

## Current Affairs Today – 19.04.2020 and 20.04.2020

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### **CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL**

#### **Union Minister Prahlad Singh Patel launches the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India in New Delhi**



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

Following UNESCO's 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, this list has been classified into five broad domains in which intangible cultural heritage is manifested:

- Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- Performing arts;
- Social practices, rituals and festive events;
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- Traditional craftsmanship.
- The present items in the list have been collated from the projects sanctioned under the scheme for 'Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India' formulated by the Ministry of Culture in 2013. As of now the list has more than 100 elements, It also includes the 13 elements of India that have already been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- Further information on how to contact M/o Culture for the same can be found on its website <https://www.indiaculture.nic.in/national-list-intangible-cultural-heritage-ich>
- The support provided by Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in building this list. It would also like to thank the researchers under the 'Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India' whose work has contributed immensely in this list.

#### **About UNESCO**

- Headquarters- Paris, France
- Head- Audrey Azoulay
- Founded- 16 November 1945

#### **About Union Minister for Culture**

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- Minister of Culture and Minister of Tourism of India- Prahlad Singh Patel
- Constituency- Damoh Loksabha Constituency in Madhya Pradesh

## Govt constitutes 6 Inter-Ministerial Central Teams to make on-spot assessment of COVID-19 situation



- Union Government has constituted **six Inter-Ministerial Central Teams** to make on-spot assessment of **COVID-19 situation**, issue **necessary directions to State Authorities** for its **redressal** and submit their report to the Centre.
- The teams will focus on compliance and implementation of lockdown measures as per guidelines, supply of essential commodities, social distancing, preparedness of the health infrastructure, safety of health professionals and conditions of the relief camps for labour and poor people.
- Violations to lockdown measures have been reported, which pose a serious health hazard to public and risk for spread of COVID- 19. There have been incidents of violence on frontline healthcare professionals, complete violations of social distancing norms and movement of vehicles in urban areas.
- Home Ministry has urged States and Union Territories to ensure strict compliance and implementation of revised consolidated guidelines on lockdown measures without any dilution to fight COVID-19. In a letter to states, the Ministry observed that certain states are allowing activities not permitted under Home Ministry guidelines.

## Govt launches online data pool of critical human resource for combating and containing COVID-19



- **Government** has launched **online data pool of critical human resource** for combating and containing COVID-19. Health Ministry stated, it has created an online data pool on **www.covidwarriors.gov.in** of doctors including nurses and other health care professionals, volunteers from National Yuva Kendras, NCC, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and ex-Servicemen for use by the ground level administration at state, district or municipal levels.
- It contains state wise and district wise availability of the large pool of human resources from various groups along with contact details of the nodal officers.
- The Ministry stated that dashboard is available for use by various authorities to prepare **Crisis Management** and **Contingency Plans** based on the available manpower, in coordination with nodal officers for each group.
- This database can also be used to utilise the services of volunteers for enforcing social distancing at banks, ration shops, mandis and for providing help to elderly, divyang and orphanages.
- This will also help States and Union Territories to move human resources from one location to the other for their utilisation.

### About Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:

- Headquarters: New Delhi

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- Officeholders: Harsh Vardhan ( Union Minister), Fagga Singh Kulaste (Minister of State)

## Centre forms high-level task force to develop vaccines, drugs



- The government announced setting up of a **new task force** to work on the development of vaccines and potential drugs as India continues to see rising number of covid-19 cases.
- The high-level task force will be headed by member **NITI Aayog professor Vinod Paul** and Principal Scientific Advisor to the government, **K Vijayraghavan**. It will work on various science frontiers to develop vaccines and drugs for the deadly virus.
- It will also have members from the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ministry of Ayush**, department of science and technology, department of biotechnology and council of scientific and industrial research (**CSIR**).
- Director General of Health Services and Drug Controller General of India will also be the members of the task force.
- The department of biotechnology will be the central co-ordination agency for the vaccine development. It will identify pathways for vaccine development and make a dynamic list of all national and international efforts in the field, monitor their progress and provide required facilitation at the government level.
- The team will also look at collecting of bio-specimens for further drug and vaccine trials. It will be different from samples testing protocols.
- India has already announced its decision to participate in the World Health Organization (WHO)'s multi country's solidarity trial for development of potential treatments for covid-19. It is an international randomised trial of additional treatments for the disease on admitted patients.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL

### Facebook launches third party fact checking in Bangladesh



- **Facebook** announced the launch of its **third party fact checking** system in **Bangladesh** to discourage the spread of fake news in the country. Facebook in partnership with **Boom Fact check** will review and rate the stories, including photos and videos.
- When third party fact-Checkers rate a post as false or fake, it will appear less or at the bottom of news feed. This will reduce the spread of the post.
- In case a certain news item or post or video is suspected to lack authenticity, the third party fact checkers will write articles about the content which is shown in the related articles immediately below the story.
- If a person shares a news or item with false information, they will receive a notification about its lack of authenticity.
- Boom is an Indian fact checking website which is available in English, Hindi and Bengali.
- Facebook started its fact-checking programme in 2016 and now it covers 60 partners in 50 languages.

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## About Facebook :

- Mark Zuckerberg :CEO, Chairperson
- Headquarters: California, United States

## About Bangladesh :

- Capital: Dhaka
- Currency: Bangladeshi taka
- Prime minister: Sheikh Hasina

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

### Fitch cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 1.8%



- **Fitch Solutions** cut India's economic growth forecast for the financial year **2020-21** to **1.8 per cent** saying private consumption is likely to contract due to large-scale loss of income in the face of worsening domestic outbreak of COVID-19.
- For India, it stated the real GDP growth rate for **2020-21** (April 2020 to March 2021) has been revised down to **1.8 per cent from 4.6 per cent**, previously.
- We now expect private consumption to contract, versus a weak expansion previously, due to large scale loss of income across the economy in the face of a worsening domestic outbreak of COVID-19, it stated.
- Fitch Solutions also anticipated a deeper contraction in fixed investments as businesses choose to cut back on capital expenditure to conserve cash amid elevated economic uncertainty.

### About Fitch ratings:

- Headquarters: New York City, U.S.
- Paul Taylor, CEO of Fitch Group

### ADB Ventures raises \$50 million, exceeding fund capitalisation target



- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** stated that **ADB Ventures**, its new impact investment platform, will soon start operations after successfully raising the equivalent of **50 million dollars** from multilateral and bilateral development partners and exceeding its first fund close target.
- The first investors in the platform's inaugural fund are Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Clean Technology Fund, the Nordic Development Fund, and South Korea's Ministry of Economy and Finance.

- ADB Ventures was established in January this year to support and invest in **technology-driven businesses** with significant potential to scale and deliver impact while helping ADB's developing member countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Its inaugural ADB Ventures Investment Fund 1 has a 17-year fund life and supports early-stage and growth-stage cleantech, agricultural technology, fintech, and health technology businesses. Its focus will be on companies with solutions that can address climate change and empower women.
- ADB Director General for Private Sector Operations Mike Barrow stated these commitments by some of the world's most forward-thinking development donors will be catalytic in achieving ADB's vision to convene one of the region's largest impact venture platforms.

#### About Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Headquarters: Mandaluyong, Philippines
- President: Masatsugu Asakawa

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

#### Uttar Pradesh becomes first state to geotag 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, a senior official stated.
- The state 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, he stated.
- The Yogi Adityanath government had anticipated the crisis early on and successfully started establishing community kitchens by mobilising state resources on a massive scale and also reaching out to civil society, religious establishments and non-governmental organisations, he stated.
- More than two crore food packets have been distributed in Uttar Pradesh since March 25.

#### About Uttar Pradesh:

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

#### Rajasthan Government Partners With Healthcare App 'Aayu' to Tackle Coronavirus Pandemic



- **Rajasthan government** has exclusively partnered with **healthcare startup MedCords** to provide 24x7 online consultation and **medicine delivery** to the people of Rajasthan as the State battles to control cases of Coronavirus. Through its integrated solution -**Aayu & Sehat Sathi app**, **MedCords** will help over **68 Million of people** in Rajasthan through this collaboration.
- MedCords' solution is fully adopted in 7 districts of Rajasthan - Kota, Udaipur, Shri Ganganagar, Bikaner, Ajmer, Pali, Jaipur and will be rolling out to complete state within a week. The app is currently helping 10,000+ patients per day with consultations and is providing home delivery of medicines through its Sehat Sathi network. The technology is provided free of cost by the startup.
- The biggest benefit of the solution is that it takes almost no time to implement across the district and is so easy to use.
- With its integrated healthcare ecosystem, **Aayu & Sehat Sathi** is helping millions of Indians families consult with qualified doctors and order necessary medicines, irrespective of their geographical limitations.
- The startup's integrated healthcare solution is being extraordinarily helpful for dependents such as the elderly and people with disabilities whose movement is restricted during the government-imposed lockdown.

#### **About Rajasthan :**

- Governor: Kalraj Mishra
- Capital: Jaipur
- Chief minister: Ashok Gehlot

## **CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPS AND PORTALS**

### **Delhi govt uses 'Assess Koro Na' app for door-to-door survey in containment zones**



- The **Delhi government** has asked officials to use the new '**Assess Koro Na**' app for **door-to-door survey** in coronavirus containment zones to speed up decision-making by analysing real-time data, removing a major obstacle in the efforts to contain the virus.
- With this app, the data collected can be uploaded on the servers in real-time and immediately analyse.
- This will help the control centres in making a quick decision on requirement of ambulances and other medical equipment and personnel in the area.
- The first phase of the app-based assessment will be launched in South Delhi.

#### **Recent News**

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a 5T plan to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus. **The 5T plan includes testing, tracing, treatment, teamwork and tracking.**
- Delhi government has come up with a term for its strategy to contain the spread of novel coronavirus - **Operation Shield**. **SHIELD stands for sealing, home quarantine, isolation and tracing, essential supply, local sanitation and door-to-door checks.**

#### **About Delhi**

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- CM- Arvind Kejriwal
- Governor- Anil Bajjal

## IIM-Kozhikode student-led team develops one-stop COVID-19 platform for accessing emergency services



- An international team led by an **Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK)** student has developed a vital digital tool to fight misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The website '**COVID FYI (covidfyi.in)**' is a one-stop digital directory for all COVID-19 related services and helplines.
- The website aims to bring the right information from the right sources to the right people, as only official information from government organisations is put on this platform to ensure authenticity and credibility.
- The platform is for citizens, government organisations/ institutions alike and provides authenticated information on — authorised laboratories near you, designated hospitals, grocery stores, mental health helplines, , emergency helplines, field officers' contact, emergency doctors to call, fever clinics near you, etc.
- The additional features in the pipeline would enable the user to book appointments with doctors, schedule sample collections, find helplines for an emergency, all while staying at home and maintaining social distancing.
- The core team of 16, led by a Postgraduate programme student of IIMK, Simran Soni, also consists of researchers, medical students and developers working tirelessly from countries like Germany and USA with the support of many more volunteers who assist them in timely updating of COVID FYI.

## Instagram founders launch COVID-19 tracking website



- **Instagram** founders have launched a new **COVID-19 tracking website**, which brings live state-by-state updates on the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. However, as of now, the website shows the updates of states in the US only and not from around the globe.
- Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger have launched the website **RT.live** using a statistic called an effective reproduction number. The stats are calculated by tracking the average number of people who catch the virus from a single infected person.
- $R_t$  has been a commonly used metric during the COVID-19 pandemic. It measures the average number of people who become infected by an infectious person. The higher the  $R_t$  is above 1 for a state, the quicker the virus is spreading.

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- “If Rt is above 1.0, the virus will spread quickly,” the Rt.live website explains. “When Rt is below 1.0, the virus will stop spreading.”

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATION

### SC Collegium Recommends Appointment Of New Chief Justices For Bombay, Meghalaya and Odisha High Courts



- The Supreme Court collegium, recommended the appointment of new chief justices to 3 high courts – Bombay, Odisha and Meghalaya.
- Calcutta high court judge, **Justice Dipankar Datta** was recommended for elevation as chief justice of **Bombay high court**.
- Justice Datta will take over from the current chief justice of Bombay, Justice BP Dharmadhikari who will retire from office on April 27.
- The collegium also recommended the appointment of **Justice Biswanath Somadder** as chief justice of **Meghalaya high court**. Justice Somadder who originally hails from Calcutta high court is currently serving as a judge of Allahabad high court.
- The current chief justice of Meghalaya, **Justice Mohammad Rafiq** was recommended by the collegium for transfer to **Odisha high court as its chief justice**.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: SUMMITS AND CONFERENCE

### 44th Session of UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee postponed

#44WHC

- **The 44th session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO** was scheduled to be held the city of **Fuzhou, Fujian province, China June 29-July 9, 2020**.
- In light of recent developments in the **world related to pandemic COVID-19**, UNESCO decided that the event will be postponed to a later date. Consultations are currently under way to determine the exact dates of the session.
- The event is notable for its adoption of new world heritage sites as well as the potential for delisting sites that are not fulfilling their commitments.

### About World Heritage Committee

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- The World Heritage Committee selects the sites to be listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger, defines the use of the World Heritage Fund and allocates financial assistance upon requests from States Parties.
- Headquarters location- Paris, France
- Founded- November 1976

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Kerala Institute Makes New Diagnostic Test Kit That Can Confirm Covid-19 Samples in 2 Hrs for Rs 1,000



- **Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, (SCTI) Trivandrum** has developed a **diagnostic test kit** which can confirm COVID-19 cases in just two hours at a cost as low as Rs 1,000.
- The test kit, called '**Chitra GeneLAMP-N**,' is highly specific for SARS-CoV-2 N-gene or the novel coronavirus and is designed to detect two regions of the gene. The test is to give accurate results even after viral gene undergoes mutation during the spread.
- The testing kit's detection time as 10 minutes, and the time of 'sample to result' (from RNA extraction in swab to RT-LAMP detection time) is stated to take less than two hours.
- A total of 30 samples can be tested in a single batch and the machines are estimated to cost Rs 2.5 lakh.
- The testing facility can be easily set up in the laboratories of district hospitals with limited facilities and trained laboratory technicians.
- Sree Chitra has also additionally developed the specific RNA extraction kits along with GeneLAMP-N test kits and testing devices.

#### Recent News

- A Pune-based company, **Mylab Discovery Solutions Pvt Lab**, has developed India's **first COVID-19 detection kit**. The kit called Mylab PathoDetect Covid-19 qualitative PCR kit.

### Six-planet system found in almost perfect orbital harmony



- Scientists have discovered a **six-planet system** -- a "**super-Earth**" and five "**mini-Neptunes**" which display an exceptionally regular spacing, hinting at how the system may have formed.

- The planets revolving the **star HD 158259** in the Draco constellation were found using the **SOPHIE spectrograph** installed at the **Haute-Provence Observatory** in the South of France, according to the study published in the journal Astronomy & Astrophysics.
- SOPHIE observations showed that the planet that is closest to HD 158259 and the five outer planets present masses of two and six times that of the Earth, respectively
- The system has been found to be compact, in the sense that the distance of the outermost planet to its star is 2.6 times smaller than the distance between Mercury and the Sun.
- NASA's TESS space telescope observed a decrease of the star's brightness as the innermost planet transited between the observer and the star.

## Microsoft to launch plasmabot to encourage COVID-19 recovered patients to donate plasma



- **Tech giant Microsoft** is launching a **plasmabot** to explore the possibility of treatment for COVID-19. It is encouraging patients who were once infected and now have been completely cured to come forward and donate plasma. To reach a large number of people, Microsoft has decided to come up with a plasmabot.
- A plasmabot is a chatbot that will answer people's queries related to the virus. The plasmabot is slated to go live this weekend.
- Plasma is a component of blood that has been used as a treatment for years. When a patient recovers from a disease, they produce antibodies to fight the presence of antigen that causes the disease, like a virus. Those proteins remain in the blood for a few days.
- **Microsoft, in a blogpost**, has stated that there are two possible ways in which plasma can be collected. The first one is to make transfusions directly available to those who are battling the virus. The other approach is to collect antibodies to make medicine. Donating plasma is similar to donating blood but is reportedly a more elaborate and involved process.
- It takes about an hour to donate plasma. It notes that plasma donors are hooked up to a small device that removes plasma while simultaneously returning red blood cells to their bodies.
- Plasma donations can be made twice a week as a donor will not have to wait for long between donations for the red blood cells to replenish.

### About Microsoft:

- CEO: Satya Nadella
- Headquarters: Washington, United States

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

### Abba Kyari Chief of staff to Nigeria's president Buhari Passes away

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- **Abba Kyari**, the trusted chief of staff to Nigeria's president Muhammadu Buhari has passed away from complications related to Covid-19.
- Kyari had widely been seen as one of the three most powerful people in Africa's largest economy.

#### Recent News

- Spanish Princess Maria Teresa of Bourbon-Parma has become the first royal to pass away due to Covid-19 complications.

### Tom and Jerry, Popeye director Gene Deitch dies at 95 in Prague



- **Gene Deitch**, an American Oscar-winning illustrator, animator, film director and producer has died. He was 95. Deitch's 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. Earlier, he had created the Tom Terrific series, while Sidney's Family Tree, which he co-produced, was nominated for an Academy Award in 1958.
- Working from behind the Iron Curtain, he directed 13 episodes of **Tom and Jerry** and also some of the Popeye the Sailor series.

#### DAILY CA 18<sup>TH</sup> APR

- **International Day For Monuments and Sites- 18<sup>th</sup> april**
- Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attends the **Plenary Meeting** of the **International Monetary and Financial Committee** (IMFC) of the IMF through video-conference
- **NIRDPR** and **UNICEF** training community leaders online to combat COVID-19
- New pit viper in **Arunachal Pradesh** named after Harry Potter character
- **TVS Motor Company** acquires **Norton Motorcycles** for Rs 153 crore
- '**Kisan Rath**' app to help farmers transport their farm produce
- Chhattisgarh Govt Launches **Website For Home Delivery Of Fruits**, Vegetables Amid Lockdown
- **IIT -Ropar** designs '**WardBot**' to deliver food, medicines to Covid -19 patients



- **DRDO** introduces products which can enhance ops at public places during pandemic
- **NASA** to launch astronauts to space station from US soil for the first time in a decade
- Shuttling to the Top: **The Story of P.V. Sindhu** by Krishnaswamy V
- **Laver Cup Postponed Until 2021** Due To French Open Clash
- **Sharath Kamal** becomes highest-ranked Indian table tennis player
- Chilean author **Luis Sepulveda** passes away
- Maharashtra Freedom Fighter **RV Bhuskute** passes away
- Former Minister **Saharai Oram** passes away at 78

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- Union Minister **Prahlad Singh Patel** launches the **National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)** of India in **New Delhi**
- Govt constitutes **6 Inter-Ministerial Central Teams** to make on-spot assessment of COVID-19 situation
- Govt launches online **data pool of critical human resource** for combating and containing COVID-19
- Centre forms **high-level task force** to develop vaccines, drugs
- **Facebook** launches third party fact checking in **Bangladesh**
- **Fitch** cuts India's GDP growth forecast to **1.8%**
- **ADB Ventures** raises **\$50 million**, exceeding fund capitalisation target
- **Uttar Pradesh** becomes first state to **geotag community kitchens**
- **Rajasthan** Government Partners With Healthcare App '**Aayu**' to Tackle Coronavirus Pandemic
- **Delhi govt** uses '**Assess Koro Na**' app for door-to-door survey in containment zones
- **IIM-Kozhikode** student-led team develops one-stop COVID-19 platform for accessing **emergency services**
- **Instagram** founders launch **COVID-19 tracking website**
- SC Collegium Recommends Appointment Of New Chief Justices For Bombay, Meghalaya and Odisha High Courts
- 44th Session of **UNESCO's World Heritage Committee** postponed
- **Kerala** Institute Makes **New Diagnostic Test Kit** That Can Confirm Covid-19 Samples in 2 Hrs for **Rs 1,000**
- **Six-planet system** found in almost perfect orbital harmony
- **Microsoft** to launch **plasmabot** to encourage COVID-19 recovered patients to donate plasma



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