

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 15TH TO 21ST MARCH 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019

- The **Lok Sabha** had already passed the Bill on **12th December 2019** and on 16th March 2020, it was passed by voice vote in **Rajya Sabha**.
- After the passage of the bill, these 3 universities will have more opportunities to **spread the knowledge of Sanskrit language not only in India but also across the world**.

Wholesale Inflation in February 2020

- The **Wholesale Price Index for 'All Commodities'** for the month of **February, 2020** declined by **0.6%** to **122.2 (provisional)** from 122.9 (provisional) for the January 2020.
- The **annual rate of inflation**, based on monthly WPI, stood at **2.26% (provisional)** for the month of **February 2020** over February 2019.

S&P Lowers India's Growth Forecast

- S&P Global Ratings had **earlier projected a growth rate of 5.7% during 2020 calendar**.
- The agency projected that the **Asia-Pacific economic growth in 2020** will be **more than halve to less than 3%**.

National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill 2019

- The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill 2019 was presented in Rajya Sabha on 7th January 2019 and seeks to **repeal the Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970**.
- It also contains the provision for **setting up a National Commission for Indian System of Medicine**.

Covid-19 Economic Response Task Force

- Prime Minister Modi has also announced '**Janta curfew**' on **22nd March 2020** in the view of coronavirus outbreak.
- Janta curfew means **for the public, curfew imposed by the public on its own** and will be followed from 7 AM to 9 PM on 22nd March.

Fitch Lowered India GDP Growth to 5.1%

- The Fitch Ratings gave the **reason of the coronavirus outbreak**, which is likely to hit business investment and exports.
- In December 2019, Fitch had projected **India's growth at 5.6 % for 2020-21** and 6.5 % for the following year.

DPIIT: NRIs to Own Up to 100% Stake in Air India

- As per the notification, foreign investments in Air India including that of foreign airlines shall **not exceed 49 % either directly or indirectly.**
- But, exemption has been made for those NRIs, who are **Indian Nationals, where foreign investment is permitted up to 100 % under the automatic route.**

BANKING

Vivad Se Vishwas Bill

- The **Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, 2020** offers a **waiver of interest, penalty and prosecution** for settlement of **Direct Tax disputes.**
- The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the **Minister of Finance, Ms Nirmala Sitharaman,** on 5th February 2020.

39th GST Council Meet

- The Goods and Services Tax Council has made recommendations to **increase GST rates on mobile phones to 18% from existing 12%.**
- The GST rates on mobile phones will come into effect from **1st April 2020.**

GOI will Borrow Rs 51,000 crore in March 2020

- The decision is taken after reviewing the cash position of the Centre, in line with the **Revised Estimate announced by the government in the Budget 2020-21.**
- The **Budget 2020-21** has raised the **net borrowing to Rs 4.99 lakh crore** from Rs 4.48 lakh crore in the Budget Estimate.

Paytm Bank to Issue Visa Virtual Debit Cards

- PPBL has said that it is targeting to **issue over 10 million new digital debit cards in 2020-21.**
- The visa virtual debit cards to its customers will enable them to **transact at all merchants accepting payments through cards.**

Governance Panel Set Up by IRDAI

- The **Insurance Regulation and Development Authority (IRDAI)** has announced on 19th March 2020 that it has set up a **governance panel/committee.**
- IRDAI is an **autonomous, statutory body** tasked with regulating and promoting the **insurance and re-insurance industries in India.**

Govt Liabilities Stood at Rs 93.89 Lakh Crore in Q3

- The increase in the Government's liability is **about 3.2% as compared to the previous quarter.**
- The liabilities, including those under the public account, had stood at **Rs 91,01,484 crore** at the end of September 2019.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi	Rajya Sabha
Hirdesh Kumar	Chief Electoral Officer of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission of India
Arundhati Bhattacharya	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Salesforce India
Karan Bajwa	Google as Managing Director of Google Cloud in India
Rajeev Jain	Managing Director of Bajaj Finance
R Gandhi & Ananth Narayan	Additional Directors of the Yes Bank Board

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
15 th March 2020	World Consumer Day	To raise global awareness about consumer rights and needs.
20 th March 2020	World Sparrow Day	Theme: "I Love Sparrow"

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Manipur Govt Announced Schemes for Sportspersons and Artists

- **Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh** has announced the biggest ever scheme for the **welfare of sportspersons and artists** of the State.
- The schemes announced would provide benefits to thousands of **sportspersons and artistes** of the State who have **brought laurels to the State and Country**.

DEFENCE

Procurement of 83 Tejas Aircraft Approved by DAC

- **HAL Tejas** is an Indian single-engine, delta wing, multirole light fighter designed for the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.
- **The Light Combat Aircraft Tejas** is designed by the **Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA)** under DRDO and **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.

Indian Navy's Quarantine Camp at INS Vishwakarma

- The camps will serve the **Indian nationals who are evacuated from countries** that are affected by the **COVID-19**.
- The **Quarantine Camp at INS Vishwakarma** is fully equipped to accommodate nearly **200 personnel**.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft Launches Coronavirus Tracker

- The website provides **up-to-date infection statistics for each country** and related articles from a variety of publishers.
- The website aggregates data from the sources like the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, the **US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, and the **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**.

Account Aggregator Framework

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has envisaged that, the ecosystem of AAF would be a **platform for financial services companies to reach out to the consumer to seek consent before using their personal data** to optimise their product offerings.
- **Cams Finserv, FinSec AA Solutions and Cookiejar Technologies** have so far received operating licences from the RBI.

New Sanitizer Developed by IHBT Scientists

- The Hand Sanitizer consists of **natural flavours, active tea constituents and alcohol content** as per the **guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- Chemicals like **parabens, triclosan, synthetic fragrance and phthalates** have not been used in this product.



2020 ITTF Challenger Plus Oman Open

- In the **semi-finals**, Achanta pulled off a seven-seat victory against **Russia's Kirill Skachkov**.
- In Oman open 2020, he has won the crown after a decade as his **last ITTF title was in in 2010 when he won Egypt Open**.

All England Championships 2020

- **Tai Tzu Ying** has won the title for the third time after beating **China's Chen Yufei at Birmingham, England**.
- In the **Men's singles**, **Denmark's Victor Axelsen** outclassed **Taiwan's Chou Tien-Chen**.