

PRACTICE

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**WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**JULY 2020  
4th Week**

**JULY 23-31**

**PracticeMock**

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## NATIONAL

1. Jitendra Singh, (Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space) has launched the restructured scheme for PM's **Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** 2020 and the web portal ([www.pmawards.gov.in](http://www.pmawards.gov.in)) through video conference.
2. According to the "Special Bulletin on Maternal Mortality in India 2016-18", released by the Office of the Registrar General's Sample Registration System (**SRS**), the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India has declined to **113** in 2016-18 from 122 in 2015-17 and 130 in 2014-2016.
3. Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman informed that so far Rs 8767 crore has been approved for 81 projects under Special Window for Affordable and Mid Income Housing (**SWAMIH**) Investment Fund I. The approved projects will enable the completion of almost 60,000 homes across India.
4. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (**APSEZ**) becomes the 1st Indian port and 7th Port globally to sign up for the Science-Based Targets initiative (**SBTi**). Now, APSEZ is committed to set science-based emissions reduction targets that keep global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. SBTi is a collaboration between CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project), the United Nations Global Compact, World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).
5. The IIT **Banaras** and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to develop a biotechnology based water treatment system for the purification of sewage water flowing into the rivers Ganga and Godavari through the **SPRING Project**. The project is funded by the Ministry of science & technology, Department of biotechnology, India with the European Union.
6. India builds 1km long World's first **electrified rail tunnel** that fits double stack containers. It cuts through Aravalli mountain on the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) near Sohna, Haryana. The project is implemented by the DFCCIL (Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited).
7. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (**TRIFED**) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (**MoTA**) have signed a tripartite MoU with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) – Delhi and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA), a Swadeshi Science Movement under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), a flagship programme under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
8. Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, has announced that the Central Government in collaboration with the World Bank has decided to convert the area of ravines in the region of Gwalior-Chambal belt of Madhya Pradesh into cultivable land.

9. Under the aegis of International Solar Alliance (**ISA**), NTPC Ltd, Largest power generation utility of India plans to establish solar power plants in **Sri Lanka**.

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10. According to the **delta rankings for aspirational districts** by NITI Aayog, **Bijapur** district in Chhattisgarh has topped the list of aspirational districts in Overall Delta Ranking for the Feb-June 2020. The delta rankings for aspirational districts considers an incremental progress in **five developmental areas** viz. Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development and Basic Infrastructure.
11. Green-Agriculture (**Green-Ag**), a project funded by Global Environment Facility (**GEF**) was launched in **Mizoram**, India. Mizoram is first among the 5 states where the project is to be implemented. The other states are Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.
12. Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** which has replaced 34 years old **NPE, 1986**. With this, the Ministry of Human Resource Development will officially be renamed the Ministry of Education (MoE).
13. The first 5 of 36 Rafale fighter jets, from France were landed in **Ambala** in Haryana after covering a distance of nearly 8500 km to join the Indian Air Force (IAF). These fighter jets are manufactured with 13 India Specific Enhancements (ISE), by Dassault Aviation, a French company.
14. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) test fired the Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) named "**Dhruvastra**" (Formerly known as Helicopter launched Nag Missile, "**HELINA**") without Helicopter at the Interim Test Range (ITR) in Balasore, Odisha.
15. Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) provides the drone named "**Bharat**" – indigenously developed by the Chandigarh based laboratory of DRDO, "**Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL)**" to the Indian Army to monitor the high altitude areas and mountain terrains along the line of actual control in the Easter Ladakh (China Border). The Bharat series drones are listed among World's most agile and lightest surveillance drones.
16. A Space start up named Digantara Research and Technology (DRT) which has developed India's first in orbit space debris monitoring and tracking system that works on **LIDAR** (Light Detection and Ranging) technology has been selected by SID (Society for Innovation and Development) incubation program at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

17. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Earth Sciences launched the mobile app "**Mausam**" designed and developed by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)'s Digital Agriculture & Youth (DAY) team, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and India Meteorological Department (IMD).
18. Kerala government announced a new scheme namely "Chief Minister's Entrepreneurship Development Programme" to address the issues of shortage of working capital and availability of credit faced by startups and small entrepreneurs amid COVID-19 pandemic. The programme will be implemented through the Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC).

## STATES

19. The Delhi Cabinet has approved '**Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Yojana**' to deliver ration directly to the homes of beneficiaries. This scheme and Centre's 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme will be implemented on the same day in Delhi.
20. Delhi chief minister, Arvind Kejriwal launched a free website <http://jobs.delhi.gov.in> named '**Rozgaar Bazaar 2020**' via video conference. The portal connects the job seekers and the recruiters on one platform.
21. Haryana Chief Minister (CM) Manohar Lal Khattar launched **e-Sachivalaya portal** (<https://esachivalaya.edisha.gov.in/>), a digital platform to enable people to take online appointments for virtual meetings with the chief minister, deputy CM, ministers and other heads of various departments.

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22. The Punjab government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) – Ropar, for Skill Development in Chandigarh.

## INTERNATIONAL

23. **China** sent a new high-resolution mapping satellite named "**Ziyuan III 03**", developed by the China Academy of Space Technology, into space by Long March-4B carrier rocket.
24. **Russia** for the first time has conducted a successful flight test of the **MGTD-20 gas turbine engine** made by 3Dprinting.
25. **Turkmenistan** became the 25th country who was granted observer status in the World Trade Organization (**WTO**) enabling the nation to establish permanent residence at WTO headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland and monitor its proceedings. Turkmenistan also became the last former Soviet republic to establish formal ties with the trade body.

26. The Republic of **Nicaragua** became the **87th** country to sign the International Solar Alliance (**ISA**) Framework Agreement, an initiative to promote sustainable energy, led by India. Out of the 87 signed countries 67 countries have also ratified the ISA Framework agreement. The headquarters of ISA located at Gurugram, Haryana.
27. The World Health Organization (**WHO**) along with other key bodies had launched **COVID-19 Law Lab (www.COVIDLawLab.org)**. It is a database of laws that countries had implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help countries to establish and implement strong legal frameworks to manage the pandemic across the world. The lab is a joint project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University.
28. The 5th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (**AIIB**) was held virtually from Beijing, China, was originally planned to be held in-person there, on the theme "Connecting for Tomorrow". Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman represented India in the event. **Jin Liqun** Re-elected President of AIIB. AIIB to Hold its First Annual Meeting in the Middle East in the UAE in 202.
29. The reconstruction of a **300-year-old temple**, Sree Sree Joy Kali Matar temple began in Natore, **Bangladesh** with Indian assistance.
30. Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth jointly inaugurated the **new Supreme Court building of Mauritius in Port Louis** through video conference. The Supreme Court building has been constructed with Indian grant assistance of US\$ 30 million and is the first India-assisted infrastructure project within the Mauritius' capital city - Port Louis

## REPORTS & SCHEMES

31. In accordance with the latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (**FRA**) 2020 brought out by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), India has ranked **3rd among the top 10 countries** that have gained in forest areas during 2010-2020 only behind China and Australia. India reported 0.38% annual gain in forest, or 266,000 ha of forest increase every year at an average. The report also states that; India provides maximum employment in forestry sector.
32. As per the new analysis by **Comparitech** on the World's Most Surveilled Cities 2020, in 150 major cities across the globe, **Hyderabad** has positioned in **16th** rank among the list of top 20 cities with the maximum number of Closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance cameras. It has most CCTV surveillance in India. The List was topped by **Taiyuan**, China. The research also highlighted the 20 most populated cities in the world. Delhi ranked 2nd & the list was topped by Tokyo, Japan. The 3rd rank was secured by Shanghai, China.

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33. The New York based United Nations Children’s Fund (**UNICEF**) and **Pure Earth**, an international non-profit organization, have authored and published the first of kind report on the health crisis titled “**The Toxic Truth: Children’s Exposure to Lead Pollution Undermines a Generation of Future Potential**”. The report states that around **1 in every 3** that is around 800 million children across the world has the blood lead level above or at 5 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ).
34. According to the new research titled “**Childcare in a global crisis: The impact of COVID-19 on work and family life**” by the United Nations Children’s Fund (**UNICEF**), 22 million children from South Asian countries (at least 40 million globally), including India, have missed out on early childhood education in their pre-school year due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic closure. In the South Asia region, UNICEF covered Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
35. According to the 7th edition of “International Trade Union Confederation (**ITUC**) **Global Rights Index 2020-The World’s Worst Countries for Workers**”, India became the new entrant in the **10 worst countries for working people** in the world, with a rating of 5 that states “No guarantee of rights”. The index ranked 144 countries on the basis of respect for workers’ rights. The ITUC Global Rights Index depicts world’s worst countries for workers by rating countries on a scale from 1 to 5+ with 1 being the best rating and 5+ the worst rating. India currently in scale 5.

## **ECONOMY & BUSINESS**

36. According to The report titled, ‘**Implications of AI on the Indian Economy**’ by National Association of Software and Services Companies (**NASSCOM**) along with the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and Google, a unit increase in Artificial Intelligence (AI) intensity (measured as the ratio of AI to total sales in firm) can result in a 2.5% increase in India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the immediate term.
37. Nitin Jairam Gadkari, Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MoMSME), launched **www.restartindia.com**, a mentoring platform. It was initiated jointly by Muthoot Fincorp and **INKtalks** to support the MSME sector to restart the business across the nation.

## **FINANCE AND BANKING**

38. The Mumbai headquartered Union Bank of India (**UBI**), after its amalgamation with Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank, has announced a corporate agency agreement with **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** to distribute latter’s policies.

39. The New Delhi based **Airtel Payments Bank** Ltd has partnered with National Skill Development Corporation (**NSDC**) to train and skill the youth in rural India. This will enable them to find employment opportunities and become entrepreneurs in the financial services sector.
40. India's third-largest public sector bank, Bank of Baroda (**BoB**) launched '**Insta Click Savings Account**', a 100% paperless digital self-assisted online savings account. It can be activated in real-time i.e; the customer can transact using the Baroda M Connect Plus application with the MPIN received on the mobile number.
41. The Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) and the Green Climate Fund (**GCF**) agreed to partner toward the "Green Recovery". This is to help hands for the people who are facing the harsh economic impact due to COVID-19 pandemic.
42. The 1st edition of two days long (July 22-23, 2020) world's largest **Global Fintech Fest (GFF)** was held virtually, which was organized by Payments Council of India (PCI) and Fintech Convergence Council (FCC) at National Payments Corporation of India (**NPCI**) under the theme "**Fintech: With and Beyond COVID**". The aim of the fest was to bring together the global FinTech and Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector. During GEF, NPCI launched UPI AutoPAY to ease online recurring payments, and SBM EnKash RuPay Business Card for small business.
43. Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) publicized the "**Report of the Committee for Analysis of QR (Quick Response) Code**" under the chairmanship of Prof. **Deepak B. Phatak** on its website for comments / suggestions of various industry players currently involved in or associated with the use of QR codes.

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44. Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) has agreed to a **USD 400 million** currency swap facility for **Sri Lanka**, valid till November 2022. This will help Sri Lanka to meet its short-term international liquidity requirements and to boost its foreign exchange reserves following the economic crisis resulting from COVID-19. This Currency swap agreement was made under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (**SAARC**) framework.
45. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (**IRCTC**) and Gurugram based **SBI Card** launched a co-branded contactless credit card, **IRCTC -SBI Platinum Card on RuPay** Platform to reward the frequent railway travellers. The card is equipped with Near Field Communication (NFC) technology by which users can facilitate their transactions at the point of sale (POS) machines by Tap and Pay Option.
46. **Bharti AXA General Insurance** has launched its crop insurance campaign, '**Bohot Zaroori Hai**' for farmers in Maharashtra and Karnataka to encourage them about their yield protection and financial security.



47. State Bank of India (**SBI**) provided liquidity support of USD 16.20 million as a COVID-relief for the Government of **Maldives** to overcome liquidity shortage on the occasion of Independence Day of the Maldives.
48. The Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) approved the **3 Million USD** grant (about Rs.22 Crore) from the ADB's Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund (**APDRF**), financed by Japanese government to India to support the Government's emergency response to COVID-19.
49. To enhance the flow of information between taxpayers and tax authorities, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (**CBDT**) has launched a **revised** auto-generated **Form 26AS** namely "**Annual Information Statement (AIS)**" from this assessment year of 2020-2021 w.e.f. June 1. The key difference between the new and old form is that the former will also reflect the details of "specified financial transactions (SFT)" i.e. all high-value transactions of individuals, companies, partnership firms, etc. which are filed with the tax department under Section 285BA of the Income-tax Act, 1961.
50. As stock market data, Reliance Industries Limited (**RIL**) becomes the 1st Indian company to reach Market Capitalisation (m-cap) of **Rs 13 lakh crore**. It becomes the world's 48th largest company by m-cap, ahead of Abbott Labs, Oracle, Chevron and Unilever. The United States listed Reliance Jio among the companies that are becoming "Clean Telcos"
51. Reliance Industries Limited (**RIL**) became the **world's second most valuable energy company**, overtaking American oil giant ExxonMobil after its market capitalisation (m-cap) reached over Rs 14 lakh crore (14.1 trillion or USD 189.3 billion). Aramco tops the list. Note: RIL is the 1st ever Indian company that crossed the m-cap of Rs 14 trillion.

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

52. Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman & CEO Mukesh Ambani has become the world's **fifth-richest man in the world** with an estimated wealth of 75 billion USD, according to the real-time ranking of billionaires by **Forbes**. The list will be updated regularly on every trading day

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## PERSON IN NEWS

53. R. **Narayanawamy**, Professor of Finance and Accounting in Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore was appointed as the **Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA), independent accounting and auditing regulator set up by the Government of India under the Companies Act, 2013.

54. The SBI General Insurance Company Limited announced that it has appointed **Prakash Chandra Kandpal** as its **Managing Director** and Chief Executive Officer.
55. **Tunisian** President Kais Saied appointed **Hichem Mechichi** as its new Prime minister.
56. The **Croatian** parliament approved the new government led by Prime Minister **Andrej Plenkovic** whose Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) party won the most parliamentary seats in the general election. The capital and currency of Croatia are Zagreb & Croatian Kuna respectively.
57. The United Nations Secretary-General **António Guterres** named Indian climate activist **Archana Soreng** among 7 members to his new **Youth Advisory Group** on Climate Change. The members will advise him regularly on accelerating global action and also provide solutions to tackle the worsening climate crisis.

## OBITUARIES

58. Veteran Bollywood Actor **Zaibunnissa** popularly known as **Kumkum** passed away. She was born on 22nd April 1934 in Sheikhpura district, **Bihar**.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

59. **26th July 2020** is celebrated as the 21st **Kargil Vijay Diwas** which marks the 21st anniversary of India's victory against Pakistan under Operation Vijay, launched to recapture the Indian Territories captured by the Intruders of Pakistani army in the Kargil Drass sector in 1999.
60. **24th July 2020** is marked as the 160th **Income Tax day or Aaykar Diwas** by the Income Tax Department. The Income Tax Day has been celebrated in India on 24th July since 2010. In 2010, The Income Tax Department declared July 24th as the annual Income Tax Day to mark the 150th year of this levy, the income tax was first imposed as a duty and came into force on 24th July 1860. Income tax was introduced in India by Sir James Wilson on 24th July 1860.
61. World Health Organisations (WHOs) **World Hepatitis Day** is annually observed on **28th July** to encourage the national and international efforts towards hepatitis and to educate the individuals and general public about the need for global response outlined by WHOs Global hepatitis report 2017. The first World Hepatitis Day was observed on 28th July 2011. The theme of 2020 World Hepatitis Day is "**Hepatitis-free future**" focusing on prevention of Hepatitis B among mothers and new-born.
62. July 28th of every year is celebrated as the **World Nature Conservation Day**. This day is celebrated all over the world to create awareness about the conservation of natural resources and on environmental issues. Aim: To focus our efforts on preserving our natural environment and keeping our home, Earth, healthy.
63. **29th July** is annually celebrated as **International Tiger Day** or the Global Tiger Day to create awareness among the general public on the importance of tiger conservation and protection of their natural habitat and to promote the resolution of the tiger range countries to double the tiger population by 2022. The

first Global Tiger Day was celebrated on 29th July 2011. Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) released a report of **4th All India Tiger Estimation- 2018**, the Status of Tigers Copredators and Prey in India.

64. The United Nations (UN) observed the "**World day against trafficking in Person**" annually on **July 30**. The day is celebrated to raise awareness about the conditions of the victims of trafficking and to protect their rights. Human trafficking is a crime that exploits women, children and men for numerous purposes including forced labour and sex. Theme for 2020 of the day as per United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is "**Committed to the Cause: Working on the Frontline to End Human Trafficking**".
65. The United Nations (UN) International Day of Friendship is observed annually on **July 30** to cherish the bond of friendship which will ultimately help to develop love and peace among human beings. The day is also called Friendship Day. The 1st day was proposed for 30 July in 1958 by the World Friendship Crusade. The UN General Assembly in 2011 proclaimed July 30 as the official **International Day of Friendship**.

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## SPORTS

66. The Minister of State (I/C) of Youth Affairs and Sports, **Kiren Rijju** and Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar announced that **Haryana will host the 4th edition of Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) in 2021** through video conference. The Games will be held in **Panchkula** in Haryana. Star Sports will be the Official Broadcast Partner.

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