



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 1,

2021

TAMIL NADU

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras-incubated startup – to conduct the world’s largest ever ‘online’ coding workshop on April 24, 2021**
- ✓ The event, which is expected to set a world record, will be conducted by IIT-M incubated startup ‘GUVI’ in association with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)
- ✓ The workshop aims to upskill 10 lakh Indians in coding through a one-day free workshop called ‘AI-For-India 1.0’.
- ✓ It targets students, IT professionals, and anyone in the age group of 8 to 80 years, who are interested in coding
- ✓ Participants can learn to build a face recognition app using Python from industry experts.
- ✓ They will also get free access to GUVI’s Python course.
- ✓ World record event participation certificates and unlimited access to ‘CodeKata,’ a coding skill-building platform, will be offered to all participants.

STATES

- **On March 30, the Uttarakhand government - announced that RTPCR-negative report is needed from April 1 for people visiting Uttarakhand from 12 states, where Covid-19 cases are increasing.**
- ✓ Besides, people coming to Haridwar for Kumbh Mela — commencing on April 1 — are also advised to carry a Covid-19-negative report.
- ✓ The new norms will be applicable for people travelling from Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Rajasthan by road/air/train to Uttarakhand
- ✓ The RT-PCR test report is to be done 72 hours prior to the time of arrival in the state

- ✓ The advisory states that those found violating the norms shall be penalised under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and Epidemics Act, 1897, and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.
- ✓ However, there shall be no restriction on interstate and intra-state movement of essential services and goods.
- ✓ Further, people above 65 years of age, persons with comorbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 10 years are advised to travel only in unavoidable circumstances.

NATIONAL

- **India – opens up Covid-19 vaccination for all citizens aged above 45 from April 1**
- ✓ States have been asked to ensure there is no pile-up of vaccine stocks at any level of storage
- ✓ In this regard, the Centre assured states that it would continually replenish the stocks based on consumption trends.
- ✓ The Centre said efforts should be made to keep vaccine wastage under 1% and regularly review use of the shots.
- ✓ At present, the average wastage is pegged at 6%.
- ✓ A total of 6,457 vaccination sessions were in private facilities, while 42,502 were in government hospitals, as on March 31
- ✓ As on date, 6.4 crore vaccine doses were administered in the country.
- ✓ Of this, more than three crore were first doses to people above 60, whereas 76.7 lakh people aged between 45 and 60 with co-morbidities received the vaccine.

6.4 CR HAVE RECEIVED VACCINES: CENTRE	TN EXTENDS COVID-19 LOCKDOWN TILL APRIL 30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Over 3cr aged above 60 yrs have received 1st dose, as have 76.7 lakh between 45 & 60 yrs with co-morbidities. In all, 6.4cr have got jabs so far ➤ Around 92.6 lakh fully vaccinated with two doses ➤ States told to ramp up drive in areas where coverage has been low, especially those reporting surge in infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CS Rajeev Ranjan has ordered that RT-PCR tests be distributed across districts with adequate testing in districts reporting high infections ➤ Containment zones have to be "demarcated" and containment measures should be implemented within such zones, he said ➤ Collectors shall strictly implement Covid-19 guidelines for enforcing social distancing, and may invoke provisions of Section 144 of the CrPC if need be

- ✓ Around 92.6 lakh people were fully vaccinated with two doses as on March 31
- ✓ While registration for vaccination will be available both online and onsite, those opting for onsite registration will have to go after 3pm.
- ✓ In another related development, Brazil's health regulator Anvisa has refused to grant a certification of good manufacturing practices (GMP) to Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, citing non-compliance with necessary standards
- ✓ The move will delay export of Covaxin to Brazil, which has placed an order of 20 million doses.

- ✓ A GMP certification from Anvisa is a must for companies wanting to sell drugs or vaccines in Brazil.
 - ✓ Anvisa's inspectors found 12 major and 14 minor non-conformities that together indicate a significant risk to the vaccine's manufacturing and product quality assurance, implying a health risk for users.
 - ✓ India has already sent one lakh doses of Covaxin to Paraguay, another South American country
- **On March 31, the Union cabinet - approved a Rs 10,900 crore Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the food processing industry**
- ✓ With this, the Centre seeks to reduce farm wastage, strengthen farm sector, increase farmer incomes, boost employment and establish India's own brands of food products in international markets.
 - ✓ Earlier, the government has cleared a Rs 2 lakh crore PLI package for 13 sectors, including electronics, pharma, air conditioners and speciality steel with the financial grant to be spent over the next five years.
 - ✓ The new scheme for food processing will incentivise both domestic and international firms that commit investments and sales in agriprocessing businesses.
 - ✓ It is expected to help create 2.5 lakh jobs by 2026-27, boost exports and facilitate expansion of food processing capacity to generate processed food output worth Rs 33,494 crore.
 - ✓ According to the government, the first component under the scheme relates to incentivising manufacturing of four major food product segments — ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat foods, processed fruits and vegetables, marine products and mozzarella cheese.
 - ✓ Further, Innovative and organic products of small-to-medium enterprise (SMEs), including eggs, poultry meat and egg products are also covered under the first component.
 - ✓ The second component relates to support for branding and marketing abroad to incentivise emergence of strong Indian brands.
- **On March 31, the 13-lakh strong Army - conducted the last flag ceremony to officially disband military farms**
- ✓ The decision to shut down military farms was taken a few years ago.
 - ✓ The military farms serving military officers and jawans in cantonments were progressively being closed across the country over the last several years
 - ✓ The military farms were first raised at Allahabad in 1889 to supply hygienic cow milk to British Indian troops
 - ✓ After Independence, military farms had flourished with 30,000 heads of cattle in 130 farms all over India in varied agro-climatic conditions.
 - ✓ Military farms were even established in Leh and Kargil in the late 1990s

- ✓ The number of military farms, which also occupied large tracts of defence land and supplied baled hay to animal-holding units of the Army, had come down to 39 around a decade ago.
 - ✓ Earlier, the Shekatkar Committee report had also recommended closure of all military farms, among other measures to enhance combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure
- **Union labour and employment minister Santosh Gangwar - flagged off the All India Surveys on Migrant Workers and the All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES) on March 31.**



- ✓ The two surveys are among the five all India surveys that the labour bureau, attached to the ministry will conduct this year.
 - ✓ The results of both surveys will generate highly useful data for effective policy making in the field of labour and employment.
 - ✓ The remaining three surveys – the All India Surveys on Domestic Workers, All India Survey on Employment generated by professionals and All India Survey on Employment generated in transport sector – will also be undertaken soon by the Centre
- **The Centre - has deferred the implementation of the four labour codes, originally due on April 1**
- ✓ The decision to defer the implementation is taken as several state governments have still not finalised the relevant rules
 - ✓ The deferment gives more time to companies to realign their salary structures in line with the new legal provisions.
 - ✓ The delay, however, will adversely impact migrant workers and gig workers, including workers engaged with platforms like Ola and Uber, who will get benefitted under the new law.
 - ✓ Since labour is a concurrent subject under the Constitution, both the Centre and states are required to notify rules under the codes to enforce the law in their respective geographies.

- ✓ Key states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Uttarakhand have only circulated the draft rules for two codes, while Karnataka has circulated draft rules for one code.
 - ✓ Jammu and Kashmir is the only state that has finalised its rules so far.
 - ✓ The labour ministry had planned to implement the four labour codes – on Industrial Relations, Wages, Social Security and Occupational Health Safety and Working Conditions — from April 1, 2021
 - ✓ The ministry has also finalised the rules under the four codes.
- **On March 31, National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) - rolled out Hansa-NG, the new generation two-seater aircraft**



- ✓ The flight tests of the aircraft are expected to take place later this year.
 - ✓ Already, 30 flying clubs have written Letters of Intent for the purchase of the two-seater aircraft
 - ✓ Hansa-NG is an upgraded version of Hansa, which first flew in 1993 and certified in 2000.
 - ✓ Between 2000 and 2007, NAL developed 12 Hansa aircraft delivered to flying clubs across India through the directorate general of civil aviation.
 - ✓ It has logged more than 4,000 flying hours with IITKanpur still flying it.
- **On March 31, the Union cabinet - recommended promulgation of an ordinance to fast-track insolvency resolution of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), a plan that was first announced last year.**
- ✓ The plan involves a “prepack” insolvency resolution scheme for MSMEs, leaving the promoter in charge, while the resolution proposal is finalised.
 - ✓ Further, the promoter of small businesses will be given an opportunity to participate in the resolution process, including submitting a plan.
 - ✓ Earlier, through an amendment, the government had barred promoters from participating in the resolution process and it resulted in their ouster from the management and ownership of the company.

- ✓ But in case of MSMEs, a special facility has been provided because the proprietor or the promoter knows the intricacies of the business and often invests their lifetime savings in the business.
- ✓ The draft plan prepared by the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Board of India in last July had proposed giving the promoters of small businesses the first right to present the resolution plan.
- ✓ Also, in case of the current scheme, an insolvency resolution professional takes charge soon after the National Company Law Tribunal admits the resolution proposal.

INTERNATIONAL

- **New York State - has legalised the use of recreational marijuana on March 31**
 - ✓ With this, the NY has become the 15th American state to legalise the recreational use of cannabis
 - ✓ Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a bill passed in the Democratic-controlled legislature that decriminalises the possession of up to three ounces of marijuana
 - ✓ Further, the NY state imposed a 13% sales tax on marijuana, and closes the state records of those previously convicted of minor possession of the cannabis
 - ✓ The law also seeks to allow people with past convictions and those involved in the illicit cannabis market to participate in the new legal market.
 - ✓ Further, on March 31, Governor Ralph Northam of Virginia asked lawmakers to legalise marijuana beginning July 1, 2021 instead of 2024.
 - ✓ Virginia had earlier passed a bill last month making it legal for residents to carry up to about 28 grams from the start of 2024
- **Pfizer and BioNTech – have announced that their Covid-19 vaccine is safe, effective and produces robust antibody responses in 12 to 15-year olds**
 - ✓ With this result of a clinical trial, the companies will seek US and European approval in the next few weeks to use the vaccine shot in this age group
 - ✓ This will likely allow for the use of the vaccine in that group before the next school year.
 - ✓ The Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine is already authorised for use in people starting at age 16.
- **Meanwhile, on March 31, Russia said that it has registered the world’s first Covid vaccine, ‘Carnivac-Cov’, for animals.**
 - ✓ The trial tests showed that the new vaccine generated antibodies against the virus in dogs, cats, foxes and mink.
 - ✓ The mass production of the vaccine is expected to start in April.

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **Pakistan - has decided to allow import of sugar, cotton and yarn from India**

- ✓ This was announced by Pakistan's newly-appointed finance minister Hammad Azhar on March 31
- ✓ Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is also minister-in-charge of commerce and textiles, had approved the summaries of importing goods from India before placing it for approval of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet.
- ✓ Following the ECC meeting, Pakistan had allowed the private sector to import 0.5 million tonnes of sugar from India
- ✓ The import of cotton and yarn through the Wagah border will help meet Pakistan's domestic requirements at lower rates as compared to the local price
- ✓ The import of cotton from India for small industries was allowed until June.
- ✓ India is the world's biggest producer of cotton and the second biggest sugar producer.
- ✓ In August 2019, Pakistan had downgraded trade ties with India in reaction to Delhi's decision to revoke Article 370, which granted J&K special status.
- ✓ Pakistan's decision to import from India follows the ceasefire agreement signed in February 2021
- ✓ Meanwhile, the Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers participated in a multilateral conference in Tajikistan on March 30 without any individual meeting between the two.
- ✓ To ensure there was no shortage of essential drugs amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Pakistan had lifted the ban on import of medicines and raw material from India in May 2020.

DEFENCE

- **Three more Rafale fighters - were expected to touch down in India from France on the night of March 31**



- ✓ These fighter jets will add to the 11 omni-role jets already been inducted by the IAF.
- ✓ The three Rafales were refueled mid-air by Airbus MRTT tankers of the UAE Air Force during their over 7,000-km flight to the Jamnagar airbase.
- ✓ Another five Rafales will land in India towards end-April.
- ✓ The IAF will get all the 36 twin-engine Rafales, contracted under the ₹59,000 crore deal signed with France in September 2016, by next year.

- ✓ The first Rafale squadron, 17 'Golden Arrows' Squadron, is already operational at the Ambala airbase.
- ✓ The second, 101 'Falcons' Squadron, will now come up at the Hasimara airbase in West Bengal.
- ✓ The 4.5-generation fighters have a combat range of 780-km to 1,650-km, without mid-air refuelling, depending on the nature of their mission.
- ✓ The IAF fighters are armed with long stand-off weapons like the over 300-km range 'Scalp' air-to-ground cruise missiles.

SPORTS

- **The Sports Authority of India (SAI) – to modify the 'final hall' at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range (KSSR) at New Delhi at a cost of Rs. 5 crore**



- ✓ The upgradation of 10m, 25m and 50m targets will enable the rifle-pistol shooters get a similar experience of shooting at the Olympic range
- ✓ With the coronavirus cases on the rise, Indian shooters will not be able to participate in the Test events for the Tokyo Games, which begins at Tokyo from April 25.
- ✓ Thirteen of India's 15 quota winners are from rifle-pistol categories.
- ✓ The biggest change at the DKSSR will be the targets, which will be replaced from roll to the latest laser technology.
- ✓ The Tokyo range will have the advanced Sius laser targets, while India has the roll targets.
- ✓ The laser targets are self-illuminated, while the roll targets have lights above them.
- ✓ The change in the lighting is the biggest factor, as alignment of rifle/pistol with the target changes as per the lighting conditions.

RANKINGS

- **India - has slipped 28 places to rank 140th among 156 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021**

RIFT WIDENS

Highlights of report

- ▶ According to WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2021, India has closed 62.5% of its gender gap till date
- ▶ India's gender gap on economic participation and opportunity sub-index widened by 3% this year
- ▶ Highest decline on political empowerment sub-index, where India regressed 13.5 percentage points
- ▶ Women's labour force participation rate fell from 24.8% to 22.3%
- ▶ Estimated earned income of women is only one-fifth of men's, which puts India among the bottom 10
- ▶ India ranks among bottom five in discrimination against women in health and survival sub-index
- ▶ As Covid-19 impact continues to be felt, global gender gap has increased by a generation from 99.5 to 135.6 years
- ▶ Iceland is the most gender-equal nation for the 12th time in 15 years
- ▶ Top 10 gender-equal countries include Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Rwanda, Sweden, Ireland and Switzerland

- ✓ With the decline, India has become the third-worst performer in South Asia.
- ✓ According to the report, India has closed 62.5% of its gender gap till date.
- ✓ The country was ranked 112th among 153 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2020.
- ✓ Most of the decline occurred on the political empowerment sub index, where India lost 13.5 percentage points
 - ✓ The significant decline was in the number of women ministers (from 23.1% in 2019 to 9.1% in 2021).
 - ✓ Among the drivers of this decline is a decrease in women's labour force participation rate, which fell from 24.8% to 22.3%.
 - ✓ In addition, the share of women in professional and technical roles declined further to 29.2%.
 - ✓ The share of women in senior and managerial positions is only 14.6% and there are only 8.9% firms with female top managers
 - ✓ Discrimination against women is also reflected in the health and survival subindex statistics.
 - ✓ With 93.7% of this gap closed to date, India ranks among the bottom five countries in this subindex.
- ✓ The decline also took place on the economic participation and opportunity sub index
- ✓ India's gender gap on this dimension widened by 3% this year, leading to a 32.6% gap closed till date.