

# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 8<sup>TH</sup> TO 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### UN Adopted Political Declaration on Women's Rights

- The political declaration on women's rights was adopted during the **64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women**.
- The UN body reaffirmed the **1995 road map** to achieve gender equality that was adopted by 189 countries at the **1995 Beijing women's conference**.

### UNSC Approved US Taliban Peace Agreement

- The United States' resolution on the deal is a **rare endorsement of an agreement with a militant group**.
- The peace deal aims to bring **lasting peace in war-torn Afghanistan** and allow **US troops to return home** from America's longest war.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Poshan Pakhwada

- The two-week-long **Poshan Pakhwada 2020** will be focused on **"Men for Nutrition - increasing male engagement in Poshan Abhiyaan to improve Nutritional Indicators"**.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment** was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **8th March, 2018**.

### Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship Programme

- The MGNF is designed and implemented by **IIM Bangalore** and in collaboration with **State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs)**.
- Under this, Indian Institute of Management Bengaluru will train **75 graduates for two years in preparing the District skill plan**.

### Nari Shakti Puraskar

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** gave away the **Nari Shakti Puraskar to 15 women** in Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The Nari Shakti Puraskar was given on the **occasion of International Women's Day on 8th March 2020**.

### 4 Indian Airports Among Best Aerodromes in World

- **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** has said in a press release on 9th March 2020 that **four AAI airports have been adjudged the best in the world**.
- In the recently announced **2019 ASQ awards**, **Chandigarh, Mangaluru, Trivandrum and Lucknow aerodrome** has been named best among the world.

### Committee on Kisan Rail Formed Under MAFW

- The government has formed a **committee on Kisan Rail under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- The initiative has been taken to **increase farmers' income by helping in the supply chain of farm produce** and promote a **flawless supply chain of perishable products**.

### "Udyam Sakhi" Portal Launched

- The **"Udyam Sakhi" Portal** was launched by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) on **8th March 2018 on the occasion of International Women's Day**.
- The portal is a network for **nurturing entrepreneurship and creating business models** for low-cost products and services in order **to empower women and make them self-reliant** and self-sufficient.

### GOI Notified New POCSO Rules

- The **POCSO Act was enacted in 2012**, to Protect the Children from Offences of Sexual Assault, Sexual harassment and pornography for safeguarding the interest and well-being of children.
- It is a **gender-neutral Act** and defines a child as any person **below eighteen years of age**.

### Crime Multi Agency Centre

- The **National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC)** was also launched at the occasion for professional quality e-Learning services on cybercrime investigation to police officers, judges, prosecutors and other stakeholders.
- The **NCRB** is responsible for collecting and analysing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws.

### GOI Put Masks and Hand Sanitizers Under the Essential Commodities Act

- The government has amended the Schedule of the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955** to bring these items under the EC Act.
- The step is taken in view of the ongoing **outbreak of COVID-19 (Corona Virus)** and non-availability of the **masks (2 ply & 3 ply surgical masks, N95 masks) and hand sanitizers**.

### Cabinet Approved Hike in MSP for Copra

- The **MSP for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) for milling copra** has been raised to **Rs 9960 per quintal** and for **ball copra to Rs 10300 per quintal** for 2020 season.
- The approval is based on recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.

## BANKING

### India's Forex Reserves Jumped to All-Time High of \$481.5 Billion

- **RBI data** showed that **India's foreign exchange reserves** jumped to hit a **new all-time high of \$481.54 billion in the week ended 28th February 2020**.
- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** announced a **cut in corporate tax rates** on 20th September 2019 and since then the reserves have been rising week-on-week.

### Moody Slashed India's GDP to 5.3% for 2020

- Moody's had reduced India's growth projection for the **calendar year 2020 to 5.4% from 6.6% on 17th February 2020.**
- In less than a month's time, it has again slashed the **growth projection from 5.4% to 5.3% for 2020 in its latest "Global Macro Outlook 2020-2021".**

#### **Sensex Biggest Single Day Loss**

- The sharpest fall was registered in **banking, consumer durables, metal and oil and gas stocks.**
- The previous biggest fall for Sensex was on **24th August 2015** when the index closed 1,624 points lower at 25,741.

#### **SBI Reduced FD Rates for 2nd Time**

- Interest rates on **FDs maturing in one-year and above** have been reduced by **10 basis points.**
- An **interest rate of 5.90%** against 6 % earlier, will be applicable on **FD with One-year to less than two-year tenor.**

#### **2018-19 Recorded Highest FDI Inflow**

- **Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal**, in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha said that the **FDI inflow stood at the highest ever for the fiscal year 2018-19.**
- In **2018-19**, the foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow stood at a record **62 billion US dollars.**

#### **Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2020**

- The IBC (Amendment) Bill 2020 was **passed by the Lok Sabha** on 6th March 2020 and **received the Rajya Sabha** nod on 12th March 2020.
- The bill aims to **help ring-fence successful bidders of insolvent companies** from risk of criminal proceedings for **offences committed by previous promoters.**

#### **India's Current Account Deficit**

- The data showed that the **CAD eased to 0.2% of GDP in the December quarter (3rd quarter)** from 0.9% of GDP in the September quarter.
- The CAD accounted for **2.7% of the GDP in the year-ago period.**

#### **RBI Announced US Dollar Sell/Buy Swap**

- The **US dollar sell/buy swap** is announced by RBI observing the mismatch in the US dollar liquidity across the world.
- Due to **COVID 19 outbreak, a slump in international crude prices and a decline in bond yields in advanced economies**, financial markets worldwide are facing intense selling pressures on extreme risk aversion.

## **INDEX AND RANKING**

#### **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**

- **Mukesh Ambani** is no longer Asia's richest man, relinquishing the title to **Jack Ma, co-founder and former executive chairman of Alibaba Group.**
- Jack Ma has topped the list with a **\$44.5 billion fortune.**

## IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
21 <sup>st</sup> June 2020	International Yoga Day	For the first time, the event will be taking place in a high altitude location like Leh.

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

### CBDT named 3 Nodal Officers on Board VSV Scheme

- The three senior CBDT members namely, **Seema Patra, PK Dash and Prabhaskar Shankar** will act as nodal officers between the ministries allocated to them.
- The CBDT has directed field officers to “escalate” the issue with these officers in the event a public-sector undertaking (PSUs) expresses reservation over settling tax disputes under the scheme.

### Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan

- The GAA has been launched by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** and is organised under the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)**.
- It is a pioneering and historic **exploratory open-water rafting and kayaking expedition** on the Ganga River.



DEFENCE

### Wings India 2020

- The **Wings India**, four-day **civil aviation business exhibition and air show**, is Asia’s largest civil aviation biennial event.
- The event is being **organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Airports Authority of India** along with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)**.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### MNRE Removed Tariff Caps for Solar, Wind Power Auctions

- The removal of tariff caps was the longstanding industry demand of the industry, as it **slowed down the pace of adding renewable generation capacities**.
- The renewable energy generation was slowed to **8.6 Giga-watt (GW) in FY 19 from 11.3 GW and 11.8 GW in FY17 and FY18, respectively**.

### North Korea Fires Three Projectiles

- The projectiles were launched from the **coastal town of Sondok area in South Hamgyong province**.
- Earlier, North Korea fired **two short-range missiles** off the east coast into the sea on 2nd March after a three-month halt.

### India: 5th Country to Isolate Covid-19 Virus Strain

- **11 strains of the Covid-19** have been isolated by the **National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune**.
- **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, the apex health research body in the country, has expanded its network of labs equipped to test COVID-19 to **65 from 51**.

