

Current Affairs:15-20.03.2022

Book on Prime Minister's 20 years journey in politics 'Modi@20:' to hit stands in April 2022

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has announced to release a book on the life of Prime Minister Narendra Modi titled **Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery**. The book captures political life of PM Modi's past 20 years, ranging from his tenure as Gujarat CM to Prime Minister of India. The book is a compilation of pieces written by intellectuals & experts and has been edited & compiled by **BlueKraft Digital Foundation**. It is set to hit stands in April 2022.

Power Minister RK Singh inaugurates India's first Virtual Smart Grid Knowledge Centre in Manesar

The **Union Minister for Power, Shri Raj Kumar Singh** virtually launched the first of its kind **Virtual Smart Grid Knowledge Center (Virtual SGKC) and Innovation Park**, as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav Programme. The Virtual SGKC will give a digital footprint of the physical setup of SGKC, established by POWERGRID in 2018 at its centre in Manesar, Haryana. Virtual SGKC is housed within the **POWERGRID centre in Manesar** and the solutions which are physically present at SGKC premises will also be hosted on this platform. The Virtual SGKC is conceptualized and developed by POWERGRID with support from **Ministry of Power** and technical support from **USAID**. The new initiative will prove to be one of the leading Centers of Excellence globally to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and research in smart grid technologies.

India approves US\$1 bn line of credit for Sri Lanka to help pay for key imports

The Government of **India** has approved **USD 1 billion line of credit (LoC) for Sri Lanka**, to help the Island nation for **importing food, essential items and medicine**. Sri Lankan Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa is visiting India on March 15, 2022 to seal the deal. The island nation Sri Lanka is currently facing severe economic crisis. The LoC is being extended by India in line with its efforts to assist its neighbouring country in fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and to mitigate its adverse impact and its developmental priorities.

Tapan Singhel reappointed as MD & CEO of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance has extended the tenure of its current managing director & chief executive officer (MD & CEO) **Tapan Singhel** for another five years. The new term of Mr Singhel will begin from **April 1, 2022**. It's worth noting that Singhel has already completed 10 years as the MD & CEO of the company.

Katalin Novak becomes first women to be elected as President of Hungary

The **Parliament of Hungary** has elected **Katalin Eva Novak** to be the **first female President of the country**. The 44 year-old Novak won the 2022 Presidential election by a two-thirds majority. She won 72.87% of the overall voting or 137 seats out of the total 199 seats. Katalin Novák will take over the new role from May 2022. She will succeed Janos Ader.

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Indian batsman Shreyas Iyer and New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr named ICC Players of the Month for February 2022

Shreyas Iyer, the fast-rising India batter, has won the ICC ‘Men’s Player of the Month’ for February 2022. Among the women category, **New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr** bagged the ICC ‘Women’s Player of the Month’ award for February 2022.

National Vaccination Day 2022: 16 March

In India, the **National Vaccination Day (also known as National Immunisation Day (IMD))** is observed on **16 March** every year, to convey the importance of vaccination to the entire nation. The day was first observed in the year **1995**. It was on March 16, 1995 that India started **Pulse Polio Programme** and the first dose of Oral Polio Vaccine was given. In 2022, the National Immunization Day is important since the Government of India has started the COVID-19 vaccination for children between 15 to 18 years of age and booster dose for senior citizens.

Former Andhra Pradesh Governor ‘Ms Kumudben Joshi’ passes away

Kumudben Manishankar Joshi, the former **Governor of Andhra Pradesh** has passed away. She was 88. Ms. Joshi served as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh from 26 November 1985 to 7 February 1990. She was the second female Governor of the state after Sharda Mukherjee. Joshi had been a member of the Rajya Sabha thrice.

International Kabaddi star Sandeep Singh Nangal passes away after being shot dead

Indian international kabaddi player Sandeep Singh Nangal has passed away. He was 40. As per the reports, Sandeep was shot dead during a kabaddi tournament in Jalandhar, Punjab. Besides being a regular member of the Indian national team, Sandeep was a frequent player in leagues in UK, US, New Zealand, Australia.

WWE legend Razor Ramon passes away at 63

The two-time **WWE Hall of Famer, Scott Hall** has passed away, due to heart attack. He was 63. His tenure with World Wrestling Federation (WWF, now WWE) began in May 1992. With WWE, he was famously known by his ring name as ‘Razor Ramon’. He went on to become a four-time WWE Intercontinental champion.

India’s Maternal Mortality Ratio improved to 103 in 2017-19

The **maternal mortality ratio (MMR)** in India showed significant improvement at **103 for the period 2017-19**, according to the official data released by the Registrar General of India on March 14, 2022. This rate was 122 in 2015-17 and 113 in 2016-18. MMR is defined as the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births during a given period.

M V Ram Prasad Bismil becomes longest vessel to sail on River Brahmaputra

The **MV Ram Prasad Bismil** has become the **longest vessel ever to sail on the river Brahmaputra**. The 90 meters long and 26 meters wide flotilla, loaded with a draft of 2.1 meters, achieved the feat on March 15, 2022, when it successfully completed the pilot run of heavy cargo movement from **Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Haldia, to Pandu port in Guwahati**.

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The cargo vessel was flagged off from the Haldia Dock in Kolkata along with two barges (DB Kalpana Chawla and DB APJ Abdul Kalam) by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (PSW), Sarbananda Sonowal on February 16, 2022 and docked at Pandu port in Guwahati on March 15, 2022. Carrying 1793 metric tonnes of steel rods, the vessel covered the distance from Haldia to Pandu through Bangladesh on the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR).

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates India's first Green Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) Toyota Mirai

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the world's most advanced technology-developed Green Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) Toyota Mirai at New Delhi on March 16, 2022. **Toyota Mirai is India's first Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV)**, which is completely powered by Hydrogen. Toyota Mirai has been launched by **Toyota Kirloskar Motor Pvt Ltd and International Center for Automotive Technology (ICAT)** under a pilot project, to study and evaluate the performance of Toyota Mirai on Indian roads and climatic conditions. This is a first of its kind project in India which will create a Green Hydrogen based ecosystem in the country and help India to become 'Energy Self-reliant' by 2047.

India's First-of-its kind 'World Peace Center' to be established in Gurugram

India's first World Peace Center is soon to come up in **Gurugram**, Haryana, for the establishment of peace and harmony in the world by mental, emotional and character development of the people. The new Centre will be set up by the **New Delhi-based Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti Organisation**, established by eminent Jainacharya and Ambassador of Peace, Dr Lokeshji. The new World Peace Center will come up in Sector 39 of Gurugram opposite Medanta Hospital and adjacent to Delhi-Jaipur Highway.

Gen Bipin Rawat Memorial Chair of Excellence instituted at the United Service Institution of India (USI)

The Indian Army has dedicated a Chair of Excellence in the memory of late Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Bipin Rawat at the **United Service Institution of India (USI)**, on the occasion of his 65th birthday anniversary. The purpose of **Gen Bipin Rawat Memorial Chair of Excellence at USI** will be to conduct research on strategic issues related to the armed forces, with focus on the field of Jointness and Integration. The Chair will be open to Veterans of three Services and civilians having expertise in the field of National Security. The topic for 2022 research will be **Jointness and Integration in the Context of Land Warfare in India**. Gen MM Naravane, Chief of Army Staff handed over a cheque of **Rs 5 lakhs** to Director, USI, Maj Gen BK Sharma (retd), which will be paid as honourarium to the nominated Chair of Excellence.

Mahanadi Coalfields Limited in Odisha becomes largest coal producing company in India

The **Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL)**, in **Sambalpur, Odisha** has become the leading coal producing company in India. MCL achieved this feat after its overall coal production crossed **157 million tonne (MT)** in the financial year of **2021-22**. Additionally, MCL produced 7.62 lakh tonne of dry fuel on March 12, 2022, which is the highest production in a single day during the current financial year.

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AAP leader Bhagwant Mann takes oath as 18th Chief Minister of Punjab

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader **Bhagwant Mann** has been sworn in as the **18th Chief Minister of Punjab** on March 16, 2022. Mann was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit. The swearing-in ceremony took place at Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of legendary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh. AAP was declared winners, after the party managed to win 92 seats in the 117-member Punjab Assembly.

Sahitya Akademi publishes book-length poem 'Monsoon' by Indian poet-diplomat Abhay K

On the occasion of its 68th anniversary, the **Sahitya Akademi**, India's National Academy of Letters, published a book-length poem titled '**Monsoon**', written by Indian poet-diplomat **Abhay K**. Sahitya Akademi was established on March 12 in 1954. The first President of Sahitya Akademi was Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. The first book published by the Academy was Bhagwan Buddha by D.D. Koshambi in 1956.

2022 FIDE Chess Olympiad will be held in Chennai

India has been picked as the host nation for the **FIDE Chess Olympiad 2022**. The 44th edition of the Olympiad is scheduled to be held in Chennai, from 26th July 2022 to 8th August 2022. This is the **first time that India will host the FIDE Chess Olympiad since its inception in 1927**. The event was originally scheduled to be held in Russia, but FIDE pulled out from there following the Ukraine invasion.

International Day to Combat Islamophobia 2022: 15 March

The U.N. **General Assembly** approved a resolution to proclaim **March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia** every year, starting from 2022. The resolution, adopted by 193-member UN General Assembly, was introduced by Pakistan's ambassador Munir Akram on behalf of **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**, on March 15, 2022. The main objective of International Day to Combat Islamophobia will be curtailing systematic hate speech and discrimination against Muslims; respect for religious symbols and practices; along with the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates FCS Integration complex in Bengaluru, constructed by DRDO using in-house hybrid technology, in record 45 days

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated a seven-storeyed **Flight Control System (FCS) Integration facility in Bengaluru**, Karnataka on March 17, 2022. The facility is housed at **Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE)**, a laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). FCS facility is a state-of-the-art complex constructed by DRDO in record 45 days, using in-house hybrid technology. This hybrid technology has been developed by DRDO with support of **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)**. The FCS facility will support Research & Development (R&D) activities for developing Avionics for Fighter Aircraft and FCS for Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft.

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DCI and Cochin Shipyard joins hand to build country's first indigenous dredger



The **Dredging Corporation of India (DCI)** and **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)** have inked an agreement to build the **first indigenous dredger of the country**. The agreement was signed on March 17, 2022, and the project is estimated to be completed within 34 months, at a cost of around Rs 920 crore. The technical know-how, basic designs, dredging system components of the Project shall be provided by **Holland-based Royal IHC**, the market leader for designing, building and servicing high added-value dredging vessels and dredging equipment.

Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle inaugurated in Madagascar

As part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebration, a **"Green Triangle" named after Mahatma Gandhi, was inaugurated in Antananarivo**, the capital city of Madagascar, on March 16, 2022. The Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle was jointly inaugurated by **India's Ambassador to Madagascar Abhay Kumar** and Mayor of Antananarivo, Naina Andriantsitohaina.

Moody's lowers India's GDP forecast for CY22 to 9.1% amid Russia-Ukraine conflict

Rating agency **Moody's** has revised downwards the economic growth forecast of India by **40 basis points to 9.1 percent** in the **Calendar Year 2022 (CY2022)**, due to adverse effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the global economy. Earlier in February 2022, Moody's estimated India's GDP in CY2022 to 9.5 percent. Moody's has projected India's GDP growth forecast for the Calendar Year (CY) 2023 at **5.4 percent**.

Axis Bank bags IFR Asia 2021 Asian Bank of the Year Award

India's third-largest private sector bank, **Axis Bank**, has won the **IFR Asia's Asian Bank of The Year 2021**. The bank was awarded for its outstanding performance in equity and debt issuance, across all major products and segments.

- Top three global IFR Asia Award for 2021
 1. **Bank of the year: Morgan Stanley**
 2. **Asian Bank of The Year: Axis Bank**
 3. **Issuer of the year: JSW Group**

Elon Musk Tops Hurun Global Rich List 2022; Ambani Ranks 9th Richest

SpaceX and Tesla founder Elon Musk has bagged the top position on the 2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List, with total net worth of \$205 billion. The 2022 M3M Hurun Global Rich List is published by research and luxury publishing group Hurun India in association with realty firm M3M. From India, **Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani** was the only Indian to feature in the top 10 list of '2022 Hurun Global Rich List' to emerge as India's as well as Asia's richest man. Ambani occupied the **ninth rank globally with a net worth of \$103 billion**.

Poland's Karolina Bielawska crowned 2021 Miss World

Karolina Bielawska from Poland has won the title of **Miss World 2021**. She was crowned by 2019 Miss World Toni-Ann Singh of Jamaica. The 70th edition of the Miss World

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international beauty pageant was held on March 16, 2022 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. First Runner-up – Indian-American Shree Saini from the United States

- Second Runner-up – Olivia Yace from Cote d'Ivoire
- **India's representative** – India was represented by **Manasa Varanasi**, the winner of Femina Miss India 2020. She made it to the top 13 but could not get selected in the Top 6 winners list.

Narayan Pradhan selected for 2022 GD Birla Award for Scientific Research

Professor Narayan Pradhan has been selected for the **31st GD Birla Award for Scientific Research** for his outstanding contribution in the field of material sciences. Prof. Pradhan is a member of the faculty at the School of Material Sciences, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Jadavpur.

Global Recycling Day 2022: 18 March

The **Global Recycling Day** is observed every year on **18th of March** to recognise the importance of recycling as a resource, not waste. Theme for 2022 is “**recycling fraternity**”. The theme recognise the people who put themselves on the frontline to collect waste and recycling during the multiple lockdowns. The Global Recycling Day was created in 2018 by the London-based Global Recycling Foundation to promote the concept and practice of recycling.

World Sleep Day 2022 : 18 March

The **World Sleep Day** is held every year on the **Friday before Spring Vernal Equinox**. In 2022, the World Sleep Day falls on **March 18, 2022**. The theme of 2022 is ‘**Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World**’.

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) celebrates 83rd Raising Day on 19 March 2022

The **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)** celebrated its **83rd Raising Day** with zeal and ceremonial fervour on **19 March 2022**. The 83rd Raising Day parade was organised at the Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu. This was for the first time that the CRPF celebrated its Raising Day outside the national capital. Union Home Minister Amit Shah took the salute at the parade and also presented the Gallantry medals and trophies for exceptional achievements in different categories to CRPF personnel.

NMDC Sign MoU with IIT Kharagpur for drone-based mineral exploration

The **National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. (NMDC)**, has signed an MoU for ‘**Drone-Based Mineral Exploration**’ with IIT Kharagpur. The NMDC Limited is a government owned mineral producer, under Ministry of Steel, and the largest Iron Ore producer in India. With this MoU, NMDC becomes the first CPSE in India to conduct Drone-based Geophysical Surveys and Hyperspectral Studies for Mineral Exploration in the country.

NPCI launches “UPI Lite – On-Device wallet” functionality for UPI user

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) designed the “**UPI Lite – On-Device wallet**” (“**UPI Lite**”) functionality for UPI user for **small value transactions**. In phase 1, UPI Lite will process transactions in near offline mode i.e. debit offline and credit online, and

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at a later point, UPI Lite will process transactions in complete offline mode i.e. debit and credit both offline.

The upper limit of a UPI Lite payment transaction shall be Rs. 200 . The total limit of UPI Lite balance for an “On-device wallet” shall be Rs. 2,000 at any point of time.

RBI issues Regulatory Framework for Microfinance Loans

The Reserve Bank of India has released the framework for Microfinance Loans. The most important points from the exam point of view are given below:

- A microfinance loan is defined as a collateral-free loan given to a household having an annual household **income up to Rs. 3,00,000**.
- RBI has removed the cap on the number of NBFC-MFIs who can provide loans to microfinance borrowers. Instead, it has focused on borrowers’ repayment capacity and accordingly **capped the fixed obligation to income ratio (FOIR) at 50 per cent**.
- The **minimum requirement of microfinance loans for NBFC-MFIs** has been revised to **75 per cent** of the total assets.
- The **maximum limit on microfinance loans for NBFCs other than NBFC-MFIs** has been revised to **25 per cent** of the total assets.

RBI Innovation Hub partners with IIT Madras to boost fintech startups

RBI Innovation Hub (RBIH) and **IIT Madras Incubation Cell (IITMIC)** have signed an MoU to work together in developing the ecosystem necessary to support and scale fintech startups in India. RBIH is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India. **Rajesh Bansal is the CEO of RBI Innovation Hub (RBIH)**. Select startups incubated at IITM Incubation Cell will be considered from time to time by RBIH for co-incubation and thereby receive strategic and operational guidance, training and mentoring sessions by RBIH leadership.

2022 UN World Happiness Report: India Ranks 136th; Finland tops for 5th straight year

India has improved its rank by three spots to acquire **136th** position in the **United Nations’ World Happiness Report** for the year 2022, which ranked 146 countries. In 2021, India’s rank was 139. **Finland** has **topped** the 2022 World Happiness Report, for fifth continuous year. **Afghanistan** has been ranked as the unhappiest country in the world, at 149th position. The World Happiness Report is being published by United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, since 2012. The 2022 World Happiness Report was released on March 18, 2022. It is the **10th edition** of the report.

Jay Shah’s term as President of Asian Cricket Council extended by one year

The **Asian Cricket Council (ACC)** has unanimously extended the tenure of its incumbent **President Jay Shah** for a period of one year. The decision was taken during the annual general meeting of ACC on March 19, 2022. Jay Shah is the **Secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** since 2019. Shah was first appointed as the President of ACC in January 2021, replacing Nazmul Hassan, the President of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

Rajesh Gopinathan re-appointed as MD and CEO of TCS for five years

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The board of IT major **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has announced the re-appointment of **Rajesh Gopinathan as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of the company for five years. His second term will begin from February 21, 2022 to February 20, 2027. Rajesh Gopinathan was first appointed as the CEO and MD of TCS in 2017.



NATO Begins military exercise ‘Cold Response 2022’ in Norway

The **NATO** has organised the massive military drill ‘**Cold Response 2022**’ in Norway from March 14, 2022 and will continue till April 01, 2022. The exercise is held in Norway **every second year**, for NATO Allies and partners. The Norwegian-led exercise provides an opportunity to train together in cold weather conditions over challenging terrain and demonstrates NATO’s ability to respond decisively to any threat, from any direction.

International Day of Happiness 2022: 20 March

Every year the **International Day of Happiness** is celebrated on **March 20**. The day aims to promote happiness as a fundamental human right for all human beings across the world. The theme for 2022 International Day of Happiness campaign is ‘**Build Back Happier**’. The first International Day of Happiness was officially held on 20 March 2013. It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 June 2012.

UN French Language Day 2022: 20 March

The **UN French Language Day** is observed annually on **20 March**. The day was established by UN’s Department of Public Information in 2010. It is one of the six official languages used throughout the Organization, and aims to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as promote equal use of all. March 20 was chosen as the date for the French language since it coincides with the 40th anniversary of the International Organization of La Francophonie, which represents countries and regions where French is a customary language.

World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People 2022: 20 March

The **World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People** is celebrated all over the world on **March 20**. The day is celebrated every year since 2001 by the international community of theatre practitioners to attract the attention of a wider public to the art of theatre for children and young people. The event is basically organised by the ASSITEJ International, an international alliance of professionals involved in theatre for children and young people.

World Sparrow Day 2022: 20 March

World Sparrow Day is celebrated every year on **March 20**. Theme of 2022 World Sparrow Day “**LOVE Sparrows**”. The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of House Sparrow and other common birds to urban environments, and of threats to their populations. The first World Sparrow Day was celebrated in 2010.

World Frog Day 2022: 20 March

The **World Frog Day** is observed annually on **March 20**. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness about the tailless amphibian frogs: found on land and water both.

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The day was created in 2009 with the intention to save many different species of frogs from going extinct.



World Oral Health Day 2022: 20 March

The **World Oral Health Day** is marked every year on **March 20**. The theme for **World Oral Health Day 2021-2023** is: **Be Proud Of Your Mouth**. The day aims to raise global awareness of the issues around oral health and the importance of oral hygiene so that governments, health associations and the general public can work together to achieve healthier mouths and happier lives.