

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**AUG 2020
4th Week**

AUGUST 24-31

PracticeMock

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NATIONAL

1. National E-Governance Division and the Common Service Centres (**CSC**) signed a pact to facilitate the delivery of **UMANG** application services through CSCs. UMANG is Unified Mobile Application for New Age Governance.
2. The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has recently released a report on construction waste, according to which, India recycles only **1%** of its demolition and construction waste.
3. The CSIR-CMERI operating under the Ministry of Science and Technology has developed **world largest solar tree**. The tree has an annual capacity of generating 12,000 to 14,000 units of Clean and Green power.
4. The **NITI** Aayog recently launched **Nationally Determined Contributions Transport Initiative for Asia** (NDC-TIA). The initiative was launched to **decarbonize transport** and provide technical support on Green Gas emission reduction measures. The initiative is supported by International Climate Initiative of German Ministry of Environment.
5. The Indian **Railways** has **solarised** more than **960 railway stations**. This is being done to achieve the objective of becoming 100% self-sustainable for all its power needs.
6. The **New Delhi Railway Station** is to be redeveloped by the Rail Land Development Authority at Rs 6,500 crores.
7. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will launch **mental health rehabilitation centre**. The helpline number "1800-599-0019" will help in providing psychological support, psychological crisis management, early screening, mental wellbeing, first-aid, and will also help to prevent deviant behaviour.
8. **Ahmedabad** Railway Division launched the **Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping Machine** at the Ahmedabad Railway station to ensure safe travel for the passengers during the Pandemic. The railways have taken this initiative under the New Innovative Non Fare Revenue Idea Scheme (NINFRIS).

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STATES

9. **Kerala** is to set up its first **International Women Trade Centre** as per terms defined under United Nations Sustainable Development goals. This is first of its kind in India.

10. **Gujarat** Government has announced that the first **sea plane services** of India is to begin from October 31. The first seaplane is to take off from Sabarmati river front to Statue of Unity in Kevadia in Narmada district.
11. **Assam** Cabinet passed a resolution to set up a **Skill University** at **Mangaldoi** in Assam with an investment of Rs 900 crores.
12. The **Karnataka** Government will build **transit homes for migrant workers**. The homes aim to provide better living conditions for the migrant workers. The project is being launched with an inspiration from "Apna Ghar" project of Kerala.
13. **Arunachal Pradesh** State Government passed the resolution to bring the state under **Schedule VI** of Indian Constitution. The sixth schedule of the constitution provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram.
14. **Kerala** has launched **Marine Ambulance** services named **PRATHEEKSHA** to provide more efficient rescue. The Marine Ambulance specializes in providing first aid and also rescue operations.
15. **Odisha** launched a new scheme '**Promotion of Intensive Aquaculture** through Introduction of Bio-floc Technology during the year 2020-21'.
16. **Delhi** Government launched the Fitness Campaign – "**Healthy Body, Healthy Mind**", for the students who are confined in their homes because of the lockdown imposed on Schools and colleges due to COVID-19 pandemic. As a part of the "Healthy Body, Healthy Mind" campaign, a YouTube channel has been started.
17. In order to promote the trading of **GI-tagged Kashmir Saffron**, the Department of Agriculture operating under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare has created an **e-auction portal** in collaboration with NSE-IT.

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INTERNATIONAL

18. The **UAE** Government launched **AGRIOTA**, a new technology driven agricultural commodity trading platform that will bridge the rural farmers from India and the gulf Food Industry. The E-Market place allows the farmers to connect with the UAE food industry directly bypassing intermediaries.
19. World Health Organization announced that the health care workers are to receive COVID-19 vaccine after senior citizens.

20. World Health Organisation declared **Africa polio-free**. The disease is now found only in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
21. **India** and **Bangladesh** will open new **inland waterway** from September 3, 2020. This is based on the agreement signed by the countries in May 2020 on Inland Water Transit and Trade. The number of IBP (Indo-Bangladesh Protocol) routes were increased from eight to ten.
22. The Industrial Ministers of **BRICS** countries attended video **meeting on 5G, industrial internet and Artificial Intelligence**. During the meet, China urged the BRICS countries to strengthen cooperation on digital transformation
23. On August 28, 2020, the longest serving Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe resigned due to health issues.
24. The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry **Piyush Goyal** addressed the Association of South East Asian Nation-India (ASEAN) Business Council meet. During the meet, minister emphasized on **3Cs namely Cooperation, Collaboration and Commitment**.
25. **Russia** released a 40-minute video of detonation of the world's most powerful **hydrogen bomb**.
26. **China** launched its **fifth Gaofen-9 series** satellite named "Gaofen-9 05" along with two smaller payloads viz. Tiantuo-5 and Duo Gongneng Shiyan Weixing through Long March-2D carrier rocket from its Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre (JSLC) in northwest China.
27. The United States Food and Drug Administration (**USFDA**) recently authorized the use of blood plasma therapy for COVID-19 patients. Other countries Plasma Therapy India is already using plasma therapy as a cure to COVID-19.
28. **Google** launched '**The Anywhere School**' initiative in more than 250 countries around the world. The initiative is expected to benefit millions of students who have switched to learning from home, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the initiative, Google will roll out over 50 new features across products like Google Meet, Classroom, G Suite and other products.

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29. The Government of India has decided to provide **smart rural water supply** system under Jal Jeevan Mission, Digital India, Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and Make in India. The Jal Jeevan Mission is being

implemented in the country with the aim of providing clean tap water connection to every rural household by 2024.

30. Ministry of Civil Aviation sanctioned **78 new routes** under **4th round of regional connectivity scheme** (RCS). So far 766 new routes have been sanctioned under the scheme. The fourth round of UDAN scheme was launched in December 2019 focusing on North Eastern Regions, Islands and Hilly states. The operation of seaplanes and helicopters were also incorporated under the scheme.
31. Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare decided to integrate electronic pension payment order with Digi Locker. This will enhance Ease of Living of the Central Government Pensioners. The system has been created with "*Bhavishya Software*".
32. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, has launched National **GIS** (Geographic Information System) enabled **Land Bank System**. The platform is to provide database of industrial clusters all over India. It will serve as one-stop solution to free and easy accessibility of industrial information. The platform is to be supported by National Centre of Geo-Informatics, Invest India, National E-Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Application and Geo-Informatics.
33. On August 28, 2020, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana completed **six years**. The scheme is a national mission for financial inclusion. Around **40.35 crore beneficiaries** benefitted under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana since 2014. As on August, 2020, of the accounts opened under the scheme, 63.6% were rural accounts and 55.2% were women accounts. A total of 29.75 crore RuPay cards were issued to Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana account holders.
34. Government of India announced that it will track the illegal beneficiaries of PM-KISAN scheme. The Ministry of Agriculture is to carry out the process.
35. An analysis of data available at the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (**NREGS**) portal says that the share of women in the NREGS is the lowest since 2013-14. It has dipped to 52.46%.
36. The World Health Organization recently reported that at least half of 25 kinds of health services experienced disruptions due to COVID-19.
37. The United Nations recently released the first ever **guidelines to social justice** for people with disabilities in order to make it easy for them to access justice systems in the world.
38. NITI Aayog has released the **Export Preparedness Index (EPI)** in partnership with Institute of Competitiveness. **Gujarat** has topped the index followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. This is mainly because of their location near the coast. Among the land locked states, **Rajasthan** was the top performer followed by Telangana and Haryana. In the category of Himalayan states, **Uttarakhand** topped the list

followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh. The report says that the 70% of exports of India are dominated by five states namely Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.

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ECONOMY & BUSINESS

39. According to the data provided by Ministry of Finance to Rajya Sabha, **Tamil Nadu** topped the list in availing MUDRA loans to women. It was followed by West Bengal and Karnataka.
40. the Government of India launched "**Chunauti**", the next generation **start up challenge** contest. Around 300 start ups working in select areas are to be identified and provided with seed fund up to Rs 25 lakhs. The challenge is launched with a special focus on Tier-II towns.
41. The Indian **Railways** have generated more than 6,40,000-man days under Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan in six states. They are Jharkhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh.
42. National Health Authority released the Draft **Health Data Management Policy** under the National Digital Health Mission. The main objective of the policy is to provide adequate guidance and set framework to secure processing of personal and sensitive personal data of individuals.
43. Union Minister of Coal and Mines Shri Prahlad Joshi announced at a webinar that India aims for **100 million tonnes of coal gasification by 2030**. This is to be achieved through investments worth Rs 4 lakh crores.
44. According **National Statistical Office**, in spite of agricultural production going up in the country, the GDP is contracting. This is the first time India is witnessing fall in GDP in spite of agricultural production going up.

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FINANCE AND BANKING

45. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman announced that the businesses with annual turnover of up to **Rs 40 lakhs** are exempted from GST. Earlier the limit was Rs 20 lakhs.
46. Reserve Bank of India released its annual report 2019-20. According to the report, the total income of RBI in 2019-20 has increased by 28.97%. The Gross Non-Performing Ratio of banking system have

declined to 9.1% as compared to 11.2% in March 2019. The currency in circulation has soared 17%. It was Rs 21.10 trillion in 2019-20. Bank frauds more than **double** in FY20 to Rs 1.85 trillion.

47. The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) announced that subscriber for Atal Pension Yojana has crossed **21 million**. The PFRDA also announced that the Assets Under Management (AUM) of the National Pension Scheme is set to touch Rs 5 lakh crores by the end of September.
48. Government of **Maharashtra** and **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank** signed loan agreement of **500 million USD** to improve **service quality, safety and network capacity of suburban railway system** in Mumbai.
49. On August 27, 2020, the finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman chaired the **41st GST Council** meet. The council discussed states' compensation and revenue losses. In the fiscal year 2020-21, the GST shortfall is Rs **2.35 lakh crores**.
50. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**) has introduced, 'Structured Finance and Partial Guarantee Program for Non-Banking Finance Companies (**NBFC**)-Micro Finance Institutions (**MFIs**)', a dedicated debt and credit guarantee product. NABARD has signed a pact with Vivriti Capital and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank on 14 August 2020 to introduce the initiative.
51. **Axis Bank**, India's third-largest private sector bank, has introduced '**Liberty Savings Account**' for the Indian Youth, to address the ever changing lifestyle needs of young and digitally interested Indians.
52. **HDFC** Bank announced a strategic partnership with **Adobe** to enhance the Digital Experiences of its Customers.

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION

53. The Dutch author **Marieke Lucas Rijneveld** has become the youngest to win the **International Booker Prize**. He won the prize for his debut novel "**The Discomfort of Evening**". The author is to share the prize along with the book's translator Michele Hutchinson.

OBITUARIES

54. On August 31, 2020, the former President **Pranab Mukherjee** and Bharat Ratna, passed away at 84 after testing positive for COVID-19. The Government of India has announced seven-day state mourning.

IMPORTANT DAYS

55. Every year, India celebrates **National Sports Day on August 29** to commemorate the birth anniversary of the legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand. He was born on August 29, 1905. About Dhyan Chand Dhyan Chand was known as "The Wizard" and had scored more than 1000 goals during his international career.

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SPORTS

56. West Indies All-Rounder Dwayne John Bravo became the first bowler in Cricket to scalp 500 wickets in Twenty20 (T20s).

57. England pacer James Anderson (38) has become the first fast bowler in history to take 600 Test wickets.

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