

Week 1 Current Affairs Update

1st- 7th April 2020

EVENTS

NATIONAL

SOCIAL

ANDHRA GOVT. STARTS DOORSTEP PENSION PAYMENT



DATE: 1st April, 2020

The Andhra Pradesh government has started distributing pensions through door-to-door delivery to over 58 lakh beneficiaries using its 2.5 lakh volunteer force amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

Key Highlights:

- The pension would be disbursed starting from April 1, 2020. The decision is expected to benefit many people including widows, old-aged persons and single women.
- Old people, toddy tappers, single women, widows, fishermen, weavers, traditional cobblers and folk artists will get an amount worth Rs 2,250, people with disabilities, dappu artists and transgenders will receive an amount of Rs 3,000.
- Under this scheme, the people suffering from chronic diseases or are undergoing kidney dialysis at government and network hospitals will get an amount of Rs 10,000.

CIVIL SERVICES ASSOCIATIONS FORM AN INITIATIVE CALLED 'CARUNA'



CARUNA

CIVIL SERVICES ASSOCIATIONS REACH
TO SUPPORT IN NATURAL DISASTERS

Civil servants launch 'Caruna' initiative to fight Coronavirus

DATE: 4th April, 2020

Associations representing officers of Central Civil Services, including the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and the Indian Police Service (IPS), have created an initiative called 'Caruna [Civil Services Associations Reach to Support in Natural Disasters]' to assist and supplement the government's efforts to battle against Corona Virus (COVID-19).

Key Highlights:

- CARUNA will help support initiatives of the government on a real time basis.
- It also the required information with health ministry and MyGovindia and the task forces set up by the central and state governments.
- The Caruna platform has formed a 10-day action plan for operationalisation of support to centre & state governments and formed themes like 'threads on slack' as capacity building programme for healthcare workers & doing works including database collation of health equipment manufacturers, reducing migration-related problems, working on food security related issues with specific responsibilities.

NHA PARTNERED WITH UBER TO PROVIDE TRANSPORT SERVICES TO HEALTHCARE WORKERS



DATE: 4th April, 2020

National Health Authority (NHA) partnered with Uber India to provide 24/7 free UberMedic transport services to India's frontline healthcare workers and hospitals engaged in the treatment of COVID-19 patients.

Key Highlights:

Initially Uber will facilitate the provision of 150 cars free of cost to support medical facilities in Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Prayagraj, Patna via UberMedicservice.

Key Highlights:

- The Vehicle supplied to NHA will be equipped with roof-to-floor plastic sheeting enclosing the driver's seat, thereby acting as a protective barrier between rider and driver.
- The drivers will also be provided with hand sanitisers, gloves, disinfectant sprays and face masks and will also provide dedicated phone service to the riders who use this service.
- UberMedic car will be disinfected after every ride to ensure the safety and hygiene standards in line with Government guidelines.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

PRIME MINISTER GARIB KALYAN YOJANA



Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan
Yojana प्रधानमंत्री गरीब कल्याण योजना

DATE: 1st April, 2020

All the Indian states have been asked to implement Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Yojana within the next week.

Key Highlights:

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting announced that the process will be carried out in a staggered manner to ensure social distancing.
- This move will involve large cash transfers to the beneficiaries.
- This was shared during a meeting organised by Cabinet Secretary with all the Chief Secretaries and DGPs of the 80 crore poor people will to get 5 kg wheat or rice and 1 kg of preferred pulses, 20 crore women Jan Dhan account holders to get Rs 500/month for free for the next three months.
- Increase in MNREGA wage to Rs 202 a day from Rs 182 to benefit 13.62 crore families.
- states on April 1, 2020.
- Under this scheme insurance cover of Rs 50 Lakh will be provided to each health worker fighting COVID-19.

AROGYA SANJEEVANI INSURANCE POLICY TO COVER COVID-19

AROGYA SANJEEVANI POLICY



DATE: 2nd April, 2020

On 1st April, The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has announced to start ArogyaSanjeevani insurance policy to cover COVID-19 hospitalisation expenses.

Key Highlights:

- This policy is the, standard health insurance policy of all general and health insurance companies and it will cover all hospital expenses for COVID-19 patients.
- The IRDAI has approved the basic ‘ArogyaSanjeevani’ insurance policy for all 29 general and health insurance companies. Each of the insurance companies has been given the right to price the product.
- The cost of premium would roughly be around Rs 1000 for coverage up to every 1 lakh.
- The customers would also be able to opt for coverage up to Rs 5 lakh, the rough cost for which would be around Rs 5000. The insurance policy will offer health expenses between Rs 1 lakh and Rs 5 lakh.
- It will be available for a period of one year in multiples of Rs. 50,000.
- The insurance can be availed through both individual and family insurance plans.
- It can be availed by anyone above the age of 18 years and up to the age of 65 years.
- The maximum age limit to purchase the policy is 65 years.
- If anyone already have a policy, you can keep extending it, even over the age of 65.
- So essentially it’s a lifetime policy.

BANKING

3-MONTH MORATORIUM ON LOAN PAYMENTS



DATE: 1st April, 2020

The Public sector banks have announced deferment of EMI payments on loans to customers for a period of three months due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Key Highlights:

- The RBI had earlier urged all the lending institutions to allow a three-month moratorium on loan payments.
- The public sector banks such as the State Bank of India, UCO Bank, Syndicate Bank, Bank of Baroda, Punjab and Sind Bank and Canara Bank have announced the offer of the moratorium to customers through tweets.
- On March 27, the RBI through an official notification announced the contours of the COVID-19 regulatory package.
- The EMI moratorium was one the relief packages. In respect of all term loans (including agricultural term loans, retail and crop loans), all commercial banks, co-operative banks, all-India financial institutions, and NBFCs (including housing finance companies) were permitted to grant a moratorium of three months on payment of all instalments falling due between March 1, 2020, and May 31, 2020.

HEALTHCARE

DRDO DEVELOPS NEW BIO SUIT



DATE: 3rd April, 2020

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed a new bio suit with seam sealing glue to keep all the health care professionals involved in the care of COVID-19 patients safe from the deadly virus.

Key Highlights:

- Several DRDO scientists have applied their expertise in the field of coating, textile and nanotechnology to come up with the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) with a specific type of fabric coating.
- The industry is preparing to produce the bio suit in large quantities, to meet the increasing shortage of personal protective equipment in the nation.
- At present, Kusumgarh Industries is producing the raw material- the coating material.
- The complete suit is being manufactured by another vendor. At present, the production capacity is 7,000 suits per day.

JWTPVT.LTD.DEVELOPSTECHNOLOGY“SCITECHAIRONNEGATIVE ION GENERATOR”



DATE: 5th April, 2020

Jclean weather Technology private limited, company of Science & Technology (Scitech) Park, Pune has developed a technology- “ScitechAiron negative ion generator” to control viral, bacterial and fungal infections in closed environments can clean the air & disinfect areas caused by COVID-19 positive cases & suspects.

Key Highlights:

- This technology ensures the well-being of staff, doctors and nurses working around the clock in quarantine facilities by improving their disease resistance power and ability to fight viruses.
- The technology is developed under the National Initiative for Development and Harnessing Innovations Promoting and Accelerating Young and Aspiring technology entrepreneurs (NIDHI-PRAYAS) program initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- The SciTech Airon ionizer machine generates negatively charged ions at approx 10 ions/sec.
- The effectiveness of the ion generator has been found in a variety of pathogens such as influenza virus, coxsackie virus, polio virus, human coronavirus, allergies, bacteria and fungi.

AEROBIOSYS INNOVATIONS DEVELOPS LOW-COST VENTILATOR CALLED 'JEEVANLITE'



DATE: 7th April, 2020

In view of increasing cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in the country, Aerobiosys Innovations Private Limited, a start-up incubated at The Center for Healthcare Entrepreneurship (CfHE) in the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) – Telangana, has designed a low cost portable emergency ventilator called 'JeevanLite'. JeevanLite with internet access can be run through the mobile app.

Key Highlights:

- Apart from this, it will also run on the battery for up to 5 hours so that the patient does not have any discomfort during the power cut.
- Every breath of the patient will be recorded and will reach the doctor operating it from the app to enable telemedicine support.
- This device can also be connected to an oxygen cylinder and can operate on its own in ambient air.
- The price of this product has been fixed at Rs 1 lakh & the design for manufacturing of the device will be delivered by first week of April 2020.

AGRICULTURE

ENAM GETS NEW FEATURES



DATE: 3rd April, 2020

The new features of eNAM have been introduced to strengthen the agricultural marketing and reduce the need of the farmers to visit mandi to sell their produce.

Key Highlights:

- eNAM was launched by centre in 2014 and 585 mandis are already connected with it and another 415 mandis will be brought under the platform soon.
- eNAM gives an alternative medium to the farmers apart from the traditional commission agent system.
- Small farmers can also take a loan against eNWRs up to 75 % of the crop value with a concessional interest of 7 %.
- The government added two new features to the electronic national agriculture market (eNAM) recently to help the farmers to sell their produce more conveniently at the different warehouse and collection centres set up by the Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO's).
- With the rising need to decongest mandis to fight against Coronavirus, the two new software modules offer an alternative to the farmers to sell their crops.

TAMIL NADU TOPPED IN MICRO-IRRIGATION COVERAGE



DATE: 6th April, 2020

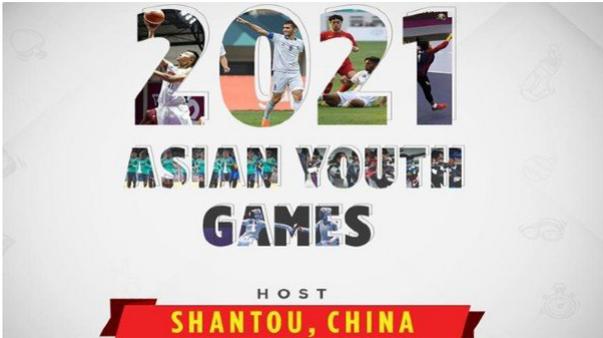
Tamil Nadu has topped the all-India level for micro-irrigation (MI), under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), with coverage of 2,06,853.25 hectares for financial year 2019-20.

Key Highlights:

- The state is followed by Karnataka and Gujarat.
- The cumulative total coverage of MI during 2015-2020 has been topped by Karnataka followed by Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat.
- Tamil Nadu occupies the fourth spot. At the all-India level, 43.71 lakh hectares of land were brought under micro irrigation in the last 5 years.
- To achieve this target Tamil Nadu government had started providing additional subsidy to what was provided by the Centre to small and marginal farmers and big farmers through a website "Micro Irrigation Management Information System" (MIMIS).
- It had also removed 12% goods and services tax (GST) on MI components. The state has provided options to farmers for the purchase of MI components by identifying 45 firms.

SPORTS

CHINA TO HOST ASIAN YOUTH GAMES IN 2021



DATE: 3rd April, 2020

China will host the 3rd edition of Asian Youth Games from November 20 to 28, 2021.

Key Highlights:

- The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has announced this decision in a letter to all the Asian member nations on April 3, 2020.
- The council has decided the dates and venue of the game after coordination with the Shantou 3rd Asian Youth Games Organising Committee (SAYGOC).
- The Games will be held in Shantou, a city on the eastern coast of Guangdong, China.
- Asian Youth Games
- It is a multi-sport event that is held once in every four years with the athletes participating from all over Asia. It is organized by The Olympic Council of Asia. The Games are also considered as the second largest sports event after the Asian Games. For the first time Asian Youth Games were held in Singapore in 2011 and then in China in 2013, where more than 2500 athletes took part.

SPACE

NASA'S ARTEMIS: FIRST HUMAN BASE CAMP ON MOON'S SOUTH POLE BY 2024



DATE: 7th April, 2020

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) unveiled its plan to setup 'Artemis', the first human base camp on Moon's South Pole by 2024.

Key Highlights:

The program aims to land first woman and next man on the moon by 2024.

- The plan is to make a one to two-month stay at the South Pole of the moon to learn more about it and the universe.
- The base camp on moon will need infrastructure for power, waste disposal and communications, besides radiation shielding and a landing pad.
- The Artemis program is carried out by NASA along with European Space Agency (ESA), the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), Canadian Space Agency (CSA) and the Australian Space Agency (ASA).



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PEOPLE

NATIONAL

ECONOMY

MADHABI PURI BUCH



DATE: 5th April, 2020

WHY IN NEWS: Her whole time member of SEBI has been extended by a period of 6 months (till October 4, 2020).

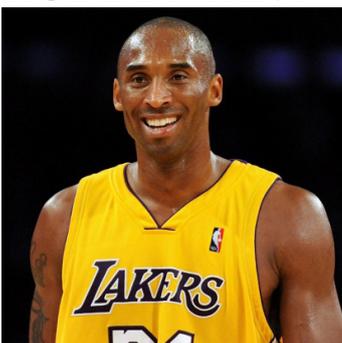
Key Highlights:

- The Government has extended the appointment of Madhabi Puri Buch as a whole time member (WTM) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- She was appointed as a WTM of SEBI for a period of 3 years in April 2017 whereas all the appointed members and Chairman of SEBI were only men from the public sector, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or the Indian Administrative Service (IAS).
- She was not only the first woman to be appointed as a WTM of SEBI but also the first person from the private sector.

INTERNATIONAL

SPORT

KOBE BRYANT



DATE: 7th April

WHY IN NEWS: He will be posthumously inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame

Key Highlights:

- American Basketball player & 5 time NBA champion Kobe Bryant will be posthumously inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, Springfield, Massachusetts along with 8 honourees.
- Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame is an American history museum and hall of fame that serves as the most complete library for basketball in addition to promoting and preserving basketball history.
- It is named after Canadian-American physician and inventor of basketball, James Naismith.

OBITUARIES

SPORTS

TONY LEWIS



DATE: 3rd April

He passed away at the age 78.

Key Highlights:

- Tony Lewis was a co-inventor of the Duckworth-Lewis method.
- He was a former University professor who along with mathematician Frank Duckworth devised the Duckworth-Lewis method to settle weather-affected cricket matches.
- The formula was first used in the match between Zimbabwe and England in 1997 and the method was later adopted by International Cricket Council (ICC) in 1999.
- Tony Lewis was born in Bolton and was a former lecturer in Management Science at the University of the West of England.
- He retired in January 2008, as a lecturer in Quantitative Research Method from Oxford Brookes University.

POLITY

GOVERNMENT REDEFINES DOMICILE RULE FOR J&K



Date: 1st April 2020

Union Government has redefined domicile rules for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

Key Highlights:

- This new rule is issued under the Section 3A of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Adaptation of State Laws Order 2020, under the Jammu and Kashmir civil services decentralisation and recruitment Act.
- According to this now a person residing in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir for at least 15 years or has studied for a period of seven years in J&K and appeared in Class 10 or 12 examinations will now be eligible to be a permanent resident of the UT.
- According to Section 5A of the act all the Gazetted and non-Gazetted Class IV posts are reserved for domiciles of the UT.
- The new domicile rule also includes children of those central government officials, all India services officers, officials of PSUs and autonomous body of central government, public sector banks, officials of statutory bodies, officials of central universities and recognised research institutes of central government who have served in the UT of J&K for a total period of 10 years or children of parents who fulfill any of the conditions in sections.

- -Additionally, persons registered as a migrant by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants) in the UT of J&K, will also be included in the definition.

BANKING

MAJOR INTEREST RATE CUTS ON SAVINGS SCHEMES



Date: 1st April 2020

The Union Government has announced different categories of cuts in the interest rates of various small Saving Schemes to generate fund to fight Covid-19.

Key Highlights:

- This will also help the government as country is witnessing major economic crisis as a result of country wise lockdown.
- The Union government exercising its powers conferred under Rule 9(1) of the Government Saving Promotion General Rules, 2018 has decreased the Interest Rates on small savings schemes for the first quarter (Q1-April to June) of FY 2020-21.
- The high small savings interest rates for bid banks have been also cut on their deposit rates immediately for the period from April 1, 2020, to 30th June 2020.
- The Interest rate on public provident fund (PPF) scheme has been lowered to 7.1 % for Q1FY 20-21 which is the lowest interest rate offered since 1977.
- The Interest rate on five year Recurring deposit (5Y RD) has been lowered to 5.8 %
- Similarly the Interest rate on five year National Savings Scheme (5Y NSC) has been slashed to 6.8 %

SPORTS**WIMBLEDON TENNIS TOURNAMENT CANCELLED**

Date: 2nd April 2020

The organizers of the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament have cancelled this year tournament in view of the world wide corona virus pandemic.

Key Highlights:

- The decision to cancel the prestigious grand slam event is historic since it was last cancelled during World War-II.
- The organizers -All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) announced the cancellation of one of the oldest annual tennis tournaments.
- The mega event was scheduled between June to July this year.
- The next edition of the tournament will be during same period in 2021.
- Prior to it in the history of Wimbledon it has been cancelled during 1915 to 1918 due to World War I and from 1940 to 1945 due to World War II.
- It should be noted that the AELTC will be getting a huge USD 114 million for cancellations as insurance protection.

ECONOMY**UN-DESA ESTIMATES SHRINKAGE OF GLOBAL ECONOMY BY 1%**



UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Date: 3rd April 2020

According to estimation of Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of United Nations (UN), the global economy could shrink by 1%.

Key Highlights:

- The World Economic Forecasting Model estimates that, the shrinkage of 1% in global economy during 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic
- It is noted that the earlier forecast was estimated to be 2.5%.
- The severity of the economic impact largely depends on 2 factors the duration of restrictions on the movement of people and economic activities in major economies; and the actual size and efficacy of fiscal responses to the crisis.
- According to this model in best case scenario the global growth will fall to 1.2% in 2020 while in worst-case scenario, the global output would shrink by 0.9%

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HEALTHCARE

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES COVID-19 TRACKING APP



Date: 3rd April, 2020

The Union Government has launched mobile tracking app for COVID-19.

Key Highlights:

- This 1st comprehensive coronavirus (COVID-19) tracking app is named as 'Arogya Setu.
- The app is applicable for both Android and iOS users to connect health services with the people to fight the novel coronavirus outbreak.
- The app notifies the user via smartphone location data & Bluetooth if any Covid infected with person is within 6 feet radius.
- The Arogya setu app has been developed by the National Informatics Center (NIC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- The Arogya setu app has many more features like a chatbot which can identify the symptoms of coronavirus and it answers the users queries.
- It is available in 11 languages including English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, among others and it is now in beta version with almost all the functions of beta version.
- The Government has verified that the Arogya Setu app is fully secured and the users data is not compromised during its application.

BIONE LAUNCHES INDIA'S 1ST HOME SCREENING TEST KIT FOR COVID-19



DATE: 5th April, 2020

Bengaluru based startup Bione, a genetic and microbiome testing firm has launched India's 1st home screening test kit for COVID-19 & is approved by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Key Highlights:

- To take the test using the kit one has to clean the finger with an alcohol swab and use the lancet provided to finger-prick & the provided cartridge reads the results within 5-10 minutes.
- The easy-to-use kit will be deployed in the market after quality checks & approvals from the regulatory authority.
- The prices of the kit ranges from Rs 2,000 to 3,000 & it will be delivered within 2-3 days of ordering.
- Regardless of the results in the screening kit, the company advises people to undergo laboratory testing if someone shows signs of coronavirus.

INDIAN LAB DEVELOPS ANTIMICROBIAL COATING FOR PPES



Date: 5th April 2020

Key Highlights:

- Research personnel at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru has developed an antimicrobial coating for PPEs
- The Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) are most important in preventing transmission of the virus not only in treatment centres but also during various other related activities.
- These Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) include such as masks, gowns, gloves, masks, face shields etc.
- The antimicrobial coating on these PPEs used by health workers be have been found to be effective in imparting enhanced protection and safety .
- The proven efficiency of the coating in 100% destruction of an enveloped virus like influenza virus shows that the coating may also like be effective in destroying another enveloped virus corona virus on contact
- This technology is going to benefit thousands of health personnel involved in caring Covid- 19 patients.

NASAL PASSAGE GEL FOR INACTIVATE CORONA VIRUS



Date: 6th April 2020

Key Highlights:

- The prestigious Indian Institute of technology (IIT), Bombay is developing a nasal passage gel for capturing and inactivation of novel corona virus.
- The Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering at IITB has developed this gel to prevent the entry of the coronavirus at nasal passage which is a major entry point of the coronavirus.
- The first component of the strategy is to inhibit binding of viruses to host cells to reduce host cell infection by the virus.
- In second component the biological molecules would be incorporated which would inactivate the trapped viruses.

- The project is approved by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

EDUCATION

HRD MINISTRY LAUNCHES COVID-19 STUDENT HELPLINE



Date: 4th April 2020

Key Highlights:

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched an important portal for students.
- The Union Minister of Human Resource Development Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched this unique MHRD-All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) COVID-19 Student Helpline.
- This helpline Portal is launched to address the difficulties faced by students due to closure of colleges & hostels due to national lockdown.
- This helpline portal connects people who are willing to help those in need like, accommodations, food, attendance, exams, etc.
- The students are also affected like other citizens and it is one of the ways to connect the students with their studies and the study group, teachers etc.

AGRICULTURE

FARMER SCIENTIST DEVELOPS BIO-FORTIFIED CARROT VARIETY



Date: 7th April 2020

Key Highlights:

- A farmer scientist from Junagadh district has developed a Biofortified carrot variety.
- This benefitting more than 150 local farmers in the area
- This Biofortified carrot variety is named Madhuban Gajar, and is high in β -carotene and iron content
- This variety is developed by farmer scientist Vallabhhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya
- Several farmers are benefitting from this biofortified carrot variety
- Madhuban Gajar is benefitting more than 150 local farmers in the area.
- The variety is being cultivated in more than 1000 hectares of land in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and other states during the last 3 years
- The average yield of 40-50 t/ha, has become the main source of income to the local farmers.