships, health, transport, harassment etc.
- More than 6500 colleges have already come forward to provide support at such a crucial juncture. Students in difficulty are encouraged to directly get connected with them through the portal.

About AICTE

- Headquarters- New Delhi
- Chairman- Anil Sahasrabudhe

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATION

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Govt extends tenure of NCLT acting President BSV Prakash Kumar



- The government has extended the tenure of acting President of National Company Law Tribunal BSV Prakash Kumar for another three months.
- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has informed the NCLT about the decision to extend the tenure to another three months or till the joining of new President, whichever is earlier.
- Earlier, Kumar was appointed as acting President for a period of three months from January 5 after the retirement of **Justice MM Kumar** as the NCLT President.
- The NCLT was set up under section 408 of the Companies Act, 2013 on June 1, 2016.

About National Company Law Tribunal

• Headquarters- New Delhi

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

China to launch communications satellite named after Wuhan



- China will launch the first two communications satellites for its space-based Internet-of-Things project this month with one of them named after its birthplace **Wuhan**, the epicentre of coronavirus, officials stated.
- The rocket to send the satellites, **Kuaizhou-1A**, was developed by the **Wuhan-based Sanjiang Group** under the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC).
- The two satellites, **Xingyun-2 01 and 02**, are the first stars of the "**Xingyun Engineering**" project, which is scheduled to complete the network with 80 low-orbit communications satellites.
- They were designed and developed by the Xingyun Satellite Company, a subsidiary of Sanjiang Group.Xingyun-2 01 was named "**Wuhan**".
- It will work for a Chinese low-orbit constellation for **Internet-of-Things (IoT)** communications and be tested in industries related to marine, forestry and engineering machinery, the report stated.

About China:

- President: Xi Jinping
- Capital: Beijing
- Currency: Renminbi

IIT Roorkee develops low-cost face shields for protection of first line healthcare professionals fighting COVID-19

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- **IIT Roorkee** has developed **low-cost face shields** for first line healthcare professionals at **AIIMS Rishikesh** for protection from COVID-19.
- The frame of face shield is **3D printed**. The shield can be used along with the protective gear by healthcare personnel while entering the wards housing COVID-19 patients.
- The spectacle-type design of the protection shield provides the ease of replacement as the transparent sheet is not bound to a reusable frame. The cost of the sheet is as low as Rs 5. The manufacturing cost per shield is approximately Rs 45. Mass manufacturing cost will be less than Rs. 25.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SPORTS

FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup, scheduled in November postponed



- The **FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup**, which was scheduled to be played in **India** between November 2nd and 21st, has been postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In a statement, FIFA stated, the new dates for the tournament will be identified later.
- The decision was taken by the FIFA-Confederations working group in its first meeting. The working group also postponed FIFA Under-20 Women's World Cup which was scheduled between August and September in Panama and Costa Rica. The working group has been recently established by the FIFA Council to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Under-17 Women's World Cup was scheduled to be played in India across five host cities Navi Mumbai, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Bhubaneswar.

About FIFA:

- President: Gianni Infantino
- Headquarters: Zürich, Switzerland
- Senior Vice-President: Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa

Official mascots of 19th Asian Games unveiled in Hangzhou, China



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- The official mascots of the **19th Asian Games** were unveiled at a digital launch ceremony in Hangzhou, China. The three robots, which are going to be the mascots for the **2022** Hangzhou Asian Games are collectively known as the smart triplets.
- The Mascots **Congcong**, **Lianlian** and **Chenchen**, which reflect the internet prowess of Hangzhou city and Zhejiang province, were unveiled at a digital ceremony in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic that has brought the whole world to a stand still.
- The Olympic Council of Asia's **19th Asian Games** will be held in Hangzhou from September 10 to 25, 2022. It will be the third Asian Games to be hosted by China following Beijing in 1990 and Guangzhou in 2010, with the participation of 45 NOCs of Asia in 42 sports.

List of Asian games venue:

2018	Jakarta-Palembang	Indonesia
19	2022	Hangzhou, china
20	2026	Aichi-Nagoya, Japan

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

Former Arunachal minister Passang Wangchuk Sona passes away



- Passang Wangchuk Sona, former minister of Arunachal Pradesh, passed away.
- The later leader was the minister of mines & minerals and cooperation, besides food & civil supplies from 1995 to 1999 in the Arunachal Pradesh cabinet.
- He also served as the Deputy Speaker of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

DAILY CA 3rd Apr

- International Children's Book Day-2nd april
- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches new features of e-NAM Platform
- C-DOT and Telecom Service Providers develop COVID Quarantine Alert System
- ADB expects India's economic growth to slow down to 4 per cent in FY21
- Indian Bank launches new products to support farmers, poultry players
- SBI Cards offers moratorium on credit card dues
- Global cost of Covid-19 could top **\$4 trillion**: Asian Development Bank
- **Google** donates **USD 6.5 million** to help fight coronavirus misinformation

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- Domino's Pizza joins hands with ITC Foods to make home delivery of essentials
- **AP govt** to buy MOM developed by NAVY for COVID-19 patients
- **Delhi govt** to provide financial assistance worth **Rs 5,000 each** to all auto-rickshaw, taxi drivers amid lockdown situations
- Maharashtra govt launches online self-assessment tool to better identify, assist patients
- **Gujarat govt** announces financial assistance of **Rs 25 per day** for each animal for April for all registered Gau Shalas
- Delhi government launches WhatsApp helpline number to provide credible information
- Aarogya Setu': Govt launches coronavirus tracker app
- Paytm Money MD & CEO Pravin Jadhav resigns
- Justice Rajnesh Oswal sworn in as permanent Judge of High Court of J&K, Ladakh under Indian Constitution
- CLW sets World Record by producing 431 Locomotives in FY 2019-20
- Bob Weighton 112-year-old officially recognised as world's oldest man
- DRDO develops **bio suit** to keep personnel engaged in combating COVID-19 safe from virus
- Emmy-winning singer Adam Schlesinger passes away due to COVID-19
- Tony Lewis of 'DLS method' fame passes away
- Bhai Nirmal Singh, Padma Shri Recipient and Former 'Hazoori Raagi' passes away

DAILY CA 4th Apr

- International Day of Mine awareness- 4th april
- MoS HRD and IT, Sanjay Dhotre launches 'Hack the Crisis-India' hackathon
- Home Minister Amit Shah approves release of Rs 11,092 Cr under SDRMF to all States
- DST sets up rapid response centre at SINE, IIT Bombay to combat COVID-19
- Finance ministry releases **Rs.17,287 crore** to states to fight Covid-19 outbreak
- World Bank to roll out USD 160 billion emergency aid to help nations deal with Covid-19
- UNGA adopts resolution calling for global solidarity in fight against COVID-19

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- Fitch slashes India growth forecast to 30-year low of **2 per cent for** FY21
- India seeks **\$6 billion loans** from AIIB, ADB to combat COVID-19: Report
- Odisha government, UNICEF launch 'Mo Prativa' to engage young minds amid COVID-19 lockdown
- Geo-Fencing App To Locate Quarantine Violators
- IBM offers 'Watson Assistant for Citizens' to quickly address covid-19 queries
- AICTE comes out with unique helpline portal to support students during lockdown
- Govt extends tenure of NCLT acting President BSV Prakash Kumar
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