





**WEEKLY CA
MARCH 2021**

MARCH 16-22



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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. **Samsung Electronics** set up **Samsung innovation lab** at **Delhi Technological University (DTU)** to promote joint research and training on domains such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and computer vision.
2. Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare **Harsh Vardhan** has been appointed as the **Chairman of 'Stop TB Partnership Board'** with effect from **July 2021**.
 - He will be serving at this post for **3-year tenure**.
3. IT major **Amazon Web Services** and **NITI Aayog** partnered to train students on the fundamentals of cloud computing through Atal Tinkering Labs.
 - **AWS** will introduce the fundamentals of cloud computing to students at more than **7,000 ATLs**.
4. Union Health Minister, **Harsh Vardhan** has inaugurated **Advanced High Resolution Microscopy Facility** at **National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI)** and Unveiled the 4 Star GRIHA Certification of Center of Innovative and Applied Bioprocessing (CIAB) Lab and Admin Building at Mohali, Punjab

STATES AFFAIRS

5. The **Mission Gramodaya** has been launched in **Madhya Pradesh**.
 - Under the Gramodaya mission, besides providing housing facilities in rural areas, basic and fundamental infrastructure will also be expanded.
6. The Jharkhand govt launched the **SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction)** campaign to tackle malnutrition.
7. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced to launch of the much anticipated **Universal Health Scheme (UHS) "Mukhya Mantri Chiranjeevi Yojana"**.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

8. **Italy** has signed amended **Framework Agreement of International Solar Alliance (ISA)** with India

- The amendments to the **ISA Framework agreement** entered into force in Jan 8, 2021, opening its membership to all Member States of the UN, including those lying beyond the tropics.
9. **Ajay Mathur** has assumed the charge as the **Director General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)** with effect from March 15, 2021.
- He has been appointed for tenure of 4 years which can be renewed for an additional term.
10. **Singapore** is building **world's largest floating solar farms of the world** to support the effort against climate change
- It will be **60 mw-peak floating solar system** with 1200 panels and is being built at **Tengeh Reservoir** by Sembcorp Industries in collaboration with Singapore Public Utilities Board

REPORTS & INDICES

11. **Hurun India Wealth Report 2020** has been released. According, to the report, there are **412,000 dollar-millionaire households/affluent households** in India with net worth of Rs 7 crore.
- Top 10 states that are home to 70.3% of millionaire households in India: **Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka** and **Gujarat**.
12. **New Delhi** has been ranked as the **10th most polluted city** in World's **most polluted capital city** for 3rd straight year, in **2020 World Air Quality Report** by Swiss organisation, **IQAir**
- Top most polluted city of the world: Xinjiang, China
13. Sweden-based **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** released report titled '**Trends in International Arms Transfers-2020**'
- As per the report, **imports of weapons and military equipment of India declined by 33%** during 2016-2020
 - India continues to be 2nd largest World importer, despite import rates cut
 - Largest arms importers: **Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia, China**
 - Largest arms exporters: **US, Russia, France, Germany, China**. India ranked 24th in this
14. **UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network** has released the **World Happiness Report 2021**.
- **Finland** was once again crowned as the world's happiest country.
 - **India** has been ranked **139** out of **149** countries.
 - **Denmark** ranked 2nd followed by **Switzerland, Iceland** and the **Netherlands**.
 - **Afghanistan** was classed as the world's unhappiest nation this year.
15. **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** has projected **India's economy contraction by 6.9% in 2020** due to coronavirus pandemic.

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GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

16. **Convergence Energy Services Ltd**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL)**, unveiled the **GRAM UJALA programme**.
- Under the programme, high-quality energy-efficient **LED bulbs** will be given for **Rs 10 per piece** in certain villages of five states in the first phase.
 - The programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.
 - In phase-I of the programme, **15 million LED bulbs** will be distributed
17. PM **Narendra Modi** has launched '**Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**' campaign on World Water Day (22nd March)
- Campaign will run till **30th Nov, 2021**
 - It will be undertaken across the country, in **734 districts** covering **600,000 villages** with theme '**catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls**'
 - It will be launched as **Jan Andolan** to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation. During this, geotagging of all water bodies will be carried out.
18. Union Environment Minister, **Prakash Javadekar** has launched new **Nagar Van Scheme** for creation of Urban forests in the cities on the occasion of International Day of Forests
- Under Nagar Van Scheme, **Urban forests will be developed in 200 cities in its first phase.**
 - **Drone mapping water conservation** and tree plantation were also taken into consideration.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

19. **United States (US)** has overtaken **Saudi Arabia** as India's second biggest oil supplier.
- Oil import of India from US rose 48% to a record **545,300 barrels per day (bpd)** in Feb 2021 compared to Jan 2021
20. Govt has constituted an **experts advisory committee** for overall execution and monitoring of **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**
- **H K Mittal** (Dept of Science and Technology) will head the committee
 - Apart from this, members from DPIIT, dept of biotechnology, science and technology, electronics and IT, Niti Aayog, startup ecosystem will be part of it

21. **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** and **US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)** have announced **\$41 million-loan portfolio guarantee program** to finance investment in renewable energy solutions by Indian SMEs
- It will enable finance investments by **small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of India** in renewable energy solutions including rooftop solar installations
 - These loans will enable SMEs to access reliable power and will cut the cost.
22. **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** projected Indian economy is expected to grow **12.6% in FY22**.
23. Moody's Analytics had projected the Indian economy to grow **13.7% in FY22**.

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FINANCE & BANKING

24. **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has launched '**UPI-Help**' on **BHIM UPI** for grievance redressal mechanism for the users of the BHIM application
25. **India's foreign-exchange reserves** become the **world's fourth largest reserve of the world**, surpassing Russia.
- **Foreign currency holdings of India** fell by **\$4.3 billion to \$580.3 billion**, as per the data by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
26. Union Cabinet has approved creation of **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN)** under **Section 136-b of Finance Act, 2007**
- It is a single non-lapsable reserve fund for health from the proceeds of health and Education cess.
 - Share of Health from the proceeds of **Health and Education Cess (4%)** will be credited to **PMSSN**
27. **RBI** has decided to extend new **Cheque Truncation System (CTS)** across all bank branches in India by September 30, 2021.
- It is issued under Section 10 (2) and Section 18 of Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (Act 51 of 2007).
28. **RBI** has imposed a **monetary penalty of ₹2 Crore on State Bank of India** for contravention of provisions of section 10 (1) (b) (ii) of Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and payment of remuneration to employees in the form of commission.

29. **RBI** has released data related to **2019-20 round of its annual survey** on exports of computer software and IT enabled services
- Survey collects details on India's exports of software services as per type of activity, on-site/off-site nature of service, country of destination and modes of supply
 - **India's export of software services stood at US\$ 128.6 billion during 2019-20, registering 9.1% growth**
 - Exports of computer services and ITES/BPO services contributed 66.6% and 33.4 %
30. **Union Cabinet** has approved bill to set up **Development Finance Institution (DFI)** with an **initial capital infusion of Rs 20 thousand crores.**

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

31. **Sahitya Akademi** has announced annual literary honour in India, **Sahitya Akademi Awards 2020** in **20 Indian languages.**
- The awards include 7 books of poetry, 4 novel, 5 short stories, 2 plays, and one each of memoirs and epic poetry.

PERSON IN NEWS

32. **Arindam Bagchi** took charges as the **official spokesperson of Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).**

OBITUARIES

33. Veteran Kathakali artist **Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair (105 years)** passed away in Kozhikode, Kerala due to old age-related ailments.

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IMPORTANT DAYS

34. **National Vaccination Day (National Immunization Day)** is observed every year on **March 16** in India, to convey the importance of vaccination.

35. **International Happiness Day** is celebrated on **20th March** every year.
- It is a global event designated by the **United Nations**.
 - The theme of the 2021 International Day of Happiness campaign is '**Keep Calm. Stay Wise. Be Kind**'.
36. **International Day of Forests (World Forestry Day)** is observed every year on **March 21** to commemorate and raise awareness of the significance of all types of forests
- **UN General Assembly** adopted **International Day of Forests** on **November 28, 2012**
 - Theme 2021: **Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being**
37. **World Water Day (WWD)** is observed every year on **22nd March** to highlight the importance and sustainable management of fresh water.
- **UN-Water** is the convener for **World Water Day**.
 - Theme of WWD 2021: **Valuing Water**.

SPORTS

38. Youth Affairs & Sports Minister **Kiren Rijju** has announced to set up **Winter Sports Institute in Gulmarg, Kashmir**.
- He also announced inauguration of **100 small sports centres** under **Khelo India mission**.
39. Tamil Nadu's **Chadalavada Anandha Bhavani Devi (27 years)** became the first-ever fencer from India to qualify for Olympic Games.
- She secured a spot for the Tokyo Olympics at the World Cup in Hungary.
40. Indian athlete **Avinash Sable** set a **new national record in men's 3000m steeplechase event** in ongoing Federation Cup Senior National Athletics Championships in Patiala with 8:20.20 timing.

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