

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22ND TO 30TH APRIL 2020

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Lebanon to Legalize Cannabis Farming

- Lebanon has become the first Arab country to legalize cannabis farming for medical and industrial purposes.
- Earlier it was illegal to perform cannabis farming in Lebanon. However, after this legalization, the country will be benefited from high value-added medicinal products.

NATIONAL NEWS

"Saiyam Mobile Application"---By Pune Municipal Corporation

- The aim behind launching the Saiyam mobile app is to effectively track home-quarantines citizens and ensure they are actually staying in the home.

"Aayu and Sehat Sathi Mobile Application"---By Rajasthan Gov. and Medcords Startup

- Rajasthan government partnered with healthcare startup MedCords to launch Aayu and Sehat Sathi Mobile Application to combat COVID-19.

#MyBookMyFriendcampaign—By HRD Ministry

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched the #MyBookMyFriendcampaign on social media.
- The campaign was launched on account of World Book Day which is marked on 23 April.

Himachal Pradesh Govt adopts Three-Pronged Strategies to Fight COVID-19

- The three actions by the state government have been put in use and these are: To increase testing capacity, To identify three types of institutions for treatment of COVID patients having different symptoms, and to provide adequate safety instruments to health workers.

'Recharge Sathi'---By Vodafone Idea and Paytm

- Vodafone Idea partnered with Paytm to launch the 'Recharge Sathi' program.
- The program has enabled Paytm to exclusively power prepaid mobile phone recharges for Vodafone Idea.

g-CNQDs for Visible-Light-Driven Antibacterial Activity---By INST

- The Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) has developed carbon nitride quantum dots (g-CNQDs) which is a metal-free nanomaterial useful for visible-light-driven antibacterial activity.
- It has been proven effective and an alternative to metal/non-metal semiconductors and expensive silver.

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'KARMI-Bot' Robot---Kerala

- A Kerala government hospital in Ernakulam in Kochi has deployed a robot named as 'KARMI-Bot' to serve food and medicines to coronavirus patients with an aim to reduce risk of infections for doctors and health workers.

'Vilokana' Search Engine---By IITM-Kerala

- An Artificial Intelligence Search Engine called 'Vilokana' has been developed by the Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management- Kerala.
- The name 'Vilokana' is based from the Sanskrit language which stands with a meaning called finding out'.

Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Based Electric Cars in Leh and Delhi

- National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has invited Global Expression of Interest (EoI) to provide Hydrogen Fuel Cell (FC) based electric buses and Hydrogen Fuel Cell-based electric cars in Leh and Delhi.

Insurance Cover of Rs.50 lakh for the Frontline Journalists---By Assam

- Assam government has announced an insurance cover of Rs.50 lakh for the frontline journalists who are covering COVID-19.
- The insurance cover is being provided because the frontline journalists have been bravely covering COVID-19 news updates against all odds by risking their lives.

Airtel and Nokia Partnership—To Boost Network Capacity

- Nokia and Bharti Airtel have signed a multi-year agreement with an aim to boost network capacity and hence provide good customer experience.
- The two companies have signed an agreement for \$1 Billion.

Agreement—ADB and GOI to Combat COVID-19

- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$1.5 billion loan that will support the government's response to the novel coronavirus disease pandemic.
- The loan amount has been sanctioned under ADBs COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program (CARES).

BANKING

RBI 3-Month EMI Moratorium to Provide Rs 2.1 lakh crore Liquidity to Corporates

- The Reserve Bank of India has announced a moratorium, in which the bank will provide Rs 2.1 lakh crore liquidity to the corporate sectors who are ready to avail the offer.
- The findings by Crisil Ratings are based on an assessment of 9,300 of its rated non-financial sector companies across 100 sectors.

ICICI Bank Launched Voice Banking Services

- ICICI (Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India) Bank has started a voice banking services on Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant for its customers.

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RBI Allows Banks to Issue Electronic Cards for Overdraft Accounts

- The Reserve Bank of India has granted permission to all banks to issue electronic cards to natural persons having Overdraft Accounts that are only in the nature of personal loan without any specific end-use restrictions.

Sri Lanka to Get \$400 million Debt Facility from RBI

- Sri Lanka signs an agreement with Reserve Bank of India for a Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement worth \$400 million.
- The agreement is signed to boost Sri Lanka's foreign reserves as the country which is badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rs 50,000 crore Liquidity for Mutual Funds by RBI

- Reserve Bank of India has come up with an announcement to provide easiness to liquidity pressures on mutual funds (MFs) by granting Rs. 50,000 crore Special Liquidity Facility (SLF) for mutual funds.
- Under this scheme, the RBI will conduct repo operations of 90 days tenor at the fixed repo rate.

Indian Overseas Bank Launched Special Borrowing Scheme for SHGs

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) introduced a special borrowing scheme for self-help groups to help them tide over the challenges inflicted by COVID-19.
- In this scheme, each member of SHG will be able to avail a loan of Rs 5000/- with a cap of Rs 1 lakh for the group.

Axis Bank to Acquire 29% Stake in Max Life Insurance

- Axis bank is set to acquire an additional 29% stake in Max Life Insurance with an estimated price of Rs 1,592 crore.

RBI Extended Restrictions Imposed on Mumbai based Coop Banks

- Reserve Bank of India extended restrictions imposed on Mumbai based Co-operative banks for 6 months that is till 31st October 2020.

REPORTS

Global Report on Food Crisis---By UN World Food Programme

- Global report on food crisis was released by the UN World Food Programme.
- Among 43 million living in the Middle East and Asia and 18.5 million in Latin America and the Caribbean are suffering food insecurity issues.

"Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019"—Report by SIPRI

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released a report titled "Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019".
- The report is a detail analysis of spending in military sector by the countries in the year 2019.

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APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Justice Dipankar Datta	Chief Justice of Bombay High Court
Kapil Dev Tripathi	Secretary to the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind
David Li	Chief Executive Officer of Huawei Telecommunication India
Sanjay Kothari	New Chief Vigilance Commissioner(CVC) of India
Jagdish Mukhi	Charge of the Administration of the Bodoland Territorial Council
Manisha Singh	US President Donald Trump as America's next envoy to OECD
Deepak Mittal	Next Ambassador of India to the State of Qatar
Piyush Srivastava	Next Ambassador of India to the State of Bahrain
J Arunkumar	Head Coach of USA Men's National Cricket Team
Rajiv Kumar	Chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB)

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
22 nd April 2020	Earth Day or International Mother Earth Day	Theme: Climate Action
23 rd April 2020	World Book and Copyright Day	Theme: KL Baca-Caring through reading
23 rd April 2020	English Language Day	--
23 rd April 2020	International Girls in information and communication technologies (ICT) Day	To encourages girls to consider a future in the technology sector.
24 th April 2020	National Panchayati Raj Day or the National Local Self Government Day	--
24 th April 2020	International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace	--
24 th To 30 th April 2020	World Immunization Week	Theme: '#VaccinesWork for All.'
25 th April 2020	World Malaria Day	Theme: 'Zero malaria starts with me'
25 th April 2020	International Delegate's Day	To raise the awareness of the role of the representatives and delegates of the Member States to the United Nations.
25 th April 2020	World Veterinary Day	Theme: 'Environmental protection for improving animal and human health.'
26 th April 2020	World Intellectual Property Day	Theme: 'Innovate for a green future'
26 th April 2020	International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day	--
28 th April 2020	World day for Safety and Health at Work	Theme: Safety and Health at work can save lives
29 th April 2020	International Dance Day	--
29 th April 2020	International Guide Dog Day	--

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30 th April 2020	Ayushman Bharat Diwas	To promote affordable medical facilities in remote areas of the country based on the socio-economic status.
30 th April 2020	International Jazz Day	--

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

'Jivan Shakti Yojana' for Womens---By Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh Government has launched a 'Jivan Shakti Yojana' for womens.
- Under the scheme, women will prepare masks at homes in the urban areas and will be able to earn profit.

Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme ---By Andhra Pradesh

- Andhra Pradesh has launched JaganannaVidyaDeevena Scheme.
- Under the scheme over Rs.4,000 crore of funds have been released along with Rs.1880 crore towards the pending amount left by the earlier government.

DEFENCE

Mobile Virology Research and Diagnostics Laboratory (MVRDL)

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a Mobile Virology Research and Diagnostics Laboratory (MVRDL) via video conference, which is India's first COVID-19 samples collection mobile lab.
- It is also named as 'Mobile BSL-3 VRDL Lab'.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Social Media Platform Facebook Acquires 9.99% Stake in Reliance Jio

- The social media platform and US tech giant Facebook buys a 9.99% stake in the Reliance Jio platform which is the telecom company of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL).

Israel's 1st Fully Digital Bank---By TCS

- Israel's Ministry of Finance, has selected India's largest software services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to transform its banking sector to digital by launching Israel's first fully digital bank which will be seen as a transformative initiative that can impact the business model of other sectors as well.

'WashKaro App'-----By IIIT Delhi

- Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi (IIIT-Delhi), has developed an app called 'WashKaro' which warns people about the coronavirus containment zone nearby them and helps them to verify whether the news about the pandemic is genuine or fake one. It aims to provide the right information in the right format at the right time to the people.

'Noor'---First Military Satellite of Iran

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- Iran has launched its first military satellite called "Noor" into orbit.
- The satellite is launched by Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), the country's armed force group.

'Feluda' A COVID-19 Test Strip---By CSIR-IGIB

- The Council of Scientific & Industrial Research's Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB), New Delhi has developed a low-cost COVID-19 test strip named 'Feluda'.

'VITAL' Ventilator ---By NASA

- Engineers and Scientists at National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have developed a high-pressure ventilator named as VITAL. The full form of VITAL is Ventilator Intervention Technology Accessible Locally. It is developed to treat COVID-19 patients.

First Hospital to have Plasma Therapy for COVID-19

- The King George Medical University (KGMU) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh became the first government hospital in the country to successfully launch the plasma therapy treatment for COVID-19 patients.

HCARD Robot—By CSIR-CMERI

- HCARD robot is developed for the frontline health workers so that they can maintain physical distance from the positive coronavirus patients while treating them.

Berberine Based Alzheimer Inhibitor---By JNCASR

- Scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) have modified the structure of Berberine into Ber-D to use as an Alzheimer's inhibitor.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

G-20 Agriculture Ministers Meeting

- The G-20 Agriculture Ministers virtual meeting organized through video conferencing by the Saudi Presidency to deliberate on the ways and means of ensuring continuity of food supply value chain, including the livelihood of farmers.

Meeting of 15th Finance Commission

- The Fifteenth Finance Commission (XVFC) held an online meeting with its Advisory Council.
- The meeting was chaired by N. K. Singh.

Eleventh Session of Petersberg Climate Dialogue

- The session was attended by Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Mr. Prakash Javadekar.
- The 11th session of Petersburg Climate Dialogue was hosted by Germany and was co-chaired by United Kingdom.