

Weekly Current Affairs (Mar 19 to Mar 25)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been authorised to conduct field trials for printing plastic notes of Rs. 10 denomination.
- Mumbai-based Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation has released an app to provide information under one roof.
- Writers, poets, thinkers, litterateurs of Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and Sanskrit from Haryana and several other states of the country have converged on Panchkula for the three-day Haryana Sahitya Sangam at the Indradhanush Auditorium.
- The U.S. state of Kansas has recognised March 16 as 'Indian-American Appreciation Day' to honour an Indian techie Srinivas Kuchibhotla who was killed last month in a racially-motivated hate crime.
- Eleven Indian women are among the 25 Asian ladies who have won the 'Women Icons' award in Singapore for dedicating their lives to social work.
- Punjab cabinet has decided to provide 33 per cent reservation for women in all government jobs.
- India and Russia signed two long-term support agreements for the Sukhoi Su-30MKI combat aircraft fleet, which is the mainstay of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Yogi Adityanath, the 32nd Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh now have two deputies Keshav Prasad Maurya and Dinesh Sharma.
- Sun Pharmaceuticals managing director Dilip Shanghvi has been appointed by the central government as a member on the western area local board of Reserve Bank of India.
- A former BJP legislator from Gujarat is set to take over as the new Chairperson of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK), which has been headless for about a year.
- An Indian-American computer scientist, Anshumali Shrivastava has won National Science Foundation (NSF)'s prestigious CAREER award for his research on redesigning current machine-learning processes.
- E-commerce major Amazon India has come out with a new program for sellers to get insights and help related to the goods and services tax (GST), called the 'A-Z GST Guide'.
- The Government has approved a new scheme to provide financial assistance or capital subsidy to small powerloom units, for installation of Solar Photo Voltaic (SPV) plant, in order to alleviate the problem of power cut and shortages faced by decentralized powerloom units in India.
- Medha, the made-in-India rake was flagged off for the maiden run of the 12-coach train from Dadar to Borivali, at Lokmanya Tilak Terminus.

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- In a bid to benefit small farmers in India and globally, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) would work together on crop improvement and agronomy programmes for grain legumes and dryland cereals.
- The three days 'International Buddhist Conference' organized by Ministry of Culture and Nava Nalanda Mahavira Deemed University in Rajgir, Bihar.
- Former Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi has been appointed as the ambassador for the fifth edition of the Blind Cricket World Cup.
- The boards of Aditya Birla Group and Vodafone Group have approved a merger between Idea Cellular and Vodafone India Ltd.
- Mumbai, 41-time Ranji Trophy champions, will no longer be considered a Full Member association in accordance with the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) new constitution.
- World Bank has announced 57 billion US dollar financing for sub-Saharan Africa over the next three fiscal years (2017-2019).
- Coming in support of weak and non-performing Public Sector Banks (PSBs), the Finance Ministry has chalked out a turnaround-linked Rs 8,586-crore capital infusion plan for 10 PSBs.
- The Centre has swapped the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of state-owned Indian Bank and IDBI Bank.
- E-commerce firm Snapdeal announced the appointment of Jason Kothari as the Chief Executive Officer of its digital payment platform FreeCharge.
- British telecom major Vodafone and Aditya Birla group-run Idea Cellular announced the merger of their operations and Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla has been appointed as the Chairman of Vodafone-Idea merged entity.
- World famous tennis player Roger Federer (Switzerland) claimed his fifth BNP PARIBAS OPEN, ATP Indian Wells Masters title after defeating Stan Wawrinka in California, USA.
- ICICI Bank has launched a mobile banking app for rural customers that allow them to access banking services as well as information on agricultural services. Anyone including non-ICICI Bank customers can download and use the app which is available in eleven Indian languages.
- New-Delhi headquartered The Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) will be merged with the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI).
- India ranked a lowly 122 on a list of the world's happiest countries, dropping four slots from last year and coming behind China, Pakistan and Nepal.

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- All branches of State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT) will function as branches of State Bank of India from April 1, 2017.
- Five Indians, including Paytm Founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma and Shruti Shibulal of The Tamara Hospitality, have made it to the World Economic Forum's 100 Young Global Leaders list.
- India is home to world's fourth highest number of billionaires with Reliance Industries chief Mukesh Ambani (33rd position globally) leading the club of more than 100 super rich Indians.
- India's most consistent middle-order batsman Cheteshwar Pujara stormed his way into record books after playing a marathon innings against Australia on fourth day of the third Test match.
- The Uttarakhand High Court has given the status of "living human entities" to the Ganga and Yamuna.
- Essar's Nand Niketan at Hazira has become India's first private sector township to go cashless, using mobile wallet for performing digital transactions.
- March 21 is the United Nations' (UN) International Day of Forests, which promotes the importance of forests and trees in our lives.
- A Canadian school teacher Maggie MacDonnell was awarded the annual Global Teacher Prize and won a \$1-million prize during a ceremony in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Bloomberg released its 2017 World Health Index. Italy has been named the healthiest country by the index followed by Iceland and Switzerland at the top second and third position respectively.
- In Cricket, Tamil Nadu has won the domestic 50-over competition, the Vijay Hazare Trophy, for the fifth time.
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the appointment of Ankur Khanna as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
- Private sector lender Yes Bank BSE -1.51 % has partnered with Payjo, an artificial intelligence banking platform based out of Silicon Valley, California to adopt its intelligence products.
- India's Vidya Pillai produced a spirited performance before settling for silver in the World Women Snooker Championship in Singapore
- The government on Tuesday announced Madhabi Puri Buch as new whole time member of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).
- The RBI proposed to fix the upper limit for Pre-paid Payment Instruments (PPIs) at Rs 1 lakh in view of growing usage of PPIs for a purchase of goods and services.

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- ISRO commissioned two major facilities-- a Hypersonic Wind Tunnel and Shock Tunnel-- at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre here as part of its continuous and concerted efforts to minimise cost of access to space.
- The Assam state cabinet has decided to implement the recommendation of the Seventh Pay Commission.
- The military investiture ceremony held in the Durbar Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Russian bank VTB has decided to close its only office in New Delhi, India to cut costs but will continue to work in India.
- The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC); a Public Sector Undertaking of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is completing 5 years and will be celebrating its 5th Foundation Day on 20th – 21st March, 2017.
- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched initiatives to develop Majuli, world biggest river island, as India's first carbon neutral district and as a biodiversity heritage- yet not officially released.
- Indian Council of Medical Research director Soumya Swaminathan has been named to a high-level group set up by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to provide expertise on and coordinate the global fight against antimicrobial resistance.
- Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines and Ms. Ségolène Royal, Minister for Environment, Energy and Marine Affairs Government of France jointly decided to appoint Mr. Upendra Tripathy, as the Interim Director General (IDG) of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on a full time basis.
- Bollywood superstar Salman Khan has unseated his actor Shah Rukh Khan to become the top earning celebrity of 2016 in the Forbes India Celebrity 100 List with an estimated income of Rs. 270.33 crore.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director Soumya Swaminathan has been named to a high-level group set up by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to provide expertise on and coordinate the global fight against antimicrobial resistance.
- Four Indian cities are among the cheapest to live in globally, while Singapore (last in the list) has been ranked as the most expensive for the fourth consecutive year, according to a 'Worldwide Cost of Living 2017' report by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- The Rs 3-lakh limit proposed for cash payments in the Budget for 2017-18 will be brought down to Rs 2 lakh as part of an unprecedented 40 amendments to the Finance Bill.

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- India's national record holder in men's 20km race walk, K T Irfan has won bronze at the Asian Race Walking Championships in Nomi, Japan.
- The 23rd of March marked the 86th martyrdom day of Bhagat Singh, one of the most revered figures of the anti-colonial movement.
- A crucial bill to ensure equal rights to people afflicted by HIV and AIDS in getting treatment, admission in educational institutions and jobs, was passed by the Rajya Sabha
- ASEA Brown Boveri (ABB) India has restored and modernised the critical 1,035 MW Sharavathi hydropower plant in Karnataka that accounts for 25 per cent of Karnataka Power Corporation's generation.
- PepsiCo's sports drink brand Gatorade has roped in Indian shuttler PV Sindhu as its brand ambassador. The move is as part of the global beverage major's commitment towards dialling up the communication on the benefits of its healthier food and beverage offerings to consumers.
- For his contributions in the world of journalism, eminent TV journalist Ravish Kumar on Sunday was honoured with the first Kuldip Nayar journalism award.
- Samsung today launched a new digital payments service in the country called Samsung Pay, which hopes to bring debit cards, credit cards and wallets under one umbrella.
- The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, is the first academic institution to get a supercomputing facility under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
- Dance, music, drama, puppetry, and handicrafts showcasing the spectacular diversity of India, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Gujarat to Bengal through folk, tribal and classical art forms in all its dimensions will be the focus of the fifth Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav being organized in the northeast from 23 to 31 March 2017.
- The government approved construction of 117,814 more affordable houses for urban poor under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in six states (Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha) with a total investment of Rs 5,773 crore and with central assistance of Rs 1,816 crore.
- Ravindra Jadeja gained seven points to become the sole world number one bowler in the ICC's Test rankings. He held the top spot jointly with Ravichandran Ashwin, who lost 37 points after a dismal performance in India's drawn Test against Australia in Ranchi.
- In the recently released Human Development Index by United Nations, India is ranked 131 out of 188 countries in the list.

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- World Water Day, held every March 22, took place around the world on Wednesday, aiming at attracting attention to the water crisis with this year's theme: "Why Waste Water."
- World Tuberculosis Day is celebrated every year by the people all across the world at international level on 24th of March.
- India's longest highway tunnel at Chenani Nashri, between Udhampur and Ramban in Jammu & Kashmir is all set to be inaugurated by prime minister Narendra Modi on April 2.
- The French mathematician Yves Meyer, a self-described "nomad" who has made deep contributions to the many subfields through which he has roamed over the past half-century, received the 2017 Abel Prize.
- In a bid to cement mutual bonhomie, a joint cycling expedition of Indian Army and Bangladesh Army, first of its type, was recently flagged off from the Agartala military station.
- India came down by one slot and was ranked 131st among 188 countries on Human Development Index (HDI) 2016 released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- Emulating China and Italy's vertical forests, Bengaluru got its first vertical garden, which it hopes will help in curbing pollution and in beautifying the city.
- Photojournalist Raghu Rai was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Minister Mr. Venkaiah Naidu for "his remarkable contribution to the field." at 6th National Photography Awards organized by the photo division of the ministry in the capital.
- Ankur Mittal clinched the gold medal at the ISSF Shotgun World Cup in the double trap event, pipping Australian rival James Willet in the final in a world record equalling effort.
- To promote cashless digital transactions, South Indian Bank has introduced Aadhar-based payment in its UPI mobile application- SIB M-Pay.
- The World Bank has signed a 100 million US dollar credit agreement with the Centre and Uttarakhand in New Delhi to improve the quality of health care services in all 13 districts of the state.
- Ed Sheeran, he of pop superstardom and songwriter/performer of the juggernaut that is "Shape of You," has been named the recipient of the Songwriters Hall of Fame's 2017 Hal David Starlight Award, which will be presented at the 48th Annual Induction and Awards Dinner on June 15 in New York.
- Indian Para Athletes bagged eight medals, including three gold, in the 9th Fazza International IPC Athletics Grand Prix in Dubai.
- The state government of Assam has signed two MoUs with Mumbai-based State Bank of India(SBI) to provide housing loan and education loan for its employees.

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- After e-commerce site Amazon was barred from selling products with the Indian Flag on them in January, the Union ministry of home affairs (MHA) on Wednesday issued a fresh directive "to ensure strict compliance of the provisions contained in the Flag Code of India, 2002."
- Indian Navy fires surface-to-air missile from INS Vikramaitya.
- Synlight is the largest collection of film projector spotlights ever assembled in one room, and scientists in Germany are turning them all on at once in the pursuit of efficient and renewable energy.
- Post demonetisation of specified bank notes on November 8, 2016, more accounts under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) have been seeded with Aadhaar numbers.
- Aadhar mandatory for mobile connection.
- The Reserve Bank of India has accorded its approval for appointment of TS Anantharaman as part-time chairman of Catholic Syrian Bank.
- In a bid to woo the mobile-savvy youth, financial services company Tata Capital launched a mobile app to offer personal loans up to Rs 15 lakh.
- Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, on 23 March 2017, launched a Coffee Table Book titled "50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution."
- CBEC renamed as CBIC under GST regime.
- PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi, author Fareed Zakaria are amongst six Indian-Americans nominated for the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honour 2017 - the highest civilian award in the US for immigrants.
- Navy gets three naval systems from DRDO.
- Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launched MoP&NG e-Seva, a dedicated grievances redressal platform on Social Media for all queries and grievances relating to Oil and Gas Sector.
- Osmania University to host 150th Indian Science Congress.
- India has marginally improved its position to 87th place on a global energy architecture performance index, but ranks among the worst for pollution.
- Nellore in AP to get Post Office Passport Seva Kendra.