

Current Affairs Today – 15.04.2020

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS

World Chagas Disease Day



- The first-ever **World Chagas Disease Day** is from **2020 onwards**, **April 14** is marked as a day to spread awareness about this "**silent and silenced disease**".
- The Chagas disease is called silent because it progresses slowly, and silenced because it mainly affects the poor people who often lack political voice and proper health care.
- The disease got its name from **Dr Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas**, who diagnosed the first patient with the disease in Brazil on **April 14, 1909**.
- The **72nd World Health Assembly** approved the designation of Chagas Disease Day on May 24, 2019.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL

Fit India, CBSE to organise 1st-ever live fitness sessions for School students



- **Fit India and CBSE** will organise first-ever live **fitness sessions** for school students in the second phase of lockdown. Live sessions will commence from 9:30 morning and students can get access to these live sessions on Facebook and Instagram handles of Fit India Movement and CBSE.
- During the programme guidelines of **Ministry of AYUSH** to stay healthy will be shared with students. Owing to the nation-wide lockdown due to Covid19 up to 3rd May and following Prime Minister's call to all citizens to increase immunity and stay healthy, Fit India and CBSE have taken this unique initiative to ensure fitness of all school children.
- All the sessions will also be available on YouTube so that students can access it at their convenience as well. The live sessions will cover all aspects of children's fitness from daily workouts to yoga, nutrition to emotional well-being.

About CBSE:

- Headquarters location: New Delhi
- Founded: 1962
- Chairperson: Anita Karwal, IAS
- Parent organisation: Ministry of Human Resource Development

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

Donald Trump halts World Health Organization funding over handling of coronavirus



- US President **Donald Trump** has announced that he has instructed his administration to stop US funding for the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, which he accused of grossly mismanaging and covering-up the spread of the novel coronavirus.
- Trump noted that the United States contributes to the WHO **400-500 million dollars** annually. President Trump stated, had the WHO done its job to get medical experts into China to objectively assess the situation on the ground and to call out China's lack of transparency, the outbreak could have been contained at its source with very little death.
- The US President stated WHO's reliance on initially false data from China regarding the novel coronavirus may have caused a 20-fold increase in cases worldwide. He further added that the United States will continue to engage with the WHO to see if the organization can implement meaningful reforms.

About WHO:

- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- Head: Tedros Adhanom
- Founded: 7 April 1948

South Korea holds parliamentary election under strict safety measures amid Covid-19 pandemic



- **South Koreans** began going to the polls to elect members of parliament, wearing masks and plastic gloves as part of strict safety measures in one of the **first national elections** held amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- About 14,000 polling stations were open at 6 AM (local time) around the country after disinfection, and voters were required to wear a mask and have a temperature check upon arrival. Anyone whose temperature was higher than 37.5 Celsius was led to a special booth.
- All voters must use hand sanitizer and plastic gloves when casting ballots and maintain 1 metre distance between each other.
- Globally, South Korea was one of the first countries to hold a national election since the coronavirus epidemic began, while many others postponed votes.
- The election campaign has taken on a different look, with candidates wearing masks and bumping fists instead of pressing the flesh and mass rallies.

About South Korea:

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- Capital: Seoul
- President: Moon Jae-in
- Currency: South Korean won

UN releases \$2.5 million to help cyclone-ravaged Vanuatu



- The **United Nations** released **\$2.5 million** from its emergency humanitarian fund to help thousands of people in the **South Pacific island** nation of **Vanuatu** affected by **Cyclone Harold** and offered support to other hard-hit countries.
- The cyclone made landfall on the largest island in Vanuatu, Espiritu Santo, on April 6 before hitting the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga. The U.N. cited media reports saying the storm left more than two dozen people dead, and destroyed homes, buildings and crops in the four countries.
- In Vanuatu, the U.N. humanitarian office stated, Initial assessments suggest as much as 90 per cent of the population in Sanma, the most affected province lost their homes, and more than half of all schools and almost a quarter of health centers were damaged.
- It stated crops have been destroyed and many communities are now cut off from help because of flooding and the destruction of roads.

About United Nations (UN):

- Headquarters: New York, United States
- Founded: 24 October 1945
- Secretary general: António Guterres
- General Assembly President: Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

HDFC Chairman pushes for restructuring of NPA norms



- **HDFC Chairman Deepak Parekh** pushed for a one-time restructuring of **stressed real estate accounts** and relaxation in classification of **NPA norms** to **180 days from 90 days** to help the sector.
- While addressing representatives from the real estate sector through video conferencing, Parekh stated unless the stressed accounts are restructured, financial institutions will find it difficult to provide additional liquidity to the sector.
- He stated recommendation has already been made to the RBI for the restructuring following which real estate developers can be given additional money.

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About HDFC:

- CEO: Aditya Puri
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Tagline :We understand your world

Govt launches Sovereign Gold Bonds Scheme 2020-21



- The **Government of India**, in consultation with the **Reserve Bank of India**, is going to launch new series of the **Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme**, which will open for subscription from **April 20**. The Sovereign Gold Bonds will be issued in **six tranches** from April 20 to 4 September, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Finance.
- The Bonds, to be issued by the RBI on behalf of the Government of India, will be sold through **Scheduled Commercial banks** (except Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices, and recognised stock exchanges such as BSE and NSE.
- Bonds will be tradable on stock exchanges within a **fortnight of the issuance** on a date as notified by the RBI.
- The minimum investment limit for Sovereign Gold Bond is 1 gram of gold, while the maximum limit of subscription is 4 kg for individual, 4 kg for HUF and 20 kg for trusts and similar entities, as notified by the government from time to time. The tenor of the Bond will be for a period of 8 years with exit option after completion of five years.

About Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme:

- SGBs are government securities denominated in grams of gold. They are substitutes for holding physical gold. Investors have to pay the issue price in cash and the bonds will be redeemed in cash on maturity. The Bond is issued by Reserve Bank on behalf of Government of India.

About RBI:

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

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Apollo and Airtel launches self-assessment tool for Covid 19 risk



- **Bharti Airtel** and **Apollo Hospitals Group** has launched an **artificial intelligence (AI) enabled tool** which will help people to check their coronavirus risk profile.
- Apollo 24/7, the digital business unit of The Apollo Hospitals Group in collaboration with Airtel has launched the tool to support India's battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The free digital self-assessment test available on **Airtel Thanks app** will enable its customers to check their **COVID-19 risk profile**. The test, which has been developed by **Apollo 24/7**, uses AI based technologies to allow users to assess their COVID-19 risk profile by answering a few simple questions.
- Based on the user responses, the digital tool generates a risk score and suggests next best action including online consults on Apollo 24/7 free, dialling COVID non-prescriptive helpline from the app itself, self-care tips, social distancing guidelines and other important prevention steps as suggested by **WHO and MOHFW**.
- In addition, Airtel customers will now be available to recharge their Airtel connections at over 3000 Apollo pharmacy stores across India. This offers added convenience to Airtel customers looking at offline recharge options.
- The partnership aims to bring together **Airtel's pan-India** network reach and Apollo Hospital's industry-leading digital healthcare platform – Apollo 24/7 to raise awareness and break the chain of spread of COVID-19.

About Airtel :

- CEO: Gopal Vittal
- Sunil Bharti Mittal (Chairman)
- Headquarters : Delhi

India, China will register positive growth rate despite Coronavirus pandemic: IMF



- **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has stated **India** and **China** are the only two major countries, which will register a positive growth rate despite Coronavirus pandemic. In its latest edition of World Economy report, IMF has projected India's GDP growth to be **1.9 per cent** in **2020** from **5.8 per cent** in January. For China, it has projected a growth rate of **1.2 per cent**.
- IMF stated, despite global economy hitting the worst recession since the Great Depression of 1930s, India and China are likely to bounce back strongly in 2021 with India expected to grow at **7.4 per cent** and **China** at **9.2 per cent**.
- IMF report stated most countries, in the advanced economy group, are forecast to contract this year, including the US, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

About International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- Headquarters: Washington, D.C. U.S.
- Managing Director : Kristalina Georgieva
- Chief Economist : Gita Gopinath

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

Baisakhi, Bihu, Vishu, Poila Boishakh, Puthandu



- The Eastern, Northern & Southern parts of the country celebrate their first harvest festival of the year - Baisakhi, Bihu, Vishu, Poila Boishak & Puthandu - with vigour and fervour. Every year, the festivals fall on April 13 or April 14, based on the Hindu or Sikh Calendar.
- **Baisakhi**, also known as **Vaisakhi** marks the **Sikh New Year** and is a spring harvest festival celebrated in Punjab and other parts of North India. Baisakhi falls on **13 April this year** and it commemorates the formation of the Khalsa Panth, under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh Ji in the year 1699.
- Vishu marks the Malayalam New Year, This year, Vishu will fall on April 14.
- West Bengal celebrates Bengali New Years Day Pahela Baishakh or Bangla Noboborsho is the first day of Bengali Calendar on 14 April.
- On this day, Bengali traders community opens new books of accounts named as 'Hal Khaata'.
- **Puthandu**, also known as **Puthuvarusham** or **Tamil New Year**, is the first day of year on the Tamil calendar and traditionally celebrated as a festival on **14 April**.

Robots to serve food, medicine to COVID-19 patients in Jharkhand



- **Robots** will serve **food and give medicine** to Covid-19 patients in two hospitals in **Jharkhand's West Singhbhum** district, in a step to protect doctors and health workers from getting infected with coronavirus.
- Developed by **District Deputy Development Commissioner (DDC)** Aditya Ranjan, the remote-controlled **COBOT-Robotics** will provide food and medicine to patients without human intervention.
- Each bed has been designed like a room where medicine and food will be provided to patients through COBOT-Robotics.
- A team of engineers, under the supervision of the DDC, designed and programmed COBOT-Robotics in a garage in Ranjan's residence, the release stated.
- The DDC had earlier designed a booth to protect health workers collecting samples of persons suspected to be infected with coronavirus, it added.

About Jharkhand :

- Chief minister: Hemant Soren
- Capital: Ranchi
- Governor : Draupadi Murmu

Uttar Pradesh govt decides to promote all students from class 6 to 9 & 11 following lockdown



- **Uttar Pradesh government** has decided to promote all students from **classes 6 to 9 and class 11** affiliated with UP Board without final exams. Now these students will move to the next grade without appearing for the final examinations.
- The announcement came as a relief for lakhs of students, whose examination preparations and academics were hampered due to closure of schools and other educational institutions amid COVID-19 outbreak.
- Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Dr Dinesh Sharma stated that students from classes 9 to 12 will be taught via e-learning and virtual classes through WhatsApp from April 20.
- He stated that UP board students can be taught with the help of e-content at **Diksha portal** and suggested that Doordarshan can also prove strong medium for the help of students.

About Uttar Pradesh:

- Chief minister: Yogi Adityanath
- Governor: Anandiben Patel
- Capital: Lucknow

e-comic Textbooks launched in Manipur



- **Manipur State Education (School) Department** has launched **electronic format comic textbooks** for class III to V for Mathematics, Environmental Studies and English Language in a motive to make up the gaps for the academic situation arises due to lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- State Education Minister Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam officially launched the **e-comic textbooks** at **Imphal**. He stated that electronic format textbooks for other classes will be soon made available.
- The decision to start this learning method has been made after thorough discussion and analysis with the experts and official concerned of the State Department of Education.

About Manipur :

- Capital: Imphal
- Governor: Najma Heptulla
- Chief minister: N. Biren Singh

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS

National Agriculture Market portal e-NAM to Complete four Years



- The pan-India Agriculture trading portal **e-NAM** will be completing **four years** of implementation.
- e-NAM was an innovative initiative in agricultural marketing to enhance farmers accessibility digitally to multiple number of markets & buyers and to bring transparency in trade transactions with the intent to improve price discovery mechanism, quality commensurate price realization and also to develop the concept of **One Nation One Market** for agriculture produce.
- e-NAM was launched by Prime Minister in 21 mandis on **14th April, 2016** which has now reached 585 mandis across 16 States and 02 UTs.
- More than 1.66 crore farmers and 1.28 Lakh traders registered on e-NAM platform. Farmers are free to register on e-NAM portal and they are uploading their produce for sale online to the traders across all e-NAM mandis and traders can bid for the lots available for sale on e-NAM from any location.
- **“Farmers friendly”** features such as Advance registration of the lot through app which in turn will reduce waiting time for farmers at gate entry of the mandi and will bring huge efficiency and will facilitate smooth Arrival recording at Gate, Farmers can now see the assaying report **On The Go**, Farmers can see **the progress of bids** for their lot being traded, **through mobile** and farmers can also get **the real time information on prices** in nearby mandis. **Electronic weighing scales** have been provided to accurately weigh the commodities of farmers after bidding on e-NAM platform to bring transparency in weighing, **Payment to farmers by traders** now can be done through mobile phone using **BHIM payment facility**.
- **For traders** the additional **OTG (On the Go)** features have been added such as **Buyers bidding from anywhere even without physically present** in the mandi, **e-NAM shopping Cart facility** in Trader login, **single e-payment transaction features** for multiple Invoices/ Bunching of multiple invoices, automatic discount/ rebate on e-Payment/ Discount to traders during e-payment, online registration for unified **trading license** etc.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS

Paytm General Insurance Ltd names Vineet Arora as MD, CEO



- Digital payments major **Paytm** stated it has named **Vineet Arora** as the managing director and chief executive officer of **Paytm General Insurance Ltd**.
- The appointment, which is subject to regulatory approvals, is a step for Paytm to further its journey into the insurance sector with an immediate focus on General Insurance, the company stated in a statement.

- Arora will lead the efforts to provide industry-leading solutions in the general insurance space, where Paytm continues to explore options to enter the sector, it added.
- Previously, Arora served as the managing director and chief executive officer of **Aegon Life Insurance Company** and was part of the India Leadership team.
- Before that, he was senior general manager and head Product, Distribution, Marketing and Wealth Management at ICICI Securities Ltd where he built a profitable distribution business across various delivery channels.

About Paytm :

- CEO: Vijay Shekhar Sharma
- Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

CURRENT AFFAIRS: AWARDS AND HONOURS

Four Indian-Americans awarded 2020 Guggenheim fellowships



- **Four Indian-Americans** have been awarded with a prestigious **US fellowship** for their accomplishments and “exceptional promise”.
- **Pradeep Sharma**, mechanical engineer at the University of Houston, **Kavita Ramanan**, professor of Applied Mathematics at Brown University, **Dilip Da Cunha**, architect, planner and teacher at Harvard University and Columbia University, and **Mukul Sharma**, professor of Earth Sciences at Dartmouth College, have been awarded the **2020 Guggenheim fellowships**.
- This year’s fellowships recognise 173 people, selected from an initial field of 3,000.
- The size of grant varies and is adjusted to the needs of fellows, considering their other resources and the purpose and scope of their plans. The average grant in the 2008 Canada and United States competition was approximately **USD 43,200**.
- The Guggenheim Foundation has granted more than USD 375 million in fellowships to over 18,000 individuals since the fellowships began in 1925. Recipients include Nobel laureates, Fields Medalists, poets laureate, members of the national academies and winners of the Pulitzer Prize, Bancroft Prize, Turing Award and National Book Awards, among other honours.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: MERGERS AND ACQUISITION

CCI approves Emerald Sage Investment's stake buy in Apollo Tyres



- The Competition Commission has approved acquisition of **9.93 per cent** stake in **Apollo Tyres** by **Emerald Sage Investment**.

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- The proposed transaction relates to subscription of **10,80,00,000** compulsorily convertible preference shares of Rs 100 each of Apollo Tyres by Emerald.
- Emerald is a Mauritius-based investment holding company, while Apollo Tyres is engaged in manufacturing and sale of automotive.

About CCI

- It is a statutory body of India, responsible for the implementation of the Competition Act, 2002 & established by the Centre with effect from 14th October 2003.
- Headquarters– New Delhi
- Chairperson– Ashok Kumar Gupta

CURRENT AFFAIRS: DEFENCE

INS Dega at Eastern Naval Command ensures joint-user airfield at Vizag remains open during lockdown



- **INS Dega** of **Eastern Naval Command (ENC)** ensured that **the joint-user airfield at Visakhapatnam** remains open round-the-clock.
- The manning of the airfield has been modified to ensure that all requisite safety services and airfield facilities continue to be available.
- This ensured that all special flights, as well as the cargo flight of SpiceJet continued its operations unhindered.
- So far, 15 sorties of the cargo flight have operated since the lockdown has been enforced.
- Further, the Indian Navy continued to maintain its operational vigil carrying out regular maritime surveillance missions by day and night.
- The **Dornier squadron of the ENC, INAS 311**, operating from the air station, has been undertaking regular maritime surveillance missions.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DRDO develops kiosk for COVID-19 sample collection



- **Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad** has added another product to the portfolio of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to combat **Coronavirus (COVID-19)** by developing **COVID Sample Collection Kiosk (COVSACK)**.
- The unit has been developed by DRDL in consultation with the doctors of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), Hyderabad. The COVSACK is a kiosk for use by healthcare workers for taking COVID-19 samples from

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suspected infected patients. Patient under test walks into the Kiosk and a nasal or oral swab is taken by health care professional from outside through the built in gloves.

- The Kiosk is automatically disinfected without the need for human involvement, making the process free of infection spread. The shielding screen of kiosk cabin protects the health care worker from the aerosols/droplet transmission while taking the sample. This reduces the requirements of PPE change by health care workers.
- After the patient leaves the Kiosk, four nozzle sprayers mounted in the kiosk cabin disinfect the empty chamber by spraying disinfectant mist for a period of 70 seconds. It is further flushed with water & UV light disinfection.
- The system is ready for next use in less than two minutes. Voice command can be given through two-way communication system integrated with the COVSACK. It is possible to configure COVSACK to be used either from inside or outside as required by the medical professionals.
- The **COVSACK** costs nearly **Rs. one lakh** and the identified industry based at Belgaum, Karnataka can support 10 units per day.
- The DRDO has designed and developed two units and handed over these to ESIC Hospital, Hyderabad after successful testing.

About Defence Research and Development Organisation:

- Headquarters -New Delhi
- Founded- 1958
- Chairman- Dr G. Satheesh Reddy

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SPORTS

Hockey India postpones all its rescheduled national championships



- **Hockey India** postponed all its **rescheduled national championships** indefinitely after the national lockdown to contain the COVID-19 pandemic was extended till **May 3**. These tournaments were rescheduled to start on April 29 and continue till July 3 but have been suspended for now.
- Hockey India President **Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad** stated that a decision has been taken to postpone the remaining annual **2020 Hockey India National Championships** keeping in mind the well-being of all our stakeholders including the players, coaches, organisers, fans and officials. He stated new dates will be announced based on the evolution of the COVID-19 situation in India.
- Ahmad stated he is working with the relevant central and state government departments to ensure that all necessary precautions are duly taken to maintain public health.

About Hockey India:

- President: Mr. Md. Mustaque Ahmad
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson: Mr. Jaideep yadav

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

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Former Gujarat Cricketer Walter D'Souza Passes Away



- Former Gujarat **cricketer Walter D'Souza** passed away at 93
- D'Souza played first-class cricket from 1947/48 to 1965/66.
- He played 16 matches for Gujarat, scoring 821 runs at an average of 35.69. He had the high score of 91 and also picked up seven wickets. He was proud when Gujarat lifted their first Ranji trophy under the captaincy of Parthiv Patel in 2016-17.

DAILY CA 14TH APR

- **B.R. Ambedkar Remembrance Day- 14th april**
- **Puthandu- 14th april**
- **IFFCO** runs hundreds of **awareness campaigns** on Ground Zero
- IMF grants immediate debt relief to **25 poor nations** to help fight Covid-19
- **North Korea** fires barrage of cruise missiles on eve of founder's birthday
- US approves sale of Harpoon missiles, torpedoes worth **USD 155 million** to India
- **ADB triples** COVID-19 response package to **\$20 billion**
- **7.4 mn bank accounts** to be credited with **Rs 1,500** in Telangana
- Brand Ambassadors in Recent News
- **Syndicate Bank, Andhra Bank** chiefs appointed as OSDs in Canara Bank, Union Bank of India
- Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan participates in **G20 Extraordinary Energy Ministers'** virtual meeting
- **ASEAN** holds special summit on response to COVID-19 pandemic
- Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog & National Informatics Centre (NIC) jointly launches **CollabCAD** in ATL schools
- **IIT Guwahati** researchers develop antiviral coating for PPEs
- Science communication initiative "**CovidGyan**" launched
- India to host **Asian Championship** in Nov-Dec this year: Boxing federation
- Former Attorney General of India **Ashok Desai** passes away

- Former **US Baseball Player Glenn Beckert** passes away
- Former pro golfer **Doug Sanders** passes away
- Former **Pakistan first-class cricketer Zafar Sarfraz** dies of coronavirus

DAILY CA 15TH APR

- **World Chagas Disease Day- 14th april**
- **Fit India, CBSE** to organise 1st-ever live fitness sessions for School students
- Donald Trump halts **World Health Organization** funding over handling of coronavirus
- **South Korea** holds parliamentary election under strict safety measures amid Covid-19 pandemic
- UN releases **\$2.5 million** to help cyclone-ravaged **Vanuatu**
- **HDFC Chairman** pushes for restructuring of NPA norms
- Govt launches **Sovereign Gold Bonds Scheme 2020-21**
- **Apollo and Airtel** launches self-assessment tool for Covid 19 risk
- India, China will register positive growth rate despite Coronavirus pandemic: IMF
- Baisakhi, Bihu, Vishu, Poila Boishakh, Puthandu
- **Robots** to serve food, medicine to COVID-19 patients in **Jharkhand**
- **Uttar Pradesh govt** decides to promote all students from **class 6 to 9 & 11** following lockdown
- **e-comic Textbooks** launched in **Manipur**
- **National Agriculture Market** portal **e-NAM** to Complete four Years
- **Paytm General Insurance** Ltd names **Vineet Arora** as MD, CEO
- Four Indian-Americans awarded 2020 **Guggenheim** fellowships
- CCI approves **Emerald Sage Investment's stake** buy in Apollo Tyres
- **INS Dega** at **Eastern Naval Command** ensures joint-user airfield at Vizag remains open during lockdown
- **DRDO develops kiosk** for COVID-19 sample collection
- **Hockey India** postpones all its rescheduled national championships
- Former Gujarat Cricketer **Walter D'Souza** Passes Away