

**EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 27,  
2021**

**STATES**

- **Asia's largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir - is scheduled to be opened for general public and tourists from March 25, 2021.**



- ✓ The Garden consists of around 15 lakh tulip flowers of more than 64 varieties, which have blossomed beneath Zabarwan Hills along the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar city
  - ✓ The Garden, named 'Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden', was previously known as 'Model Floriculture Center' and spread over an area of 74 acres
  - ✓ The tulip garden was inaugurated in 2007 with the aim of boosting floriculture and tourism in Kashmir Valley.
  - ✓ Many other species of flowers like daffodils, hyacinths, and ranunculus have also been added to the garden.
- **Andhra Pradesh - to set up the country's first government-run ambulance network exclusively for animals**
  - ✓ The ambulance will reach out to the distressed animals to provide them proper animal healthcare and to boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in the state.

- ✓ They will provide the veterinary first aid services besides on-the-spot diagnosis and attend all the emergency cases involving animals
- ✓ The Animal Husbandry Department was directed to set up one mobile ambulance veterinary clinic at each of the assembly constituency.
- ✓ Under the animal ambulance network, 175 mobile ambulance (veterinary) clinics will be placed in total at assembly constituency level.
- ✓ The ambulance will also have the “Hydraulic Lift Facility” to lift the animals and shift them to the nearest Government veterinary facility in the emergency cases.
- ✓ The ambulance will be manned by one veterinary doctor and one para-veterinary worker.
- ✓ These ambulances are also connected with a 24/7 toll-free call centre.

## NATIONAL

- **The Rajya Sabha - passed the ‘National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill 2021’ by voice vote on March 25**
  - ✓ The Bill seeks to establish the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development to support ‘infrastructure financing’ in the country
  - ✓ The proposal to establish the institution was announced in the Budget speech by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
  - ✓ The Bill was earlier passed in Lok Sabha on March 24, 2021.
  - ✓ The NBFID would work as a principal Development Financial Institution (DFIs) with an authorized share capital of one lakh crore rupees
  - ✓ It will be set up as a corporate statutory body and will be answerable to Parliament
  - ✓ The entity will be managed by chairman & board nominated professionals who will be appointed by Government.
  - ✓ The shares of NBFID can be held by central government, financial institutions, pension funds, insurers, multilateral institutions, banks, sovereign wealth funds, and other institution prescribed by central government.
  - ✓ The DFIs are set up to provide long-term finance in areas where risks involved are beyond acceptable limits of commercial banks and other financial institutions.
  - ✓ They source funds from market, government and multi-lateral institutions, without any direct contribution from public.
- **On March 22, the Jal Shakti Ministry - has signed an agreement with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the government of Denmark**
  - ✓ The agreement aims to provide tap water connections to 11 water-scarce districts of the Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions in Uttar Pradesh under the Jal Jeevan mission.
  - ✓ The UNOPS will provide support in the areas of capacity building, creation of village action plans, grassroot water quality monitoring methods and community mobilisation

- ✓ The Jal Jeevan mission was launched on August 15, 2019 to provide safe and adequate drinking water to all the rural households across the country by 2024.
  - ✓ The programme also implements the source sustainability measures like recharge and reuse through the grey water management, rain water harvesting and water conservation.
- **The Election Commission of India - is working with IIT-Madras on using Blockchain Technology for remote voting**
- ✓ The technology is expected to be used in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections
  - ✓ The EC is working with eminent scientists and IIT-Madras to introduce app-based e-voting for the convenience of citizens to vote remotely.
  - ✓ This was announced by the chief election commissioner Sunil Arora on March 26
  - ✓ During his speech, the CEC said though “One Nation One Elections” is desirable, it is difficult to achieve it as it requires amendments of existing laws and political consensus.
  - ✓ The EC is also working on linking Aadhaar card with voter id as part of electoral reforms.
- **The central PSU, Power Grid Corporation of India - has launched an e-tendering portal called PRANIT.**
- ✓ This portal has been launched to reduce paperwork, ensure ease of operation and make the tendering process more transparent.
  - ✓ The portal has been certified by the Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
  - ✓ The POWERGRID is the only organization in India which has an e Procurement solution on the SAP, Supplier Relationship Management
  - ✓ The Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), under the Ministry of Power, is engaged mainly in the transmission of power.
  - ✓ It transmits around 50% of the total power generated across India through its transmission network
  - ✓ The company also operates the telecom business called POWERTEL and is headquartered in Gurugram
- **The Union Cabinet – has approved the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed between India and Japan for bilateral cooperation in the field of water resources.**
- ✓ This will help in increasing exchange of information, knowledge and technology through joint projects.
  - ✓ Earlier, the MoC was signed in between ‘Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation’ under ‘Ministry of Jal Shakti’ of government of India and ‘Water & Disaster Management Bureau’ under ‘Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport & Tourism’ of government of Japan.

- ✓ It was signed with the objective of developing a long-term cooperation in the field of water and Delta management.
- ✓ It will also help in achieving water security, improved irrigation facility and sustainability across the water resources development.
- **The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment - to launch 'Poshan Abhiyan' for the Elderly to provide them 'nutrition support'.**
- ✓ Under the mission, support will be provided to elders who are not staying in old age homes and are affected by malnutrition.
- ✓ The proposed scheme will be implemented by "Gram Panchayats and Urban Municipalities" by utilizing the 'Senior Citizens Welfare Fund'
- ✓ The mission has been proposed under the government's umbrella scheme for senior citizens called "National Action Plan for Senior Citizens"
- ✓ This scheme provides for financial security, shelter & welfare, healthcare & Nutrition, protection of life & property, awareness generation and active & productive ageing.
- ✓ The Poshan Abhiyan or National Nutrition Mission (NNM) was launched in 2018 to tackle the malnutrition problem among children, adolescents, pregnant & lactating women.
- ✓ The mission seeks to eliminate malnutrition by 2022 and specifically targets reducing stunting, undernutrition, anaemia and low birth weight.

## SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On March 26, the Supreme Court - upheld Cyrus P Mistry's removal from the post of executive chairman of Tata Sons**
- ✓ It had rejected the Shapoorji Pallonji Group's accusations against Ratan Tata, including the Tata Sons board's allegedly oppressive practices against minority shareholders.
- ✓ Further, the court also rejected the SP Group's last minute plea for evaluation of its shares for an honourable exit from Tata Sons through payment of fair compensation.
- ✓ The verdict was given by a bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian in a 282-page judgment
- ✓ The SC slammed the NCLAT for ordering Mistry's reinstatement even when it was not sought by the SP Group.
- ✓ The bench wondered how the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) could have deviated from the law to order Mistry's reinstatement even after expiry of his tenure as executive chairman and direct conversion of Tata Sons into a public company.
- ✓ The SC also rejected SP Group's claim for proportionate representation on the Tata Sons board, under the 1956 Act and under the 2013 (Companies) Act

## BOARDROOM BATTLE THAT ENDED IN COURTROOM

**Cyrus Mistry joins Tata Sons board**



**appointed Tata Sons chairman,**



**move will place restrictions on Mistry cos from selling stake to**

**order to provide time for Tatas to appeal to the Supreme Court**

- ✓ Earlier, on March 16, 2012, the Tata Sons board appointed Mistry, who owns just 18.37% of the total paid-up share capital, as its Executive Deputy Chairman

## INTERNATIONAL

- **On March 26, Pakistan - conducted a flight test of the surface-to-surface ballistic missile, Shaheen-IA**
- ✓ The new missile is capable of delivering both conventional and nuclear warheads up to a range of 900km
- ✓ The test flight was aimed at re-validating various design and technical parameters of the weapon system including advanced navigation system.
- ✓ Shaheen 1-A with its sophisticated and advanced guidance system is a highly accurate missile system.
- ✓ In February 2021, the army had successfully test-fired Babur cruise missile IA, which is a short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile capable of hitting land and sea targets with high precision and range of up to 450km
- ✓ Further, the army had successfully conducted the 'training launch' of nuclear-capable ballistic missile Ghaznavi as part of its annual field training exercise last month
- ✓ On January 20, a successful test of the surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-III was also carried out
- **Taiwan – to distribute water in 'ration' basis from April, 2021 for more than one million households residing in centre of the island**

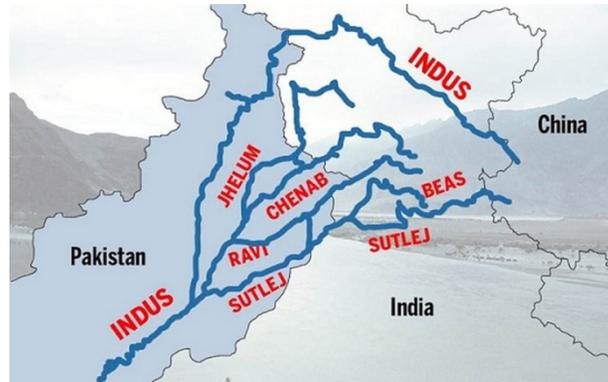
- ✓ Taiwan is a sub-tropical country and is experiencing its worst drought in half a century because the rain-bearing typhoons failed to make landfall in the country in 2020.
  - ✓ Shortage of water is most severe across the vast region of western Taiwan, where most of the people live.
  - ✓ Hence, the government has decided to cut water supplies in some areas for two days in a week and send out the water tankers to areas where required.
  - ✓ However, the ration system will not be applicable to Hsinchu province, which is home to companies such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co Ltd (TSMC)
  - ✓ The TSMC is a multinational semiconductor contract manufacturing and design company.
  - ✓ It is the most valuable and also the largest dedicated independent semiconductor company in the world.
- **Russia - had successfully launched 38 satellites for 18 countries in their orbits from Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.**



- ✓ The Russian Space Agency, Roscosmos, launched the Soyuz-2.1 a rocket carrying satellites from countries including Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Italy, Germany and Brazil
- ✓ The launcher also launched “Challenge-1 satellite”, which is the first satellite completely made in Tunisia, created by Telnet Telecommunications group.
- ✓ The launch had twice been postponed from March 20 after a voltage surge was detected.
- ✓ The 2.1a version of the Soyuz satellite consists of a digital flight control system and the upgraded engines on booster.
- ✓ This new digital flight control and telemetry systems rocket is launched from the fixed platform rather than angled launch platform.
- ✓ It also provides for the launch of larger commercial satellites comprising of the wider and longer payload fairings like ST-type fairing.
- ✓ The Soyuz vehicles are used as the launcher for crewed Soyuz spacecraft under the Soyuz programme

# INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **The annual Permanent Indus Commission meeting - was recently held after a gap of over two years on March 23, 2021 at New Delhi**



- ✓ Before the two-day meeting, Pakistan had raised objections to the designs of Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai hydropower plants which are under construction in Jammu and Kashmir, which was later justified by India in the meeting
- ✓ In the 116<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission, both the sides discussed other issues under Indus Waters Treaty.
- ✓ The Indian side was led by PK Saxena, India's Indus Commissioner while the delegation from Pakistan was led by Indus Commissioner Syed Muhammad Meher Ali Shah.
- ✓ This is the first important engagement between both the countries after Indian and Pakistani militaries had announced to strictly observe a ceasefire along Line of Control and other sectors.
- ✓ The last meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission was held on August 29, 2018 in Lahore
- ✓ The Pakal Dul Dam, under construction, is being constructed on Marusudar River which is a tributary of Chenab River in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir
- ✓ The concrete-face rock-fill dam is capable of generating 1000 MW of hydroelectric power
- ✓ The project was awarded to consortium of domestic and foreign countries in February 2014, which includes JP Prakash Associate, AFCONS and Bharat Heavy Electricals.
- ✓ The construction of the dam is opposed by Pakistan which is of the view that it violates Indus Water Treaty.
- ✓ The second project – Lower Kalnai – is being developed on the river Chenab.
- ✓ Under the Indus Water Treaty, waters of river Chenab were allocated to Pakistan.
- ✓ The World Bank-backed treaty was signed by the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and the President of Pakistan, Ayub Khan in Karachi on September 19, 1960.
- ✓ The Permanent Indus Commission was set up under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 to deal with bilateral water issues

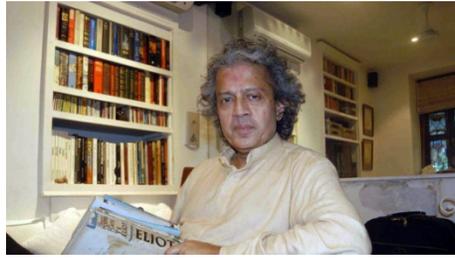
- ✓ According to the treaty, waters of the eastern rivers — Sutlej, Beas and Ravi had been allocated to India, while the western rivers — the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab to Pakistan.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On March 22, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) - has announced that it has successfully demonstrated its free-space Quantum Communication for a distance of 300 metres for the first time ever**
- ✓ The technology was demonstrated at the Space Applications Centre (SAC) in Ahmedabad in between the two line-of-sight buildings within its campus.
- ✓ This space quantum communication includes the use of indigenously developed NAVIC receiver for time-synchronisation in between the transmitter and receiver modules.
- ✓ It also includes a gimbal mechanism system instead of the bulky large-aperture telescopes for the optical alignment of the system.
- ✓ The demonstration of the free-space Quantum Communication includes the live video conferencing using the quantum-key-encrypted signals.
- ✓ This technique achieves unconditionally secured satellite data communication using the quantum technologies based on the Laws of Physics
- ✓ This technology cannot be used with the conventional encryption systems.
- ✓ The conventional cryptosystems used for the data-encryption rely on complexity of the mathematical algorithms.
- ✓ The NAVIC or the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) is an autonomous regional satellite navigation system which provides the accurate real-time positioning and timing services.
- ✓ The satellite covers India and the region extending up to 1,500 km across it.

## OBITUARY

- **Anil Dharker, renowned journalist and writer (74 years)**
- ✓ The founder of Mumbai's Tata Literature Live festival Anil Dharker died on March 26 following cardiac problems
- ✓ Dharker had served as editor of publications including The Illustrated Weekly of India, the Independent and Mid-day
- ✓ He also headed the National Film Development Corporation, when it coproduced Richard Attenborough's iconic film, Gandhi.
- ✓ Dharker graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of London.



- ✓ He was offered an academic position at the University of Glasgow but returned to India to join an architectural firm and later moved to journalism.
- ✓ He was also a film and TV critic and helped open the Akashwani auditorium as an art movie theatre.
- ✓ The Covid-19 pandemic forced his last public event, the Tata Literature Live, to be held indoors on a virtual platform in November 2020.

## SPORTS

- **India's Vijayveer Sidhu – clinched silver medal after losing the gold medal game against Estonia's Peeter Olesk in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol in the ISSF Shooting World Cup at New Delhi**



- ✓ Overall, Three Indians had qualified for the six-man final – Anish Bhanwala, Vijayveer Sidhu and Gurpreet Singh
- ✓ The gold medal winner was guaranteed of the country's possible 16th quota place in shooting for the Tokyo Olympics
- ✓ The much-talented Anish Bhanwala failed spectacularly, finishing a lowly fifth
- ✓ In the non-Olympic category events, India claimed two gold medals.
- ✓ Tejaswini Sawant and Sanjeev Rajput paired up to win the day's first gold in the 50m rifle 3 positions mixed team event.
- ✓ Later, the Indian trio of Chain Singh, Swapnil Kusale and Niraj Kumar combined to bag the gold in the men's 3P team event
- ✓ The Shooting event became quite popular in the country after the silver-winning show by armyman Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore in double trap in 2004.
- ✓ However, at Tokyo, India will not see any army shooter, which will be a first since Rathore's feat in 2004