

Current Affairs Today – 16.04.2020

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS

World Art Day



- **World Art Day** is celebrated every year on **April 15 globally**. The date of April 15 was chosen in honour of **Leonardo Da Vinci's birthday**.
- It is an international celebration of arts to recognize and support all forms of creative expressions like visual arts, films, music, creative writing etc.
- It is also celebrated to create awareness on the diversity of artistic expressions and highlight the contribution of artists to sustainable development.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL

DST creates Integrated geospatial platform to help area-specific strategies & decisions in COVID-19 outbreak



सत्यनिष्ठा प्रतिज्ञा
INTEGRITY PLEDGE

- **Department of Science and Technology of Government of India** has created an **Integrated Geospatial Platform** out of available **geospatial datasets**, standards-based services, and analytic tools to help decision making during the current COVID-19 outbreak and aid devising area-specific strategies to handle the socio-economic impact in the recovery phase.
- The platform is initially expected to strengthen the **public health delivery system** of the State and Central Governments and subsequently provide the necessary geospatial information support to citizens and agencies dealing with the challenges related to health, socio-economic distress, and livelihood challenges.
- The mobile application **SAHYOG**, as well as the web portal (<https://indiamaps.gov.in/soiapp/>) prepared and managed by the **Survey of India**. It has been customized to collect COVID-19 specific geospatial datasets through community engagement to augment the response activities by Government of India to the pandemic. Information parameters required as per the Government of India strategy and containment plan for large outbreaks have been incorporated in the SAHYOG application.

- This mobile application will complement the AAROGYA-SETU mobile app launched by the Centre for Contact tracing, Public awareness, and Self-assessment objectives. State Spatial Data Infrastructure in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir have been providing collateral standards-based geospatial data services to the State and District Level Authorities.

About Department of Science and Technology (DST) :

- Headquarters location: New Delhi
- Union Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan is head of the department
- Ashutosh Sharma is its present secretary

Govt launches All India Agri Transport Call Centre for inter-state movement of perishables



- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** launched the **All India Agri Transport Call Centre** at **Krishi Bhavan** in **New Delhi**. This will facilitate inter-state movement of perishables in the current situation of lockdown due to the COVID-19 threat.
- The Call Centre numbers are 18001804200 and 14488. These numbers can be called from any mobile or landline phones any time of the day or night.
- The **24x7 service** All India Agri Transport Call Centre is an initiative of the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare for coordination between states for inter-state movement of perishables.

About Agriculture Ministry:

- Narendra Singh Tomar, (Cabinet Minister)
- Parsottambhai Rupala (Minister of State)
- Kailash Choudhary, (Minister of State)

MEA announces COVID-19 training program for healthcare professionals from SAARC countries



- The **External Affairs Ministry** has announced a training programme on COVID-19 from April 17 for healthcare professionals from **SAARC countries**.
- The training programme will be carried out by the Central government's **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme**.
- At an India-initiated video conference of SAARC leaders on March 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested that health professionals of the member nations could come together to jointly fight the coronavirus pandemic.

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- Days after the Prime Minister strongly pitched for a regional approach to deal with the pandemic, India proposed setting up of a common electronic platform for all SAARC nations to share expertise and best practices to jointly combat the spread of coronavirus.

About External Affairs Ministry

- Subrahmanyam Jaishankar (Minister)
- Constituency : Gujarat ,Rajya Sabha
- V. Muraleedharan (Minister of State),

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

IMF proposes to deploy its full 1 trillion US Dollar lending capacity to support countries



- **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has proposed to deploy its **full 1 trillion US Dollar** lending capacity to support countries battling COVID-19 outbreak.
- Describing the COVID-19 pandemic as a crisis like no other, International Monetary Fund head **Kristalina Georgieva** on, world is now in the worst recession since the **Great Depression**.
- Georgieva told reporters at the start of the first ever virtual annual spring meeting of IMF and the World Bank in Washington, about its plans to **double emergency financial assistance**.
- The IMF Board has already approved debt relief for 25 of its poorest members. IMF chief expressed satisfaction that during the G20 Finance ministers discussion, there was unanimous support for the Fund to raise more capacity for concessional funding poor countries.

About International Monetary Fund (IMF):

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

WHO launches interactive COVID-19 service on Facebook Messenger



- The **World Health Organisation** has come up with an interactive method which uses **Facebook Messenger** to eradicate false information being spread about coronavirus.
- The WHO will be using the reach of Facebook Messenger to provide accurate information to users.
- The users will also be able to ask questions and get a quick response from the WHO's '**Health Alert**' service on Messenger.

- This service will be free to use. In many of the regions hit hardest by COVID-19, total messaging through Facebook's family of apps has increased by more than 50 per cent," Facebook stated in statement
- The WHO's '**Health Alert**' interactive service can be accessed through the WHO's official Facebook Page by selecting Send Message or through the dedicated Messenger link.

About WHO:

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

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

Equitas Small Finance Bank steps up digital banking services



- **Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited (the "Bank")**, the largest **small finance bank ("SFB")** in India in terms of number of banking outlets offers digital banking with **Selfe FDs** and **Selfe savings accounts** during the national/regional lockdown with NO physical contact or branch visits; just selfonboarding by new customers.
- Customers can open **Selfe Fixed Deposit (FD)** online for value upto **Rs. 90,000/-** with the Bank by keeping their Aadhaar Number and PAN handy; and then booking their FD online in just three minutes; and enjoying returns upto 7.75%* p.a. for 1 year.
- **Selfe FD**, a digital standalone **Insta Fixed Deposit**, envisages easy and effortless FD booking from the comfort of home, transactional convenience packaged by offering UPI VPA funding from any full-KYC non-Equitas bank account in India (linked in UPI).
- Selfe FDs are designed with certain additional features to the traditional products, which we believe will add value to the FD account and make the overall proposition attractive to the end customer.
- SELFE Savings Account is a digital bank account which can be opened with a web based interactive video form by registering using Aadhaar number, PAN and other basic details. Customers can set up a mobile banking PIN and start using their account immediately.
- They can get interest rate up to 7.5% p.a. with no minimum balance and virtual debit card. The Bank also supports its customers through their chat bot Aidya to take care of the customer needs and queries.

About Equitas Small Finance Bank

- Headquarters location: Chennai
- Shri Arun Ramanathan (Part-time Chairman);
- Mr. Vasudevan P N (MD & CEO)

HDFC Bank launches Safety Grid campaign for social distancing



- **HDFC Bank** has launched a **campaign** to encourage and reinforce **social distancing** while waiting at shops.
- Using the outer grid of **HDFC Bank logo**, it has created physical markers on the ground to help people maintain the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** prescribed **social distance** while waiting in queue at a shop or an establishment.
- After a pilot in Kolkata, the Safety Grid campaign has been launched in Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Pune, Chandigarh and Bhubaneswar. It will be implemented at over 4,000 essential services stores across the eight cities. Till now, it has been implemented at over 1,750 essential services stores.
- The Safety Grid will be painted in front of the space leading to various retail outlets such as pharmacies, grocery stores, and ATMs, among others, HDFC Bank stated in a statement, adding that each grid will be placed at an optimal WHO prescribed distance of one metre from each other.

About HDFC:

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

RBI to inject Rs.25,000 cr via TLTRO on April 17



- The **Reserve Bank of India** (RBI), stated it will conduct the fourth tranche of **targeted long-term repo operation (TLTRO)** of **three-year tenor** to inject **Rs.25,000 crore** liquidity into the banking system on April 17.
- The central bank stated funds availed under this tranche of targeted long-term repo operation will have to be deployed within **30 working days** from the date of the operation.
- So far, TLTROs aggregating **Rs.75,000 crore** have been conducted in three tranches
- The maximum amount that a particular bank can invest in the securities issued by a particular entity or group of entities out of the allotment received by it under the TLTRO is capped at **10 per cent**.
- Liquidity availed under the LTRO by banks has to be deployed in investment-grade corporate bonds, commercial paper, and non-convertible debentures over and above the outstanding level of their investments in these bonds as on March 27.
- Banks are required to acquire up to 50 per cent of their incremental holdings of eligible instruments from primary market issuances, and the remaining 50 per cent from the secondary market, including mutual funds and non-banking finance companies.

About RBI:

- Headquarters– Mumbai, Maharashtra

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

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Tata AIA becomes the first Life Insurance company to announce Additional Benefits Related to COVID-19



- As part of **Tata AIA Life's initiative**, its individual policyholders will get COVID-19 related additional benefit up to Rs **500,000** at no additional cost.
- Further, to extend the Circle of Protection to its own Agents, all '**active**' **Agents of Tata AIA Life Insurance** along with their spouse and children will be reimbursed up to **Rs 25,000** in case of hospitalisation due to COVID-19.
- This is a first of its kind initiative in India. The suddenness of present times has led to a high level of uncertainty and this is Tata AIA's own way of showing solidarity and giving back to society.
- All employees and Agents are working completely on a digital platform from the comfort of their homes to ensure a full suite of services to consumers.
- Tata AIA has already in place several measures to provide for its employees during these times such as Mediclaim policy for employees and their families and an emergency medical funds trust which can be used for COVID-19 diagnosis hospitalisation as well.
- With an intent to offer similar support during COVID-19 pandemic to its policyholders and Agents, Tata AIA has launched this initiative.
- All policyholders of Tata AIA will get an additional benefit equal to the base sum assured or Rs 500,000 whichever is lower for valid death claims due to COVID-19. This benefit is applicable for all valid death claims with a date of death on or before June 30 2020.

About Tata AIA Life Insurance

- CEO: Rishi Srivastava
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Founded: 2000

Google launches 'journalism relief fund,' following Facebook



- **Google** stated it will launch an **emergency fund** to help local news outlets struggling to maintain operations in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.
- The internet giant gave no specific figure for its fund, but stated it would offer grants ranging from the "**low thousands of dollars**" for the smallest operations to "**low tens of thousands for larger newsrooms.**"
- The move comes with the media sector facing deep cutbacks resulting from the global consumer lockdown, an intense economic slump and a retrenchment in advertising revenues that many news outlets depend on.

About Google:

- CEO: Sundar Pichai
- Founded: 4 September 1998
- Parent organization: Alphabet Inc
- Headquarters: California, United States

Asia may see zero per cent growth in 2020 due to coronavirus pandemic: IMF



- Asia is expected to witness **zero per cent growth** in 2020 due COVID-19 pandemic, its worst growth performance in almost 60 years, but still the world's largest and most populous continent is likely to fare better than other regions in terms of activity, **the International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has stated.
- The IMF in a blog titled '**COVID-19 Pandemic and the Asia-Pacific Region: Lowest Growth Since the 1960s**' further stated the impact of the coronavirus on the region will be "**severe and unprecedented**". "Growth in Asia is expected to stall at **zero per cent** in 2020.
- This is the worst growth performance in almost 60 years, including during the **Global Financial Crisis (4.7 per cent)** and the **Asian Financial Crisis (1.3 per cent)**," it stated. It further noted that "Asia still looks to fare better than other regions in terms of activity".
- The global economy is expected to contract in 2020 by 3 per cent -- the worst recession since the Great Depression, the IMF stated adding Asia's key trading partners are expected to contract sharply, including the United States by 6.0 per cent and Europe by 6.6 per cent.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

Karnataka CM to inaugurate mobile testing Kiosk for COVID 19 in Bengaluru



- **Karnataka** Chief Minister **B S Yediyurappa** will inaugurate a **mobile testing Kiosk** for COVID19 in **Bengaluru**. The mobile kiosk developed by **Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences** can be deployed in Corona Virus hotspots and clusters to procure the throat swabs according to the guidelines issued by **ICMR**.
- A project that uses technology to combat the virus was inaugurated by the state Deputy Chief Minister C N Ashwathnarayan
- This clinic developed by Pulmonologist Dr. Chandrashekar enables the Specialist to converse with the doctor of far flung hospitals in district through video conference, check the medical records online, hear the pulse and heart beat of the patient and suggest remedies.

About Karnataka:

- Chief minister: B. S. Yediyurappa
- Capital: Bengaluru
- Governor: Vajubhai Vala

UP first state to get ICMR nod for 'pool testing' of samples for coronavirus



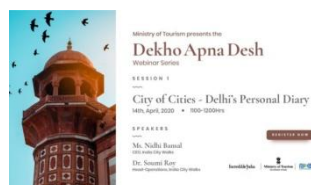
- **Uttar Pradesh** has become the first state in India to get the approval by the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** for "**pool testing**" of samples of COVID-19 suspects in order to increase the rate of sample testing in the state with soaring cases.
- The "pool testing" involves testing upto **five samples** in a single test. So far, one sample is being tested at a time.
- Currently, the state health authorities are collecting over 2200 samples daily and around 2000 are being tested on a daily basis.
- Under pool testing, all 10 samples would be mixed and tested, if the mixture tests negative, then no further test of any of the 10 suspects would be tested but if the mixture gives indication of coronavirus strains, then individual testing would be held. This will accelerate the process of testing, stated the official.

About Uttar Pradesh:

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

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS

Ministry of Tourism launches "DekhoApnaDesh" webinar series



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- The **ministry of tourism** was launching the **Dekho Apna Desh webinar series**.
- The webinar series will provide information on the many destinations and the 'depth' and 'expanse' of the culture and heritage of India. The first webinar on the history of Delhi and was titled "**City of Cities- Delhi's Personal Diary**".
- The webinar will be available on the ministry's social media handles- IncredibleIndia on Instagram and Facebook.
- The next webinar will be held on April 16 from 11 am to 12 noon and will be based on Kolkata.

About Tourism Ministry

- Minister of Tourism- Prahlad Singh Patel
- Constituency- Damoh Madhya Pradesh.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATION

Ajay Mahajan appointed MD & CEO of Care Ratings



- **Ajay Mahajan** has been appointed as **Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of CARE Ratings** for five years commencing from April 15, 2020.
- He replaces **Rajesh Mokashi**, who resigned in December 2019.
- **T.N. Arun Kumar**, the **Interim - CEO** of the company would revert to his previous position of Chief Ratings Officer and would be overseeing the functions of Ratings operations.
- Mahajan started his career with Bank of America in 1990 and went on to become MD & Country Head of Global Markets Group. Thereafter, he was a part of the management team at inception of Yes Bank in 2004, building UBS' maiden branch in India in 2008 and then working in IDFC, which converted from an Infrastructure Financing NBFC to a full service commercial bank.

IWF chief Tamas Ajan resigns amid corruption probe



- **International Weightlifting Federation (IWF)** president **Tamas Ajan** resigned in the wake of allegations of corruption and doping violations made in a documentary earlier this year.
- The statement by the Budapest-based federation noted an independent investigation is ongoing into the allegations made by German broadcaster ARD in a report.
- The documentary alleged a "**culture of corruption**" had been established in the Olympic sport with prominent weightlifters rarely subjected to drugs tests and cash being taken by doping controllers to accept manipulated urine samples.
- Hungarian Ajan, 81, who had been at the IWF since 1976 serving 24 years as general secretary and the past 20 as president, claimed the allegations were unfounded.

About International Weightlifting Federation (IWF):

- Headquarters : Budapest, Hungary
- President: Tamás Aján
- Founded: 1905

CURRENT AFFAIRS: AWARDS AND HONOURS

Tata Power bags Edison Award for social innovation



- **Tata Power** got the awards for its '**Club Enerji #Switchoff2SwitchOn**' campaign. The sustainability initiative has brought in 533 participating schools across India that have saved 29.8 million units of power since it started in 2007.
- The Edison Awards, named after Thomas Alva Edison, recognises and honours the world's best innovations and innovators.
- Tata Power is India's largest integrated power company and has an installed capacity of 10,763 megawatts together with its subsidiaries and jointly controlled entities.
- The judging panel was comprised of more than 3,000 professionals from the fields of product development, design, engineering, science, marketing and education, including professional organisations representing a wide variety of industries and disciplines.

About TATA Power

- CEO- Praveer Sinha
- Headquarters- Mumbai

Algerian Author Abdelouahab Aissaoui Wins the 13th International Prize for Arabic Fiction



- Algerian author **Abdelouahab Aissaoui** has won the 13th **International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)** with his novel "**The Spartan Court.**" Backed by the **UK's Booker Prize Foundation**.
- Aissaoui will receive \$50,000 and funds will be provided to translate the book into English.
- According to the organizers, the five other authors, from Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria will each receive \$10,000.
- "The Spartan Court" is a historical novel that relates the power struggle between Ottoman and French colonial powers in Algeria at the start of the 19th century.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NIT-K Professor builds Zero-Cov, a cost-effective disinfectant chamber

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- A team of researchers from **National Institute of Technology-Karnataka** at Surathkal near has developed a cost-effective disinfectant chamber **Zero-Cov** that could disinfect personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, surgical masks, vegetables, packed food and other day-to-day items without causing them damage.
- The chamber is made out of an old refrigerator and uses UV-C radiation with a wavelength of 254 nanometres that could destroy or inactivate all surface contamination – bacteria and viruses up to 99.9 %, including novel coronavirus.
- By placing items, including vegetables and currency, in the **disinfection chamber** for 15 minutes, one can ensure destruction or inactivation of bacteria and viruses up to **99.9 %**. UV technology is well proven and accepted by the scientific community and **World Health Organisation** has recommended this technology for surface disinfection. This is commonly used as disinfection in hospitals, laboratories and at water treatment plants.
- Using an old refrigerator as a chamber and three Ultraviolet C lamps each consuming 11 watts of power, the team has brought out Zero-Cov. The chamber could be made up of any unused material made of metal, plastic or wood, while one UV lamp costs around Rs. 500. It is developed by **Arun M. Islur**, Professor and Head, Department of Chemistry, NITK, along with research scholar **Syed Ibrahim**.

Recent News

- **Indian Institute of Technology (IITG) Guwahati** has developed an **antimicrobial (antiviral/antibacterial) spray-based coating for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and 3D-printed ear guard** for comfortable use of face masks by healthcare workers.
- **Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur** has developed a **low-cost rapid disinfection process chamber** for installation at public places, such as offices and markets.
- **IIT-Bombay** developed '**Digital Stethoscope**' **AyuSynk** for remote auscultation
- The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Roorkee**, in collaboration with **All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), Rishikesh**, has developed a low-cost ventilator, **Prana Vayu**.
- **IIT Guwahati** developed **robots** to deliver food, medicines to Covid-19 wards.

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

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- 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

DAILY CA 16TH APR

- **World Art Day- 15th april**
- DST creates **Integrated geospatial platform** to help area-specific strategies & decisions in COVID-19 outbreak
- Govt launches **All India Agri Transport Call Centre** for inter-state movement of perishables
- MEA announces **COVID-19 training program** for healthcare professionals from **SAARC countries**
- IMF proposes to deploy its full **1 trillion US Dollar** lending capacity to support countries
- **WHO** launches interactive **COVID-19** service on **Facebook Messenger**
- **Equitas Small Finance Bank** steps up **digital banking services**
- **HDFC Bank** launches **Safety Grid campaign** for social distancing
- RBI to inject **Rs.25,000 cr** via TLTRO on April 17
- **Tata AIA** becomes the first Life Insurance company to announce Additional Benefits Related to COVID-19
- Google launches '**journalism relief fund**,' following Facebook

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- Ministry of Tourism launches "**DekhoApnaDesh**" webinar series
- **Ajay Mahajan** appointed MD & CEO of Care Ratings
- IWF chief **Tamas Ajan** resigns amid corruption probe
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