

Top Current Affairs of the Week (20 April-26 April 2020)

1. Culture Ministry launched National ICH list of India

- Union Minister for Culture Prahlad Singh Patel launched the **National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India**.
- It aims to raise awareness and protection about intangible cultural heritage elements from different states of India at national and international level.
- This initiative is also a part of the **Vision 2024 of the Ministry of Culture**.
- The National ICH List is an attempt to recognize the diversity of Indian culture embedded in its intangible heritage.

2. Chhattisgarh Govt launched online delivery website 'Cghaat'

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the online delivery website '**Cghaat**' to provide **home delivery of fruits and vegetables** during the extended lockdown phase.
- It has been developed by **Chhattisgarh government's agency Chips**.
- The interested vendors can register online and start providing home delivery against the placed orders after receiving Collector's permission.
- **This service is available free of charge to vendors.**

3. CSIR-NAL develops Personal Protective cover-all Suit

- **CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL)**, along with **MAF Clothing Pvt. Ltd.**, Bengaluru has developed and certified the **overall protective cover-all suit**.
- It is based on **polypropylene spun laminated multi-layered non-woven fabric** to ensure the safety of Doctors, Nurses, Paramedical staff and Health Care workers to Combat COVID-19.
- The Coveralls have gone through stringent testing at SITRA, Coimbatore and have been qualified for use.

4. MNRE urges states to set up renewable energy equipment parks

- The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has urged states to set up **renewable energy (RE) equipment manufacturing parks** to meet domestic demand as well as make India a global production hub.
- These facilities will manufacture equipment like **silicon ingots and wafers, solar cells and modules, wind power equipment and ancillary items** like back sheet, glass, steel frames, inverters, and batteries.
- The hubs will also export equipment and services in the RE sector.

5. Govt amends extant FDI policy due to the current pandemic

- The Government of India has amended the **extant Foreign Direct Investment(FDI) policy** for curbing opportunistic takeovers/acquisitions of Indian companies due to the COVID-19 of **Consolidated FDI Policy, 2017**.
- As per the new change, an entity of a country which shares land border with India or where the beneficial owner of an investment into India is situated can invest only under the Government route.
- The decision will take effect from the date of **FEMA notification**.

6. ARI develops bug sniffer for efficient detection of pathogens

- **Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune** has developed a **sensitive and low-cost sensor to rapidly detect bacteria**.
- The portable device can detect as low as 10 bacterial cells from a sample of **1 millilitre in just 30 minutes**.
- At present, they are working on a method for simultaneous separation and detection of **Escherichia coli** and **Salmonella typhimurium**.
- The research is **funded by ICMR**.
- The bug sniffer is affordable, and the raw materials required are readily available.

7. US Animator, Filmmaker Gene Deitch passes away

- American Oscar-winning illustrator, animator, film director and producer **Gene Deitch (95 years)** passed away.
- His movie "**Munro**" won the Academy Award for **Best Animated Short Film in 1960**.
- He was also nominated for the same award twice in 1964 for "**Here's Nudnik**" and "**How to Avoid Friendship**."
- He directed 13 episodes of "Tom and Jerry" and also some of the "Popeye the Sailor" series.

8. Rajasthan claimed to be first Rapid Testing state for COVID-19

- **Rajasthan** claimed to be the first state in the country to carry out **Rapid Testing for Covid 19**.
- The test will be done at a large scale to assess the prevalence of Covid 19 in hotspots - both in the containment and the buffer zones around the clusters.
- In addition to rapid testing, PCR based testing will continue to be done in an aggressive manner in the containment zones all over Rajasthan.

9. IIA connects Li abundance in interstellar space to new Li-rich red giants

- **Researchers Team at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA)** have discovered hundreds of **Li-rich giant stars** indicating that Lithium is being produced in the stars and accounts for its abundance in the interstellar medium.
- The researchers determined the evolutionary phase of these giants by analyzing relative positions of stars using their temperature and luminosity and from Kepler Space Telescope.
- This will eliminate theories such as nucleosynthesis.

10. World Bank-IMF Development Committee meeting held

- The **101st Meeting of the Development Committee Plenary** was held through video conference on 17 april.
- The items on the agenda included update on World Bank Group Response to the COVID-19 Emergency, and the Covid-19 Debt Initiative: International Call for Action in Support of IDA Countries.
- The next meeting of the Development Committee is currently scheduled for October 17, 2020, in Washington, DC.

11. IIT Ropar to develop 'WardBot'

- A team of researchers at **IIT Ropar** is aiming to develop a **Wardbot** that will deliver food and medicine to COVID-19 patients in their isolation wards.
- The other features include **self-sanitising** on the return path and can be used even to **sanitise the walls**.

- Lines drawn on the floor will help the **IR-sensor-fitted wardbot** find its way.
- The bot will have at least twelve shelves and a carrying capacity of 4 to 5 kg. It should be able to serve 10 to 12 patients.

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12. FM attends NDB 5th Annual Board of Governors Meeting

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attended the **5th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of New Development Bank** through video-conference.
- FM Sitharaman appreciated NDB's effort on fast tracking of financial assistance of about \$5 billion to BRICS countries including Emergency Assistance of \$1 billion India to combat COVID-19 pandemic.
- The NDB was established by the **BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa)** in 2014.

13. UP became first state to use geo-tagging of community kitchens

- Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country to **geotag its 7,368 community kitchens** and community shelters across 75 districts which produce 12 lakh food packets a day.
- UP government has also tied up with Google to "**Geo-map**" the locations of all these establishments on the Google Maps app for ease of beneficiaries.
- An app has also been developed by **RSAC** by feeding location data as per the latitudes and longitudes of community kitchens and shelter homes.

14. Earth Day being observed today

- **Earth Day or International Mother Earth Day** is observed every year on **22 April** to demonstrate support for environmental protection.
- The first Earth Day was marked in the US on **22 April 1970** as peaceful call for environmental reform, following a massive oil spill in California.
- The theme of **World Earth Day 2020** is "**Climate Action**".
- The 50th annual call for environmental reform falls at a time when the health of people and nature has never been more urgent.

15. Pune Municipal Corporation develops 'Saiyam' app

- The **Pune Municipal Corporation under Smart Cities Mission** has developed a mobile application named "**Saiyam**" to effectively track the home-quarantine citizens.
- The Mobile Application constitutes **GPS tracking facility** which alerts the City Administration whenever the quarantined citizens leave their homes.
- All the Home Quarantined citizens are given the mandate to download the app and install it.

16. Virtual meeting of G-20 Agriculture Ministers being held

- The **G-20 Extraordinary Agriculture Ministers Meeting** was held through Video Conferencing on the issue of COVID-19 as well as its impact on food security, safety, and nutrition.
- Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar participated in the Extraordinary virtual meeting of G-20 Agriculture Ministers
- It was organized under the **presidency of Saudi Arabia**.
- G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

17. BRO constructed Daporijo bridge over Subansiri river amid lockdown

- **Daporijo bridge over Subansiri river, Arunachal Pradesh** has been constructed by **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** amid the nationwide lockdown.
- The bridge was constructed in less than a month while adhering to the safety norms required to keep away covid-19 infections.
- Bridge on Daporijo River is a strategic link towards the **LAC between India and China**. Old Bridge developed cracks which could lead to a major catastrophe.
- New bridge has allowed heavier vehicles to pass.

18. WhatsApp partners WHO to create 'Together at Home' sticker pack

- **WhatsApp** partnered with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** to create a new sticker pack titled "**Together At Home**" designed to reflect the moments and emotions people are going through in the coronavirus pandemic.
- The sticker pack is available within WhatsApp, including with text localized for 10 languages - **Arabic, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish**.

19. CeNS develops TriboE masks to protect healthy individuals from COVID-19

- A team of researchers at the **Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS)**, Bangalore have come up face masks, termed as **TriboE Mask**.
- It can hold electric charges to restrict the entry of infections without any external power and relies on electrostatics.
- TriboE mask comprises of **three-layer: nylon cloth sandwiched between polypropylene layers** made from used non-woven grocery bags. In place of nylon, silk fabric from an old saree or shawl may also be cut and used.

20. Union HRD Minister launches national program VidyaDaan 2.0 in New Delhi

- HRD Ministry launched **VidyaDaan 2.0** program for inviting e-learning content contributions.
- The programme has been launched due to the increasing requirement for **e-learning content for students due to Covid-19** and also **integrate digital education with schooling to augment learning**.
- VidyaDaan is a common national programme to develop content and to get recognized nationally.
- Content will be on **DIKSHA app** to help students to continue their learning anytime and anywhere.

21. World Press Freedom Index 2020 released

- The **World Press Freedom Index 2020** has been released by the media watchdog group **Reporters Without Borders (RWB)**.
- It is compiled by means of a questionnaire in 20 languages that is completed by experts all over the world.
- **India has dropped two places to be ranked 142nd**.
- **Norway ranks first** for the fourth consecutive year and Finland and Denmark in second and third place.
- The **index is released annually since 2002 measuring the level of media freedom in 180 countries**.

21. BRO constructed Kasowal Bridge over river Ravi under Project Chetak

- **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** has constructed new permanent bridge on the **river Ravi** connecting **Kasowal enclave in Punjab** to the rest of the country **replacing pontoon bridge**.
- The **484-meter bridge** is built by 141 Drain Maintenance Coy of 49 Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) of **Project Chetak**.
- The bridge is built at a cost of Rs 17.89 crore excluding the approaches.
- The pontoon bridge used to be dismantled every year prior to the Monsoon due to the limited load capacity.

22. TCS to power Israel's first fully digital bank

- India's largest software services firm **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** will launch Israel's first fully digital bank.
- TCS is the first to receive a banking license in Israel in over 40 years and is to be launched in 2021 with industry leading **TCS BaNCS Global Banking Platform** that helps banks offering innovative products and services.
- The **fully digital bank** will have no physical branches and provide Israeli citizens with all the services that regular banks offer.

23. Union HRD Minister launched #MyBookMyFriend campaign

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has launched **#MyBookMyFriend** campaign on World Book Day.
- #MyBookMyFriend campaign will run for 7 days and during this time all people are urged to join this campaign.
- **This campaign is launched in order to emphasize on the importance of book reading.**
- HRD Minister urged all the students to read a book and share about the book using #MyBookMyFriend on social media.

24. CSIR develops Feluda, a low-cost paper strip COVID-19 test

- CSIR has developed '**Feluda**' which is a promising **new low-cost paper strip test for Covid-19**.
- The test is developed by 7-member team of researchers at **CSIR-IGIB** led by **Dr Souvik Maiti and Dr Debojyoti Chakraborty**.
- The test like pregnancy test strips and costs around Rs 500.
- The test uses the **cutting-edge gene-editing tool- Crispr-Cas9** to target and identify the genomic sequences of the novel coronavirus in the samples of suspected individuals.

25. Karnataka launches Apthamitra app as well as helpline

- Karnataka government has launched '**Apthamitra**' **helpline** with exclusive toll-free helpline number 14410 and '**Apthamitra**' **mobile app**.
- **Apthamitra** **helpline** will work from 8 AM to 8 PM, with helpline Centers at **Bengaluru, Mysore and Mangalore** and will deal with only COVID-19-related queries including telemedicine, counselling, and facilitating testing and treatment for those in need.
- '**Apthamitra**' **App** is for people seeking advice for telemedicine from doctors directly.

26. Defence Minister launches First Covid-19 Mobile Testing Laboratory

- Raksha Mantri launches First COVID-19 Mobile Testing Laboratory titled "**Mobile BSL-3 VRDL Lab**" through video conferencing.

- This Lab has been developed by **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)**, in collaboration with ESIC, Hyderabad 15 days with due permission of ICMR.
- The Mobile Viral Research Lab is the combination of a **BSL 3 lab** and a **BSL 2 lab** to meet international guidelines with electrical controls, LAN, Telephone cabling, and CCTV.

27. Renowned Theatre artist Usha Ganguly passes away

- **Usha Ganguly** (75 years), the founder of the famous Hindi theatre group, Rangakarmee passes away.
- Usha Ganguly was a trailblazer for women in Indian theatre and was a director as well as actor.
- Her main works include **Mahabhoj, Lok Katha, Holi, Court Martial, Rudali, Himmat Mai, Manto aur Manto**, and **Kashinama**.
- She was awarded the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award** for Direction.

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28. World Games unveil new updated logo

- The **World Games in Birmingham, Alabama** has unveiled an updated logo and title after being delayed a year because of the coronavirus pandemic.
- The Olympic-style competition for sports and events that are not on the Summer Games program will now be known as **The World Games 2022**.
- The event was initially scheduled for July 2021, but it will now be held in July 2022 to accommodate the one-year postponement of the 2020 Summer Olympics.

29. HP to adopt three-pronged strategy to tackle coronavirus

- **Himachal Pradesh** government is all set to adopt a **three-pronged strategy** to tackle the menace of coronavirus.
- Under this, three types of institution will be recognized.
- Asymptomatic people would be kept in **Covid care centres**, moderate symptomatic people would be kept in **Covid Health Centres** and severe symptomatic would be kept in **Covid Hospitals**.
- Health department had also set up **Whatsapp number 01792227328** to provide other health services in addition to Covid19.

30. Manipur govt commemorates 'Khongjom Day' at Khongjom War Memorial Complex

- Manipur Government commemorated '**Khongjom Day**' at **Khongjom War Memorial Complex**, remembering the people who valiantly fought in the **Anglo-Manipuri War in 1891** on April 23.
- This day is commemorated to pay tribute to the war heroes of Anglo-Manipuri War 1891 who had sacrificed their lives fighting against the British to protect freedom of Manipur.
- The site is about 35 KM south of Imphal in Thoubal district where the battle was fought between Manipuri and British.

31. DRDO designed UV-C Light based sanitisation box and device

- **DIPAS and INMAS**, DRDO laboratories have designed and developed **Ultraviolet C Light based sanitisation box** and **hand held UV-C (ultraviolet light device)** (with wavelength 254 nanometres).
- The UV-C box is designed for disinfecting personal belongings like mobile phone, tablets, purse, currency, cover of office files, etc.
- The hand-held device having 8-watt UV-C lamp disinfects office and household objects like chairs, files, postal delivered items etc.

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32. UNODC launches 'Lockdown Learners' series

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) has launched '**Lockdown Learners**' series of online dialogues with students and educators in India on COVID-19 and its impact on SDGs, peace and rule of law.
- The dialogues have been launched under its flagship **Education for Justice initiative**.
- The aim is to sensitise students on concerns of vulnerable groups and emerging issues such as cybercrime, misinformation, violence, discrimination, corruption.

33. SpaceX successfully launches 60 Starlink satellites

- **SpaceX** successfully launched a new batch of **60 Starlink satellites** into orbit and nailed a rocket landing at sea to cap the mission with **Falcon 9 rocket**.
- It was launched from **Launch Pad 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center**.
- The launch marked the 84th Falcon 9 flight, making SpaceX's workhorse rocket the most flown U.S. rocket in use.

34. Iran launches first military satellite 'Noor'

- Iran has launched its first military satellite '**Noor**'
- It is a **military satellite** launched recently by **Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps**, a branch of the country's armed forces.
- The satellite flew into orbit on top of a multi-stage Qased rocket powered by a combination of solid and liquid fuels.