

Current Affairs Today – 25.04.2020

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS

World Malaria Day: 25 April



- **World Malaria Day (WMD)** is commemorated every year on 25 April to recognize global efforts to control malaria.
- Theme 2020: **Zero Malaria Starts with Me.**
- The “**Zero malaria**” campaign engages all members of society: political leaders who control government policy decisions and budgets; private sector companies that will benefit from a malaria-free workforce; and communities affected by malaria, whose buy-in and ownership of malaria control interventions is critical to success

CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL

UNODC launches ‘Lockdown Learners’ series for students, teachers of India



- **The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)** has launched a ‘**Lockdown Learners**’ series of online dialogues with students and educators in India on COVID-19 and its impact on Sustainable Development Goals, peace and rule of law
- Educational institutes have been shut down in India due to the nationwide lockdown imposed to stop the spread of covid-19. This has resulted to a halt in the academic session of 2020, which is motivating organisations to take steps like launching online platforms for students.
- The dialogues have been launched by the United Nations body under its flagship Education for Justice initiative.
- The Lockdown Learners series also provides a platform for students to receive mentorship and knowledge support through activity-based learning, and use their talent and skills to promote awareness and share their ideas and solutions to address some of these problems, it stated.

About The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC):

- Headquarters: Vienna, Austria
- Founded: 1997

Govt declares banking industry as a public utility service for six months till October 21

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- Government has declared **banking industry** as a public utility service for **six months till October 21** under the **provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act**.
- Bringing banking services under the provisions of this Act means that the banking sector would not see any strikes by employees or officers during the operation of the law starting from April 21.
- In a circular, Department of Financial Services stated the labour and employment ministry through a notification has declared "**banking industry as a public utility service**" for six months.
- The notification was issued by the labour ministry against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic which has significantly impacted economic activities.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

WHO launches 'landmark' collaboration to develop COVID-19 drug, vaccine



- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** stated it would announce a "**landmark collaboration**" to speed development of safe, effective drugs, tests and vaccines to prevent, diagnose and treat COVID-19.
- The Geneva-based agency, in a brief statement stated the initiative with partners aims to make technologies against the disease caused by the novel coronavirus "**accessible to everyone who needs them, worldwide**", but gave no details.
- The **GAVI vaccine alliance**, **Gates Foundation** and **Global Fund** are among traditional large donors to the U.N. agency, in addition to its 194 member states.
- WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated on April 6 that he planned to announce an initiative to accelerate the research, development and production of vaccines and also design mechanisms for equitable distribution.
- The initiative is expected to include a stockpile for use in poor countries, such as the WHO currently has for influenza vaccines should a flu virus evolve into a pandemic.

About WHO:

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

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

Vodafone Idea ties up with Paytm to launch 'Recharge Saathi'



- **Vodafone Idea and Paytm**, a digital payments and financial services platform, have launched '**Recharge Saathi**' programme which helps individuals and small businesses to earn an additional income.
- The programme will enable any **Paytm customers** (following a registration) to start selling **Vodafone and Idea recharges on Paytm app**, the company stated in a statement.
- They can start selling mobile recharges by downloading and registering on the Paytm app. Vodafone Idea will also give an assured cashback to merchant partners for multiple recharges.
- Individuals and small businesses — such as pharmacists, milk booth operators, newspaper vendors and individuals — would be able to earn up to Rs.5,000 every month under the programme.

About Vodafone Idea:

- CEO: Ravinder Takkar
- Headquarters: Gandhinagar, Gujarat

About Paytm:

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

Bank of Baroda announces ex-gratia, health cover for business correspondents



- State-owned **Bank of Baroda** stated it will provide an **ex-gratia payment of Rs 10 lakh** to the next of kin of **business correspondents (BCs)** in case of loss of life due to COVID-19. It will also provide health insurance cover of **Rs 60,000** to the BCs.
- The bank has taken steps for BCs' financial security, in terms of ex-gratia payment of Rs 10 lakh to the nominee in case of loss of life due to COVID-19, and health insurance facility of Rs 60,000 to each active BC, it stated in a statement.
- Bank of Baroda stated to ensure maintenance of hygiene and safety, it is also providing additional support in tranches to keep the BC points sanitised and clean through sanitisers, disinfectants, use of masks and other measures.
- In the first tranche, **Rs 2,000** was provided to each active and functional BC in the month of April 2020. In May, each functional BC will be provided **Rs 1,000** for hygiene maintenance, the bank stated.
- Further, the bank will pay an amount of **Rs 100** per working day towards transportation as an incentive to the BCs to encourage them to extend their services from 10 am to 5 pm till June 30, 2020 subject to minimum 40 transactions.

About Bank of Baroda :

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- Headquarters: Vadodara, Gujarat
- Hasmukh Adhia: Chairman
- Sanjiv Chadha :MD & CEO
- Tagline : India's International Bank

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

HCL to offer tech support to TN govt in tackling Covid-19



- **The Tamil Nadu government** has joined hands with **HCL** to strengthen its response to Covid-19 pandemic by setting up a **Disaster Management-Data Analytics Centre** in the city.
- The State's Disaster Management Centre is responsible for the overall management of disasters across the entire State. HCL will help in improving and expanding the State's disaster management helpline (1070) through technological upgradation, manpower assistance and effective reporting mechanisms, says a HCL.
- The Disaster Management-Data Analytics Centre, will help capture data trends from across all districts in real time and display them live to inform the Government's future decisions on the degree of response needed for each district and also for graded relaxation of the current lockdown to resume economic activities, the release stated.
- Given the increased call volumes in the wake of Covid-19, HCL is helping the State to upgrade their existing call centre by implementing an Automatic Call Distribution system; build case flow system to track caller identity, immediate needs and follow through with relevant departments to solve their issues within defined turnaround time, the release stated.

About HCL:

- Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- CEO: C Vijayakumar , Roshni Nadar

About Tamil Nadu:

- Chief minister: Edappadi K. Palaniswami
- Capital: Chennai
- Governor :Banwarilal Purohit

CM Jagan launches zero-interest loan scheme, gives SHGs Rs 1,400 crore in Andhra Pradesh



- Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** launched the **YSR Zero Interest Loan scheme**, under which **Rs 1,400 crore** has been credited to the bank accounts of **8.78 lakh Self Help Groups (SHGs)**.

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- Under the scheme, women SHG members can avail loans of **Rs 20,000-40,000** a year. It will benefit over 91 lakh women SHG members across the State. Of the 8.78 lakh SHGs, 6.95 are in rural areas.
- The zero interest scheme was first launched by the then chief minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy in the united Andhra Pradesh in 2011, under which the state government bore the interest burden on loans extended to the women SHGs.
- Jagan re-launched the **zero interest scheme** that would benefit **about 91 lakh members** of SHGs.
- The SHG women were currently securing loans from banks at an interest rate of **7 to 13 percent**
- The zero interest scheme would prove beneficial to the women SHGs, he said and listed out the slew of schemes launched by his government for the welfare of women.
- The chief minister announced that house-sites would be distributed to over 27 lakh women on 8 July as the programme got postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

About Andhra Pradesh:

- Capitals: Amaravati, Hyderabad
- Governor: Biswabhusan Harichandan
- Chief minister: Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS

CISF launches "e-office" app for movement of files



- An e-office application, that enables movement of files and documents without physical touch, has been launched for usage in the 1.62 lakh personnel-strong Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to prevent coronavirus infection.
- The application called "**e-karyalay**" (**electronic office**) has been designed by the in-house technical team of the force.
- "This application has been hosted at CISF cloud with all security arrangements in place to safeguard the data," CISF spokesperson Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Hemendra Singh stated.
- Moreover, he stated, a data recovery site has also been established to maintain round-the-clock services of e-karyalay.
- He stated the app gives the same visual look like a file that has notings on the left and all correspondence and attachments on the right.
- Files may be opened, worked, parked and closed in the same manner, he stated.
- "Dak" or letters management section of the app handles all sorts of communication between various levels of functional hierarchy.
- As the government has only allowed officers above the rank of deputy secretary to go office and have only one-third of the manpower below this rank on a given day at work, the app will ease the work load.
- Also, it will enable officials to work from home, another official stated.
- The CISF is the national civil aviation security force with 63 airports under its cover and it also guards the Delhi Metro and other vital infrastructure in the aerospace and nuclear domain.

About Central Industrial Security Force (CISF):

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Minister responsible: Amit Shah, Union Home Minister
- Director General of CISF :Rajesh Ranjan, IPS

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Sanjay Kothari takes oath as Chief Vigilance Commissioner



- Retired IAS officer **Sanjay Kothari** took oath as the **Chief Vigilance Commissioner** at a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Mr Kothari, a 1978 batch (retired) IAS officer of Haryana cadre, was administered the oath of office by President Ram Nath Kovind at the event which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and others senior officials.
- Sanjay Kothari was secretary to the president before being nominated to the new role.
- Mr Kothari was reportedly shortlisted as the Central Vigilance Commissioner in February this year by a high-powered panel headed by the prime minister.

About Central Vigilance Commissioner:

- Formed: February 1964
- Objectives: To address governmental corruption
- Headquarters: New Delhi

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IIT-Delhi develops COVID-19 test kit, gets ICMR's approval



- The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi** has developed a COVID-19 test kit, which has got the approval of **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**.
- "Testing will be cheaper than all existing devices," he stated, adding that the device is affordable for commercial production.
- ICMR had approved detection assay for COVID-19, which has been developed by researchers at IIT-Delhi's Kusuma School of Biological Sciences (KSBS).

- The assay has been validated at the ICMR with a sensitivity and specificity of 100 per cent. This makes IIT-Delhi the first academic institute to have obtained ICMR approval for a real-time PCR-based diagnostic assay," statement from IIT-Delhi.
- This is the first probe-free assay for COVID-19 approved by the ICMR and it will be useful for specific and affordable high throughput testing. It can easily be scaled up as it does not require fluorescent probes. The team is targeting large-scale deployment of the kit at affordable prices with suitable industrial partners as soon as possible.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

Former Australian cricketer Graeme Watson dies at 75



- **Graeme Watson**, the **former Australia all rounder** who was battling cancer, has died at the age of 75. Primarily a middle-order batsman and a medium-pace bowler, he played five Tests from 1967 to 1972 and two ODIs in 1972.
- After starting his domestic career at Victoria, Watson earned an Australia call-up on the 1966-67 tour of Rhodesia and South Africa as Doug Walter's replacement.
- He returned for the fourth Test in Johannesburg where he bagged a career-best 2 for 67 but failed to make a significant contribution with bat or ball thereafter as Australia lost the series in Port Elizabeth.

DAILY CA 24th APR

- **UN English and Spanish language day- 23rd april**
- **National Panchayati Raj Day- 24th april**
- Remittances to India likely to drop by **23 pct** this year: World Bank
- Bajaj Allianz launches '**BAGIC GOQii Co-pay Option**' under regulatory sandbox
- **SIDBI** launches special liquidity scheme for MSMEs
- World Bank approves **Rs 585 cr for Himachal Pradesh** State Roads Transformation Project
- Mizoram: Mobile app '**mCOVID19**' to act as online pass for drivers and handymen
- J&K bags three national awards for outstanding contribution by its Panchayati Raj Institutions
- Ujjivan SFB ranked 5th among '**Best Large Workplaces**'
- SpaceX successfully launches latest batch of **60 internet-beaming satellites to orbit**
- IGIB scientists develop low cost COVID-19 test '**Feluda**'
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates **DRDO mobile testing lab**

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- **Tech Mahindra, IBM** tie up to set up innovation centres
- **Charles Leclerc** wins Chinese Virtual Grand Prix
- **Alireza Firouzja** defeats **Magnus Carlsen** in final of Banter Blitz Cup
- Thespian **Usha Ganguly** dies at 75 in Kolkata
- Former Rajya Sabha **MP Basanta Das** passes away

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- **World Malaria Day: 25 April**
- UNODC launches '**Lockdown Learners**' series for students, teachers of India
- Govt declares banking industry as a **public utility service** for six months till October 21
- WHO launches '**landmark**' collaboration to develop COVID-19 drug, vaccine
- Vodafone Idea ties up with Paytm to launch '**Recharge Saathi**'
- **Bank of Baroda** announces ex-gratia, health cover for **business correspondents**
- HCL to offer tech support to TN govt in tackling **Covid- 19**
- CM Jagan launches zero-interest loan scheme, gives SHGs **Rs 1,400 crore** in Andhra Pradesh
- CISF launches "**e-office**" app for movement of files
- **Sanjay Kothari** takes oath as **Chief Vigilance Commissioner**
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