

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS: 15TH APRIL TO 21ST APRIL 2019

NATIONAL NEWS

Supreme Court Bans Mining Along Kaziranga National Park

- All mining activities along the Kaziranga National Park and catchment area of rivers originating in Karbi Anglong Hills in Assam, has been banned by Supreme Court.
 - As mining activities resulting in environment degradation and habitat destruction in an important elephant and tiger habitat.
 - It is a home to world's largest population of Indian one-horned Rhinoceros located in the Golaghat and Nagaon districts of Assam.

Medals of Honour Awarded to Indian Peacekeepers

- Medals of Honour Awarded to 150 Indian Peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).
 - India is the second largest contributor of peacekeepers to UNMISS with more than 2,400 military and police personnel currently deployed in the mission.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- Julian Assange was arrested in London to face a charge in the United States of conspiring to hack into a Pentagon computer network in 2010.
- Julian Assange is a Co-founder of **WikiLeaks**.
 - It is a media website which is an international, self-described, not-for-profit organization publishing submissions of private, secret, and classified.

Indo-Pacific Wing Set up in the Foreign Office

- An Indo-Pacific Wing in the foreign office has set up by Ministry of External Affairs.
- This wing is currently headed by joint secretary **Vikram Doraiswami**.

Christina Koch sets Record for the Longest Spaceflight

- A Record Set up by NASA astronaut **Christina Koch** to have her mission on the International Space Station (ISS) extended to 328 days, which is the longest single spaceflight by a woman.
- Koch, who arrived at the space station on March 14th is scheduled to remain in orbit until February 2020 which will eclipse the record of 288 days set by former NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson in 2016-17.

IMF and the World Bank Launch "Learning Coin"

- IMF and World Bank jointly Launched a private blockchain with a pseudo-token- "Learning Coin".
 - The coin has no real value, called "**Learning Coin**" is accessible within the IMF and World Bank.
 - The main purpose of this token is to teach relevant individuals within the organizations about blockchain.

BANKING

SEBI Approves a Rs 10,000 Crore "Airport Fund"

- "Airport" specific fund of Rs 10,000 crore Approved by SEBI.
- **Gigi George** leads the management and operation of 'Sponsor and Investment Manager' of this Fund which is based in Chennai and is termed as 'Taking Off To The Future Investment Management LLP'.
- It can raise a capital amounting to \$1.5 bn (Rs. 10,000 crores).

RBI Permits Reinsurance Brokers to Open Foreign Currency Accounts

- To open non-interest bearing foreign currency accounts with banks for undertaking transactions Reinsurance Brokers gets Permission from RBI.
- **Foreign Currency Accounts**
 - **Foreign currency account** refers to a bank account held or maintained in currency other than the currency of India or Nepal or Bhutan.

PMLA Prevails over Bankruptcy Act and Insolvency Code

- Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) prevails over the Bankruptcy Act and Insolvency Code when it comes to attachment of properties obtained as 'proceeds of crime' has Ruled by Delhi High Court.
 - Delhi High Court has stated that by the virtue of Section 71, PMLA has the overriding effect over other existing laws in the matter of dealing with "money-laundering" and "proceeds of crime".

IDRBT Launches the "5G Use Cases Lab"

- **"5G Use Cases Lab" launched** by institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) for banking and financial sector along with blockchain technology.

Canara Bank Becomes First PSB to Meet RBIs EMV Mandate

- To support EMV card acquiring across its ATM network and Aadhaar Authentication, Canara Bank has successfully rolled out major new functionality.
- **EMV Card:**
 - EMV stands for Europay, MasterCard, Visa, the three organisations that developed and established EMV as the global standard for chip-based credit and debit transactions.

Bandhan Bank's Merger with Gruh Finance Approved by CCI

- Merger of **Bandhan Bank and Gruh Finance** has been Approved by CCI for the proposed scheme of amalgamation of Gruh Finance with the bank.

Bank of Maharashtra partners with M1Xchange TReDS Platform

- Bank of Maharashtra join Hands with M1Xchange TReDS Platform for MSME bill discounting.
- **TReDS:**
 - TReDS is a digital platform to support micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to get their bills financed at a competitive rate through an auction where multiple registered financiers can participate.

APPOINTMENTS

Person	Appointed as
Jean Michel Lapin	New Prime Minister of Haiti
Mohammed Ishtaye	New Prime Minister of Palestine

Mithali Raj	Goodwill ambassador of the Indian team for the Street Child Cricket World Cup
Rajesh Kumar Yaduvanshi	Executive Director of PNB
Padmaja Alaganandan	Chief People Officer of PwC India
Kaushik Shaparia	CEO for Deutsche Bank India
N. Kashinath	Member of Railway Board

IMPORTANT DAYS

- 11th April is observed as World Parkinson's Day. Parkinson's disease is a progressive nervous system disorder.
- World Haemophilia Day observed on April 17th, 2019. The theme for 2019 is "**Reaching out - connect to your community.**"
- World Heritage Day 2019 was observed on April 18th 2019 with the theme **Rural Landscapes.**

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

- The **annual G20 leaders' summit** on November 21-22, 2020, in its capital Riyadh will be hosted by Saudi Arabia.
- This the First time ever when Arab is going to host this Summit.
- **G-20:**
 - Group of Twenty (G20) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union.

INDEX AND RANKING

Forbes Best Indian Banks 2019: First-ever list of the World's Best Bank 2019 in terms of **customer services and technological advancements.** Below is the List:

HDFC Bank	1st Rank
ICICI Bank	2 nd Rank
DBS Bank	3 rd Rank
Kotak Mahindra Bank	4 th Rank
IDFC Bank	5 th Rank
Syndicate Bank	6 th Rank
PNB	7 th Rank
Allahabad Bank	8 th Rank
Vijaya Bank	9 th Rank
Axis Bank	10 th Rank

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Award	Awardee	Reason
Prestigious Saraswati Samman 2018	K Siva Reddy	For his collection of poetry titled Pakkaki Ottigilite.
Lifetime Achievement Award	Dr. A K Singh	For notable contributions in Internal Decorporation of Fission Produced Radionuclides and Infection

		Imaging.
Gold Medal for India	Meena Kumari	Won the only gold medal for India in the Cologne Boxing World Cup 2019.
20th Victor Dutch International Badminton Title	Harsheel Dani	Defeated Mads Christophersen of Denmark

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Event Horizon Telescope project reveals First-ever photo of Black Hole

- A research, conducted by the **Event Horizon Telescope (EHT)** released photo of the black hole which was taken using a global network of telescopes to gain insight into celestial objects with gravitational fields so strong no matter or light can escape.
- It reveals the black hole at the centre of Messier 87, a massive galaxy in the nearby Virgo galaxy cluster.
- This black hole resides about 54 million light-years from Earth.
- **Black holes:**
 - Black holes are phenomenally dense celestial entities and a point of no return beyond which anything - stars, planets, gas, dust and all forms of electromagnetic radiation - gets swallowed into oblivion.

Ancient human species Homo Luzonensis Discovered

- A species of ancient human "Homo Luzonensis", which was previously unknown to science, was discovered by Researchers of Philippines.
- **About Species:**
 - It was identified from a total of seven teeth and six small bones and teeth from two adults and one child found in a cave on the island of Luzon in the Philippines.
 - It is lived on the island of Luzon at least 50,000 to 67,000 years ago.

India successfully test fires Sub-Sonic Cruise Missile 'Nirbhay'

- Long-range sub-sonic cruise missile '**Nirbhay**' successfully test fired in Chandipur, Odisha.
- It is India's First indigenously designed and developed missile that can carry warheads of up to 300 kg including nuclear warheads and take off vertically like missile and cruise horizontally like an aircraft.
- It was the sixth experimental test of Nirbhay missile system and it achieved all mission objectives right from lift-off till the final splash.

Artificial Intelligence Lab opened by Google in Ghana

- **First Africa Artificial Intelligence** Lab opened by Google in **Ghana's capital Accra**, to take on challenges, related to Agriculture, across the continent by using Google's AI machine app '**TensorFlow**', Helping farmers to analyze the issue with their plants and boost their production.

Sri Lanka's First Satellite Raavana-1 Launched into Space

- Sri Lanka's First Satellite **Raavana-1** was Launched into Space from NASA's Flight Facility on Virginia's east shore designed by two Sri Lankan research engineers at the Kyushu Institute of Technology in Japan.

NASA Launches Nepal's First Ever Satellite 'NepaliSat-1'

- **“NepaliSat-1”**, Nepal’s First Ever Satellite has been Launched by **NASA**.
 - For collecting the information about the country’s topography and Earth’s magnetic field , this Satellite will start rotating around the earth’s orbit.
 - The satellite was developed by two Nepalis Abhas Maskey and Hariram Shrestha at Japan's Kyushu Institute of Technology.

SPORTS

Japan Dominates Singapore Open 2019

- **The winners of the Singapore Open 2019 are listed below:**
 - Men's Singles: Kento Momota (Japan)
 - Women's Singles: Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan)
 - Men's Doubles: Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda (Japan)
 - Women's Doubles: Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)
 - Mixed Doubles: Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)

OBITUARY

- **Alan Garcia**, Peru's former president, shot himself in the head to avoid arrest in connection with alleged bribes from Brazilian builder Odebrecht, taking his own life, in the most dramatic turn yet in Latin America's largest graft scandal.

DEFENCE

India and France to conduct Largest Naval Exercise "VARUNA"

- The largest-ever naval exercise '**Varuna**' was conducted between **India and France** with aircraft carriers, destroyers, submarines and fighters early May as part of their expanding strategic partnership.