

Weekly Current Affairs 2nd Week Of March 2021 Notes



1. International Women's Day: 08 March

- **International Women's Day (IWD)** is observed every year on **March 8** to celebrate women, their rights and their achievements.
- **IWD** began in the 1900s and has been celebrated for over a century now.
- It was first organized in **1911** by the early 20th century Marxist from Germany Clara Zetkin who was born in 1857 in Germany's Wiederau.
- Theme 2021: **Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world.**
- The day's slogan is **#ChoosetoChallenge.**

2. Naureen Hassan appointed as First VP & COO of Federal Reserve Bank

- Indian-origin **Naureen Hassan (25 years)** has been appointed as **1st Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (COO)** of New York-based Federal Reserve Bank by Board of Governors of Federal Reserve System
- He will take over the new role with effect from **March 15, 2021**
- With this, he will become 2nd highest ranking officer and alternate voting member of Federal Open Market Committee.
- Prior to this, she was **Chief Digital Officer for Morgan Stanley Wealth Management (MSWM)**

3. PM to inaugurate 'Maitri Setu' between India and Bangladesh

- PM Modi will inaugurate '**Maitri Setu**' between India and Bangladesh
- **Maitri Setu**
 - It has been built over **Feni river** which flows between Tripura and Bangladesh
 - The name symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.
 - It has been built by **National Highways and Infrastructure Development**
- PM will also lay the foundation stone for setting up an Integrated Check Post at Sabroom and NH 208 connecting Unakoti with Khowai district

4. India's first 'Transgender Community Desk' opens in Telangana

- **Cyberabad police** has inaugurated '**Transgender Community Desk**' at Gachibowli Police Station in Rangareddy district, Telangana
- It is the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative of India
- It will be managed by police liaison officer and transgender person who is designated as community coordinator.
- It will provide support to file cases in offences related to violence or discrimination against any transgender person.

5. EPFO keeps interest rate unchanged at 8.5% for 2020-21

- **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** announced interest rates on Provident Fund deposits for the financial year 2020-21 on March 4.
- EPFO board has recommended **8.5% interest** for the **financial year 2020-21**, same as 2019-20.
- Speculations about lower interest on provident fund deposits due to economic downfall and coronavirus pandemic were making the rounds. However, the rate has been kept unchanged.

6. Muthoot Group Chairman M G George Muthoot passes away

- Muthoot Group Chairman **M G George Muthoot (71 years)** passed away in New Delhi.
- He was the Chairman and Whole Time Director of the Muthoot Group.
- He became the managing director of Muthoot Group in 1979 and its chairman in 1993.
- **Muthoot Finance Ltd** is one the largest gold loan NBFCs in India
- Muthoot Finance Ltd headquarters: **Kochi, Kerala.**

7. All-women crew of MT Swarna Krishna makes history

- Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Mansukh Mandaviya** has flagged off an **all-woman crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel, MT Swarna Krishna.**
- It is the first time in the world maritime history that a ship is being sailed by all women officers.
- This move demonstrated the gradual shift in the perception of seafaring as a male-oriented profession
- **M. T. SWARNA KRISHNA:** Oil Products Tanker that was built in 2010 and is being operated by SCI

8. Noted Kannada poet Lakshminarayana Bhatta passes away

- Renowned Kannada poet, eminent academic, and critic Prof **N S Lakshminarayana Bhatta (85 years)** passed away in Bengaluru.
- He was known as '**NSL**' in the literary circles and Kannada music world
- He was an expert in Kannada, English and Sanskrit literature
- His anthology of poems includes as **Nilanjana, Deepika, Bhava Sangama, Baro Vasantha, Madhuri, and Mandara.**
- He won **Sahitya Akademi award** and had translated 50 of William Shakespeare sonnets into Kannada.

9. India downgraded to "Partly Free" in report by US Think Tank

- India was downgraded to '**partly free**' for the first time **since 1997** in an annual ranking of democracies by the U.S.-government funded research group **Freedom House**
- The status is given after worsening civil rights condition under PM Narendra Modi.
- India was among **73 nations** downgraded for declines in political rights and civil liberties, affecting three-fourth of population.
- **Report ranks 210 nations**, found that states designated '**Not Free**' have reached highest since 2006.

10. Harsh Vardhan addresses the inaugural session of Techbharat 2021

- Union Health Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has addressed inaugural session of **second edition of TechBharat 2021**
- **Organized by:** Laghu Udyog Bharati and IMS Foundation
- It brings together stakeholders from HealthTech & Edutech sector on a virtual platform.
- **TechBharat 2021:** It is facilitating interactions & deliberations between thousands of domestic & global participants, including policymakers, govt representatives, industry members, investors and start-ups.

11. UNGA adopts India's resolution for 2023 as International Year of Millets

- **United Nations General Assembly** has adopted a resolution sponsored by India and supported by **70 nations** declaring **2023 as the International Year of Millets**
- It is a big step to promote nutritional and ecological benefits of millets to the world as key component of the food basket
- Other co-sponsors for this resolution are **Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, Senegal**
- Millets can grow on poor soils and are resistant or tolerant to many crop diseases and pests

11. Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates New Delhi World Book Fair 2021

- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal** has virtually inaugurated **New Delhi World Book Fair 2021-Virtual Edition**.
- 2021 is the 29th edition of the annual World Book Fair and for the first time the fair will be held virtually due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- It has been organized by National Book Trust (NBT).
- Theme of 2021 New Delhi World Book Fair: '**National Education Policy-2020**'.
- National Book Trust and its entire team is holding this virtual event.

12. India Science Research Fellowship (ISRF) 2021 announced

- **40 scholars from six countries** have been awarded with **Indian Science Research Fellowship (ISRF) 2021** on the basis of their research proposal, experience, academic merit and publication record
- ISRF:
 - It is a platform to establish research cooperation and S&T partnerships with neighbouring nation
 - Launched: Dept of Science and Tech in 2015 for **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand**
 - Due to COVID-19, no award was made in 2020

13. DRDO successfully flight test SFDR technology

- **DRDO** has conducted successful flight test of **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology** from **integrated test range (ITR), Chandipur, off Odisha coast**
- SFDR technology will enable DRDO to develop long-range air to air missiles.
- SFDR is a missile propulsion system being developed primarily by **Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)** and **Research Centre Imarat (RCI)** in Hyderabad.
- **High Energy Material Research Laboratory (HEMRL)** has developed nozzle-less booster.

14. Australia plans to build world's first platypus sanctuary

- **Australian conservationists** have planned to build **World's first sanctuary** for the platypus
- This new facility will promote breeding and rehabilitation of iconic creature **Platypus**, a duck-billed mammal, that are native to Australia.
- **Taronga Conservation Society Australia** and **New South Wales State govt** plans to build specialist facility by 2022, at a zoo 391-km from Sydney.
- It will have ponds and burrows for the semiaquatic creatures, and could house up to 65 platypuses.

15. India-Sweden Virtual Summit 2021

- PM **Narendra Modi** and his Swedish counterpart **Stefan Lofven** participated in the virtual **India-Sweden summit**
- It was organized to exchange views on regional and global issues and to discuss the bilateral cooperation on digitalization, startups between the two countries
- It also focuses on **climate action, sustainable development, gender equality, counter-terrorism** and **disaster resilient infrastructure**.
- This was the fifth interaction between the two leaders since 2015

16. Second Edition of Khelo India Winter Games concluded

- **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** has topped medals tally in the **2nd edition of Khelo India Winter National Games**
- **Khelo India Winter National Games** was five-day mega sports event that was held at Gulmarg in Baramulla, north Kashmir
- **J&K won 11 gold, 18 silver and 5 bronze medals**. It was followed by **Karnataka** and **Maharashtra**
- It was organized by **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** in collaboration with **J&K Sports Council** and **J&K Winter Games Association**

17. CM Biplab Kumar Deb launches 'Jagrut Tripura'

- Tripura CM **Biplab Kumar Deb** has launched '**Jagrut Tripura**' project to empower citizens of the northeastern state
- It was developed by **EasyGov**, a Jio Group company, and it will be available to all the residents of Tripura.
- The platform will have at least **102 schemes** of various departments of central as well as state governments
- With '**Jagrut**', we want to empower people to get the benefits they deserve, and focus is on '**one data one source**' and privacy at the core

18. Axis Securities announces online platform YIELD

- **Axis Securities** has announced the launch of an online platform to buy and sell bonds as well as debentures in the secondary market named as '**YIELD**'
- **YIELD**: first-of-its-kind initiative that allows retail investors direct access to the debt instruments.
- This will remove the hassle of filling up physical forms or the need for separate KYC with bond institutions to facilitate transactions only in secure option
- It aggregates only 'AAA' to 'A' rated quality debt instruments

19. HDFC ERGO launches "Business Kisht Suraksha"

- **HDFC ERGO General Insurance** has launched '**Business Kisht Suraksha**' covering MFIs, financial institutions and banks during catastrophe or natural disaster.
- It aims to protect balance sheet of financial institutions due to non-payment of EMIs by borrowers, following listed calamities such as floods, earthquakes, cyclones, etc.

- It will address these concern by indemnifying against the climatic changes and also protecting financial institutions from rising NPAs occurring.

20. WAN-IFRA names The Hindu Group 'Champion Publisher of the Year 2020'

- The **Hindu Group** won two golds and two silvers at **WAN IFRA's South Asian Digital Media Awards** and is named as '**Champion Publisher of the Year**'.
- The awards are presented in recognition of outstanding work done by news publishers, in digital media.
- **WAN-IFRA**: Global organisation of world's press, with a network of 3,000 news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, and 60 member publisher associations representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries.

21. Culture Minister inaugurates Women's Art Exhibition titled 'Akshya Patra'

- Minister of Culture and Tourism **Prahlad Singh Patel** has inaugurated **All-Women's Art Exhibition** titled as '**Akshya Patra**' at Rabindra Bhavan Galleries in New Delhi on the occasion of International Women's Day.
- The exhibition has been curated by **Lalit Kala Akademi** for providing opportunity to all the female artists around India and the world.
- It will continue till 20th March and showcase more than 250 artworks from over 12 countries.
- **#KaroNaSalam** was also presented.

22. President inaugurates conservation works at Singorgarh Fort in MP

- President of India, **Ram Nath Kovind** has laid down the foundation stone for the **conservation works of Singorgarh Fort in Singrampur village of Damoh district, Madhya Pradesh**
- He also inaugurated **newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India**
- Apart from this, President Kovind addressed State Level Tribal Conference '**Janjatiya Sammelan**' in Damoh.
- It was organized jointly by **Ministry of Culture** and **Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh**.

23. Union Minister Sanjay Dhotre virtually inaugurates MEMP 2021

- Union Minister, **Sanjay Dhotre** has inaugurated **International Conference on Multifunctional Electronic Materials and Processing (MEMP 2021)** virtually on the occasion of 30th foundation day of Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology.
- **MEMP 2021**:
 - It is organised by **Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), Pune** from 8 to 10 March 2021.
 - It will provide an opportunity to researchers, young students to interact with eminent scientists/ technologist.

24. WCD Ministry signs MoU with Invest India to enhance cooperation

- **Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD)** has signed an agreement with **Invest India** in New Delhi to enhance cooperation.

- The aim will enhance co-operation in the thematic areas of **Nutrition, Child Protection and Development, Women Empowerment** and convergent capacity building in mission mode.
- **DRISHTI under Invest India** will conduct input and output analysis research, and other research as per requirement including coordinating with research agencies.

25. UP Govt launches second phase of Mission Shakti

- **UP govt** has launched **2nd phase of Mission Shakti** to encourage women empowerment on International women's day.
- Under this, CM inaugurates women special Police stations in 18 districts along with pink booths and pink toilets.
- UP govt has launched '**Mission Shakti**' program on Oct 17, 2020 for the security of women.
- Along with this, **first commercial flight after 24 years was flagged off in Bareilly**, operated by all women crew members' carrying 60 passengers to Delhi

26. FICCI's Overall Business Confidence Index released

- **FICCI's Overall Business Confidence Index** has been released that witnessed **decadal high of 74.2** in the current round on account of improvement in present conditions as well as expectations
- The Index had stood at **70.9 in 2020 survey** and **59 in 2019 survey**
- It revealed recovery of demand conditions, improved capacity utilization.
- FICCI survey stated that percentage of participants citing higher profits over next 6 months has increased to **36% from 33%** in the last survey

27. Former Rajasthan Governor Anshuman Singh passes away

- Former Governor of Rajasthan, **Anshuman Singh (86 years)** passed away due to some health ailments.
- He was a retired Justice who served as the **Governor of Rajasthan** from January, 1999 till 2003.
- Prior to that, he was appointed as the **Governor of Gujarat state in 1998**.
- Anshuman Singh was a retired Justice who served as the Governor of Rajasthan from January, 1999 till 2003
- He was born in 1935 in Allahabad and pursued arts and law.

28. Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat wins Gold at World Ranking Series in Rome

- World Championship bronze medallist wrestler, **Bajrang Punia (27 years)** won a gold medal at **Matteo Pallicone** ranking series held in Rome, Italy.
- He defeated Mongolia's **Tulga Tumor Ochir** by 2-2 in 65kg freestyle event final.
- It was his successive gold medal, who had won previous gold at this competition in 2020.
- Apart from this, ace India woman wrestler **Vinesh Phogat (26 years)** won gold medal in the **53kg title**, after beating Canada's Diana Weicker by 4-0

29. SEBI cancels Sahara India Financial Corporation registration as Sub-broker

- **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has cancelled certificate of registration of **Sahara India Financial Corporation Ltd (SIFCL)**, as a sub-broker.

- The move has been taken by **SEBI**, due to failure of SIFCL to fulfill the '**fit and proper**' criteria, in terms of Intermediaries Regulations
- SEBI's order also mentioned actions taken against certain Sahara entities like Sahara India Real Estate Corporation Ltd and Sahara Housing Investment Corporation involving SEBI.

30. Textiles, Agriculture Ministry signs MoU for sericulture activities

- **Ministry of Textiles** has signed MoU with **Ministry of Agriculture** to amplify sericulture activities in the country.
- MoU will focus on establishing tree based agro-forestry models in sericulture, along with exploring possibilities of activities through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
- It will enhance training, boost technology and create sustainable livelihood for silk farmers or rearers.
- **Buniyaad Reeling Machines** to women silk rearers were also distributed.

31. Manish Kaushik clinches gold at Boxam International Tournament

- **Manish Kaushik** has clinched gold in Boxing at **35th edition of Boxam International Tournament** with 10 medals in Castellon, Spain
- He defeated **Denmark's Nikolai Terteryan** with a split 3-2 decision in men's 63kg
- Bronze medallist **Vikas Krishan** went down fighting 4-1 against Ndiaye Sissokho to settle for silver medal in men's 69kg.
- **14-member (8 men and 6 women) Indian contingent** participated in 35th edition of Boxam International Tournament.

32. BEL pays interim dividend of 140 % on its paid-up capital to Govt

- Navratna Defence PSU, **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** paid interim dividend of **140% on its paid-up capital to Government for financial year 2020-21**
- Interim Dividend cheque of Rs 174,43,63,569 payable to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi
- This is the 18th consecutive year that BEL is paying interim dividend.
- It had paid a total dividend of 280 per cent on its paid-up capital for the financial year 2019-20.
- Chairman and Managing Director of BEL: **M V Gowtama**

33. Bangladesh to confer its highest civilian award 'Swadhinta Puraskar'

- **Bangladesh** has announced the names of 9 individuals and organization for conferring '**Swadhinta Puraskar (Independence Award)**', the highest civilian award of Bangladesh for 2021
- **Winners:**
 - Freedom fighters posthumously: A K M Bazlur Rahman, Ahsan Ullah Master, Brig Gen. Khurshid Uddin Ahmed, Akhataruzzaman Chowdhury Babu
 - Science and Tech: **Mrinmoy Guha Niyogi**
 - Literature: **Mahadev Saha**
 - Culture: **Ataur Rahman and Gazi Mazharul Anwar**
 - Social and public service: **M Amzad Hossain**

34. India's first forest healing centre inaugurated in Uttarakhand

CLAT &
other Law Entrance Exams

START FREE TRIAL

- India's first-of-its-kind '**Forest Healing Centre**' has been inaugurated at **Kalika, Ranikhet in Uttarakhand**
- **About Forest Healing Centre:**
 - It is based on the concept of making people healthy by bringing them into direct contact with nature over 13 acres land
 - It is a **pine-dominated forest**, developed by **research wing of Uttarakhand Forest Dept**
 - It has various activities for visitors like hug trees, walk barefoot on the grass, lie on their back and gaze at the swaying trees

32. J&K launches Super-75 Scholarship Scheme for meritorious girls

- J&K Lt Governor **Manoj Sinha** has launched '**Super-75**' scholarship schemes for meritorious girls
- **Aim:** To facilitate the education and entrepreneurship of women
- The scheme will support the education of meritorious girls from poor families, so that they can excel in streams like medicine, engineering, ITI and humanity and contribute to nation-building.
- '**Tejaswini**' scheme was also announced providing financial assistance of **Rs 5 lakhs** to the girls between **18 to 35 years**.

33. HDFC Bank launches 'SmartUp Unnati' for Women Entrepreneurs

- **HDFC Bank** has launched dedicated mentoring programme named as '**SmartUp Unnati**' to support women entrepreneurs.
- Under this **SmartUp Unnati programme**, senior women leaders from HDFC Bank having expertise in various domains will mentor women entrepreneurs, over the next one year, to help them achieve their goals.
- It is **available only to existing HDFC customers** and will initially target more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs associated with the bank's SmartUp programme.

34. Book on Smriti Irani's victory in Amethi to release on March 15

- Book titled '**Dynasty to Democracy: The Untold Story of Smriti Irani's Triumph**' has been scheduled to release on March 15
- The book traces the journey of Smriti Irani from her defeat in 2014 to her victory over Amethi, UP in 2019 LS election
- **Amethi** is '**karmabhoomi**' of **Nehru-Gandhi**, since its inception as LS constituency in 1967
- It is the English version of '**Amethi Sangram: Aitihāsik Jeet Ankahi Dastan**' written by journalist-author Anant Vijay
- It is published by **Westland**

35. NABARD's Chairman G.R. Chintala takes charge as Chairman of APRACA

- Chairman of NABARD, **G.R. Chintala** has been sworn in as the **Chairman of APRACA (Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association)**
- He succeeded **DPK Gunasekera**.
- **APRACA:**
 - **Established:** 1977 by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - **Aim:** to promote the development of rural finance in Asia Pacific.

- It is a non- government international organization, representing 21 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Headquarters: **Bangkok, Thailand.**

36. PV Sindhu settles for silver in BWF Swiss Open Super 300

- India's ace shuttler **PV Sindhu** has won **silver medal in BWF Swiss Open Super 300** in final of women's singles event held at Basel
- She lost to World No. 3 and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin.
- **Other Winners:**
 - **Men's Singles:** Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) beat Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Thailand)
 - **Women's Singles:** Carolina Marin (Spain) beat PV Sindhu (India)
 - **Men's Doubles:** Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen (Denmark)
 - **Mixed Doubles:** Thom Gicquel-Delphine Delrue (France)

37. Autobiography of 'Frontier Gandhi' released in English

- Autobiography of freedom fighter 'Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan', titled '**The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle**' has been released
- It is English translation of Abdul Khan's autobiography, which was first published in Iranian language Pashto in 1983
- English translation of the book is done by former Pakistani author **Imitiaz Ahmad Sahibzada**
- It is published by **Roli Book publishing house**
- **Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan:** Afghan independence activist against British colonial rule in India

38. UNEP releases Food Waste Index Report 2021

- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and **WRAP** has released **Food Waste Index Report 2021** to cut food waste to half by 2030
- Key findings:
 - It estimates that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019
 - Out of which, 61% came from households, 26% from food service and 13% from retail
 - Around 17% of total global food production was wasted
 - About 690 million people went hungry in 2019
 - In India, household food waste is about 68.7 million tonnes a year

39. Tirath Singh Rawat to be new Uttarakhand Chief Minister

- **Tirath Singh Rawat (56 years)** will take over as **Chief Minister of Uttarakhand**, after the resignation of Trivendra Singh Rawat.
- He is a BJP MP from the **Pauri constituency**.
- He was the chief of BJP in Uttarakhand in 2013-15 and also an MLA from the state in the past.
- BJP was faced with challenge of balancing two groups: old-time BJP players were pitching for their candidate and imports from Congress, like Harak Singh Rawat and Satpal Maharaj, were pushing for theirs.

40. NITI Aayog along with DEA organises virtual workshop on asset monetization

- **NITI Aayog**, along with **Dept of Economic Affairs (DEA)** has organized **national-level virtual workshop on asset monetization**.
- Workshop elaborated on the strategic context of core and non-core asset monetization, along with detailed discussions on the need for and modality of such monetization.
- He also highlighted the potential monetization opportunities for States and the pre-requisites for being successful in this regard.
- NITI Aayog CEO: **Amitabh Kant**.

41. Online certification course on 5G for Govt Officers inaugurated

- Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, **Anshu Prakash** has inaugurated an **online certification course on 5G Technology** for Government Officers
- It is being conducted by **National Telecommunications Institute for Policy Research, Innovation and Training (NTIPRIT)**
- It is the first of its kind **36-hour (12 week) online 5G Certification Course** to train and certify Officers of Government of India.
- It will act as a capsule programme for learning overall 5G technology.

42. IOCL signs MoU with IDCO for Paradeep Plastic Park

- **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** has signed MoU with **Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO)** to develop Paradeep Plastic Park
- Govt has initiated the cluster development of the Industry through its Plastic Park scheme, keeping the enterprise and employment generation potential of the plastic sector in mind
- Currently, six such parks have been approved by Government of India, with Paradeep Plastic Park being one of them.

43. Girish Murmu re-appointed Chairman of UN Panel of External Auditors

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been re-appointed as **Chairman of United Nations Panel of External Auditors** for 2021
- He was elected as Chairman of this Panel for 2020
- **Panel of External Auditors:**
 - **Consists of 13 countries:** India, Germany, Chile, China, UK, France, Philippines, Switzerland, Italy, Ghana, Indonesia, Canada, Russia
 - Established: **1959**
 - It is a forum to support delivery of high quality, standards-based assurance.

44. Singapore tops Economic Freedom Index 2021

- **Singapore** has topped in **Economic Freedom Index 2021**, for 2nd year in row with overall score of 89.7, followed by New Zealand and Australia
- The index is published by US conservative think-tank, **The Heritage Foundation**
- It covered **184 countries** that covered the period from July 2019 to June 2020
- India has been placed at **121** position in the index, with a score of **56.5 out of 100** under **Mostly Unfree** category

- Among Asia-Pacific countries, **India ranks 26 out of 40 countries**

45. India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise DUSTLIK II commences in Ranikhet

- India - Uzbekistan joint military exercise titled '**DUSTLIK II**' has been commenced in Ranikhet in Uttarakhand.
- This is the **2nd Edition of annual bilateral joint exercise** of both armies.
- It will continue till the 19th March
- 1st edition of DUSTLIK II exercise: **Uzbekistan in November 2019.**
- It will culminate into a **36 hours joint validation exercise** scheduled from 17th to 18th March.
- The validation exercise will be a test bed for the soldiers of both armies.

46. Rajya Sabha passes Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- **Parliament** has given its nod to **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021**
- The new legislation will amend **Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996**
- It contains provisions related to domestic and international arbitration and defines the law for conducting conciliation proceedings.
- **Bill replaces an Ordinance** with the same provisions promulgated on 4th Nov, 2020
- Bill also aims at giving greater flexibility to the **Arbitration Council of India.**

47. France launches first military exercises in space

- **France** has launched its **first military exercise in space** to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defence equipment from an attack.
- This was the first such exercise for French army and Europe
- It has been codenamed as '**AsterX**' in memory of the first French satellite from **1965** and will be based on 18 simulated events
- French military will monitor potentially dangerous space object
- **US Space Force** and **German space agencies** are taking part in French exercise.

48. NS Karanj commissioned into the Indian Navy in Mumbai

- Third Scorpene-class submarine '**INS Karanj**' was commissioned into Indian Navy in Mumbai
- **INS Karanj:**
 - It is third in the series of six Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarine, being built for Indian Navy
 - It has been designed by France's Naval Group and is being built in India by Mazagon Dock Limited under Project 75.
 - Other submarines: **INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Vela, INS Vagir and Vagsheer.**

49. Niger's Mahamadou Issoufou wins Africa's top prize for Leadership

- Incumbent President of Niger, **Mahamadou Issoufou (69 years)** has won '**2020 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership**'
- It is world's largest leadership prize, worth \$5 million.
- **Mahamadou Issoufou** became the **President of Niger in 2011** and was then re-elected in 2016.
- He is stepping down as president of Niger in April 2021

- **Ibrahim Prize** was introduced in **2006**, by **Sudanese billionaire Mo Ibrahim's foundation** to promote good governance in the world's poorest continent.

50. Chess Player Koneru Humpy named BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2021

- World rapid chess champion **Koneru Humpy (33 years)** has won **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award for 2021**.
- She was the youngest grandmaster in 2002 at the age of 15. She has received the Arjuna Award in 2003 and the Padma Shri in 2007.
- She hails from Andhra Pradesh
- Veteran athlete **Anju Bobby George** won the **Lifetime Achievement award**.
- Young shooter **Manu Bhaker** won the **Emerging Player-of-the-Year award**.

51. R Ashwin declared ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2021

- India's off-spinner **Ravichandran Ashwin** has been named as the **ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2021**
- He played three Tests against England in February 2021, scoring **24 wickets** and **176 runs**.
- Apart from him, **England's Tammy Beaumont** has been declared **ICC Women's Player of the Month for February 2021**
- She played three ODIs in February against New Zealand where she passed fifty in each with total 231 runs.
- Rishabh Pant was named ICC's Men's Player of January 2021

52. China to launch e-health certificate for outbound Chinese travellers

- Chinese Foreign Minister **Wang Yi** will be launching **Chinese version of electronic health certificate**.
- It will be rolled out for outbound Chinese travelers but It did not say anything on its availability for foreigners in China
- It will be available in two formats, digital and in paper, with certificate-holder's NAT and IgG antibody test results and vaccination status
- It will facilitate the issuance of visas, making cross-border travel much easier

53. Veteran Marathi Actor Shrikant Moghe passes away

- Marathi stage and film actor **Shrikant Moghe (91 years)** passed away in Pune after suffering from age-related ailments.
- He was popular for his work in both **Marathi and Hindi languages**.
- Shrikant Moghe was born at Kirloskarwadi in Sangli district of Maharashtra.
- His famous Marathi films are **Madhuchandra, Sinhaasan, Gammat Jammata** and **Umbaratha**, and plays such as **Varyavarchu Varaat** and **Tuze Aahe Tujapashi**.

54. China inks MoU with Russia to jointly build Lunar Space Station

- **China** has signed MoU with **Russia** to jointly construct a lunar space station that will be open to all countries.
- This Lunar space station will be known as **International Scientific Lunar Station (ISLS)**

- **ISLS:** Complex of experimental and research facilities, created on the moon's surface or in orbit of the moon.
- It will be strengthening research cooperation and promoting the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes in the interests of all mankind.

55. OECD projects India to be fastest growing major economy in 2021 at 12.6%

- **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has projected **GDP of India to be grow 12.6% in 2021**, compared to -7.4% in 2020 in its OECD Economic Outlook, Interim Report March 2021
- India is set to regain its title as the world's fastest growing major economy in 2021.
- India's positive growth is highest among the world's 20 major economies.
- **Global GDP growth** is projected at **5.5% in 2021** and **4% in 2022** by OECD.
- OECD HQs: **Paris, France**.

56. Amitabh Bachchan to be honoured with FIAF Award

- Noted Bollywood actor **Amitabh Bachchan (78 years)** has been chosen as the recipient of **2021 FIAF Award by International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF)**
- He is the **first Indian cinema personality to be bestowed with FIAF Award** for his exceptional dedication and contribution to the preservation of world's film heritage
- FIAF award will be presented to Amitabh Bachchan on **March 19, 2021**, virtually, by **Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan**
- FIAF award was introduced in 2001

57. Kiran Bedi felicitated with Baton of Honor from President Ram Nath Kovind

- President of India, **Ram Nath Kovind** has presented '**Baton of Honour**' and a letter of appreciation to former Puducherry Lieutenant Governor **Kiran Bedi** at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi.
- She has been recognized for her services to the Union Territory of Puducherry.
- **Baton of Honor** is decorated with the emblem of the Indian Republic.
- Kiran Bedi was the **first female IPS officer of India** and started her service in 1972.

58. Government Appoints GP Samanta as new Chief Statistician of India

- Centre has appointed **G P Samanta** as the **new Chief Statistician of India (CSI)** for a period of two years.
- Prior to this, he was serving as an **adviser in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Department of Statistics and Information Management**
- He will succeed **Kshatrapati Shivaji**, who was holding additional charge of the post since September 2020
- He is India's fourth CSI.
- He will also serve as the Secretary in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

59. Imran Amin Siddiqui appointed as Executive Director of Indian Bank

- General Manager of Indian Bank, **Imran Amin Siddiqui** has been appointed as the **Executive Director (ED) of the Bank** with effect from March 10, 2021
- He has been appointed for **3 years** with effect from the date of assumption of office, or until further orders
- He started his banking career with Allahabad Bank, which is now merged with Indian Bank, as a SSI Field Officer in 1987.
- **Shenoy Vishwanath V** and Shri **K.Ramachandran** are the other two ED on the board of Indian Bank

60. NSE acquired 26% stake in IGX gas trading hub

- **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** has acquired **26% equity stake in Indian Gas Exchange (IGX)**, through its wholly owned subsidiary NSE Investments.
- NSE has become co-promoter and the second largest shareholder on IGX gas-trading platform.
- Indian Energy Exchange (IEX), set up IGX natural gas trading hub and has 54% shareholding
- **ONGC, GAIL, Torrent Gas Private Limited, Adani Total Gas Limited** holds 5% equity each in IGX.
- This made NSE and IEX as the two promoters of IGX

61. APEDA launches its first virtual trade fair

- **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** has launched its **first virtual trade fair** to boost export of agricultural and processed food products.
- It is a three day event.
- The fair will display **basmati rice, non-basmati rice, millets, wheat, maize, groundnut and coarse grains** have been displayed.
- 266 Indian and international buyers from various countries have registered for the virtual fair.

62. RBI takes IDBI Bank out of PCA framework

- **RBI** has removed **IDBI Bank** from **Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework**, amid the improving finances of the bank after Board for Financial Supervision (BFS) review
- However, it is subjected to certain conditions and continuous monitoring
- **IDBI Bank** was placed under PCA in **May, 2017**
- PCA places curbs on lending and expenditure of bank and RBI keeps close watch on banks certain financial parameters like capital ratios, asset quality and profitability
- IDBI HQs: **Mumbai**

63. Anurag Thakur promoted as Captain in Territorial Army

- Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, **Anurag Thakur** has been appointed as **Captain in the Territorial Army**.
- He belongs to **124 Infantry Battalion Territorial Army (Sikh)**.
- He was commissioned into **Territorial Army as a Lieutenant in July 2016**.
- He is the first serving Member of Parliament (MP) to become a regular commissioned officer in the Territorial Army.
- He is a four-time BJP MP from Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh.

64. Ivory Coast Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko passes away

- Incumbent Prime Minister of Ivory Coast, **Hamed Bakayoko (56 years)** passed away due to cancer in Germany
- He was named Prime Minister in July 2020 following the sudden death of his predecessor, Amadou Gon Coulibaly.
- **Patrick Achi** has been named as interim prime minister in place of Bakayoko by **President of Ivory Coast, Alassane Ouattara**.
- Patrick Achi was serving as the chief of Defence staff of the country.
- Capital of Ivory Coast: **Yamoussoukro**.

65. Deepika Padukone inducted in WEF's 2021 Young Global Leaders List

- Bollywood actor **Deepika Padukone** has joined **Forum of the Young Global Leaders (YGLs)** for 2021 compiled by World Economic Forum.
- The list comprises of **112 world's most promising leaders** under the age of 40, who are involved in activities ranging from advocating for public healthcare to campaigning for inclusivity in medical research.
- **YGLs:**
 - **Founded:** 2005 by Klaus Schwab
 - Currently, there are **1,400 members** and alumni from over **120 countries**.

66. Labour Ministry launches convergence of ESI Scheme with ABPM-JAY

- **Union Minister for Labour** has launched **convergence of ESI Scheme with Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPM-JAY)** in 113 districts of Chhatisgarh, Karnataka, MP and Maharashtra.
- It will ensure that 1.35 crore ESI beneficiaries can avail cashless medical services through empanelled hospitals of ABPM-JAY
- **ESIC e-pehchan/ Health Passbook** and **Aadhar Card** will be needed
- **PM-JAY beneficiaries** can also avail cashless treatment at 15 underutilized ESIC hospitals

67. Indian Ambassador to Thailand receives King Bhumibol Soil Day 2020 Award

- Ambassador of India to Thailand **Suchitra Durai** has received the prestigious **King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award** on the behalf of Indian Council of Agricultural Research in Bangkok.
- The award was announced by **Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome** in view of ICAR's excellent contributions in Soil Health Awareness on the theme **Stop soil erosion, save our future**
- **ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science, Bhopal** organized a massive awareness campaign for preserving SOIL.

68. First Quad Leader's Virtual Summit 2021 held

- **Quadrilateral Framework (QUAD) Leader's Summit 2021** has been held
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joseph Biden, Australian PM Scott Morrison and Japanese PM Yoshihide Suga addressed 1st virtual Quadrilateral Framework (Quad) summit 2021
- It is first time leaders of the Indo-Pacific grouping (QUAD) are meeting.

- The meet focused on COVID-19 vaccines, cooperation on technology, climate change and Beijing's recent moves in Pacific as well as at LAC, Ladakh

69. Jammu & Kashmir celebrates festival of Shivratri 'Herath'

- Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir celebrated festival of three day festival **Shivratri 'Herath'**
- This festival symbolizes the values of devotion and harmony, which are the hallmarks of glorious tradition & cultural ethos of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Mahashivratri** is locally known as Herath in Kashmir and is being celebrated by Kashmiri Pandit Community with religious fervour by offering '**Watak Nath Pooja**' to mark the wedding of Lord Shiva with Goddess Parvati.

70. Mithali Raj becomes 1st Indian woman cricketer to score 10,000 runs

- Veteran cricketer **Mithali Raj (38 years)** became **first Indian woman cricketer** to complete 10,000 runs across all formats
- With this, she also became the 2nd largest woman scorer in international cricket
- She achieved the feat with a boundary off Anne Bosch in 28th over of India's innings during the ongoing 3rd ODI against South Africa.
- She scored **663 runs in 10 Test matches** with a best score of 214, while she has **6974 and 2364 runs from 212 ODIs and 89 T20 Internationals**

71. Tata Motors rolls out 'Wheels of Love' to support parenthood

- **Tata Motors** has launched a holistic programme that supports new parents in their exciting journey both as a parent and also as a valued employee, titled as '**Wheels of Love**'
- It will promote a progressive culture of care, inclusion and sensitization within the organization across levels.
- It is also presented in the form of a specially curated book with focus on growing family and career goals of employee.
- Other aspects: Announcing pregnancy, Dedicated Counselling Sessions

72. Govt launches Mera Ration mobile app for migrant PDS beneficiaries

- Govt has launched '**Mera Ration**' mobile app for ration card holders, particularly migrant beneficiaries to identify the nearest fair price shop, check details of their entitlement and recent transactions.
- The app has been developed by **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**
- It is currently available in **Hindi and English** and will be made available in **14 languages**
- It will facilitate various **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)** related services **NFSA beneficiaries**.

73. Russia curbs Twitter services over 'objectionable' content

- Media regulator of Russia, **Roskomnadzor** has announced to **slow down online access to the social media giant Twitter**
- Russia has accused the social media company of failing to remove around 3000 posts relating to objectionable content.

- If Twitter does not comply with Russian law, there will be further actions against the service, including a complete ban as per Roskomnadzor
- Roskomnadzor had made over **28,000 complaints** to Twitter since 2017

74. Jammu & Kashmir launches e-Suvidha app

- **Ramban District Administration (J&K)** has developed a mobile application titled as 'e-Suvidha'
- It will bring public delivery services and departments on the digital platform
- It will be available on the **Google Play-store**
- It will provide access to all basic services like plumbing, electric works, mobile and laptop troubleshooting, masonry, carpentry and skilled jobs
- It will also link many important departments like **Health, Community Services, Food-Civil Supplies, Banks**

75. Bengaluru airport launches India's first dedicated express cargo terminal

- **Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru** has launched **India's first dedicated Express Cargo Terminal** exclusively for export and import of international couriers.
- The 2 lakh square feet built to suit facility terminal will be operated by Express Industry Council of India
- It has a dedicated space for customs offices with direct access to both Landside and Airside wing
- It will **enable ease of doing business and reduce transaction time and cost for the shipper**

76. India hosted First Meeting of BRICS CGETI

- First Meeting of **BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI)** was held under India's Chairship
- It was held from **9th to 11th March**
- Theme of BRICS 2021: **BRICS at 15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus.**
- India presented the calendar of events for **BRICS CGETI 2021**, which included the priority areas for deliverables, schedule and scope of the MSME roundtable conference workshop on Services Statistics, and the BRICS Trade Fair.

77. Digitisation of 4.50 crore pages of Records on Mahatma Gandhi inaugurated

- Union Culture Minister **Prahlad Singh Patel** has inaugurated **Digitisation of 4 crore 50 lakh pages of Records and Exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi and the Non-Cooperation Movement.**
- It has been inaugurated on the occasion of **131st foundation day of National Archives of India**
- Out of the total archive of nearly 18 crore pages, about 4 crore 50 lakh pages will be digitised in the first phase which is expected to get over in the next three years.

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CLAT & other Law Entrance Exams



**Sanojam, Shantanu Jha, Savitri Kirshnamurty,
Ankit Sharma, Pranav Pant**

