



CURRENT AFFAIRS QUICK RECAP (MARCH WEEK II)

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Awards and Honours

- **Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)** has won two of the three **Visitor's Awards** that had been instituted by President Pranab Mukherjee last year.
- A 108—feet tall idol of **Lord Rishabhdeva**, the first **Teerthankar of Jains**, carved out of a single rock, has entered the “**Guinness World Records**” as the world's tallest Jain statue.
- **Mahindra & Mahindra** chairman and managing director **Anand Mahindra** has been conferred with **Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur (Knight of the Legion of Honour)** by the **French**
- Veteran Egyptian diplomat **Ahmed Abul Gheit** has been named as the **Arab League's new secretary general**.
- **Kerala Tourism's** new campaign has bagged the “**Golden City Gate Award**” at the world's leading travel trade show in Germany.

Appointments

- **Sun Pharmaceuticals** has named Indian cricket team captain **MS Dhoni** as **brand ambassador** of its health supplement brand Revital H. Earlier, actor Salman Khan was its brand ambassador for Revital H.
- Japanese investment bank **SoftBank Group Corp** has announced a major **reorganisation** of its businesses.
- The “**Queen**” of Bollywood **Kangana Ranaut** was announced as the **brand ambassador** of **Reebok India**. The actress also launched the new campaign of the brand titled “Be More Human”
- Chief of the Army's Northern Command, **Lt Gen NPS Hira** has been appointed as **Deputy Chief of Army Staff** and would assume office on March 14.

Banking and Economy

- **Capital Local Area Bank**, a Jalandhar-based local area bank, has emerged as the first entity to have received the Reserve Bank of India's **licence to start operations as a small finance bank**.
- **ICICI Bank** announced the launch of a **work-from-home programme to prevent women employees from dropping out of its workforce**.
- The **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** has set up a **dedicated structure** for delivery and monitoring of tax payer services in the income tax department.

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- Global rating agency **Fitch** has maintained its **growth forecast** for **India at 7.5 per cent** this fiscal and sees higher growth over the next two financial years. However, 8 per cent growth will remain elusive in the short term.
- To commemorate the International Women's Day, **SBI Life Insurance** has launched '**SBI Life – Smart Women Advantage**' plan that provides for life cover, savings and female-specific critical illness benefits.
- The **Reserve Bank** has signed a pact with **Bank of Israel** for **exchange of information** pertaining to **banking supervision**.
- Presenting the Union Budget for 2016-17, **Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley** had proposed **to tax withdrawal of 60 per cent** of accumulations in the **EPF after April 1, 2016**.
- **S Ramadorai** has **retired** from the position of **chairman and public interest directorship of BSE**.
- After a delay of more than six months, the government has appointed ex-judge of **Supreme Court BS Chauhan** as the **chairperson of the 21st Law Commission**.
- The **SEBI board** has approved curbs on '**wilful defaulters**', which entails ban on public issue of securities. Any entity declared wilful defaulters will also not able to take control in any other listed entities.
- **Yes Bank** has inked a pact with the **India Brazil Chamber of Commerce (IBCC)** for **cooperation** in knowledge sharing, consultancy, skill and technology, and B2B opportunities.

National Round-up

- In a bid to strengthen women entrepreneurs, the ministry of women and child development (WCD) launched **Mahila e-Haat**, an online marketing platform for women.
- **Tata Motors** has signed a strategic agreement with **Bharat Forge and US-based General Dynamics Land Systems** for India's Rs 50,000-crore Future Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV) programme.
- Gearing up to introduce trains that run at speeds of more than **300 kmph**, the Indian Railways have formed a new **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** to implement the **Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Bullet Train project**.
- **Germany** is going to participate in **the smart city programme** of the Union government.
- **Gujarat** has topped the list of 21 states with most investment potential that has been drawn up by New Delhi-based think-tank **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)**.

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- In a bid to encourage optimum use of wind energy potential in India, the Centre will soon unveil a policy to give incentives including an interest rebate of 0.25 for increasing capacity of wind mills of up to **1 MW**.
- In a major move to prevent transfer of enemy property and allows state appointed custodian to sell it off, the government has introduced a Bill to amend retrospectively several provisions of the **Enemy Property Act of 1968**.
- The licensing committee of **Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP)** has approved **12** industrial licences to the **Reliance Defence**.
- The government will sell up to **5 per cent stake** in state-run **Container Corp** as part of its asset sales programme.
- Five regional centres of the prestigious **National School of Drama (NSD)** are to be set up across the country, besides upgrading a resource centre at **Bengaluru** to a regional centre.
- Parliament has passed the **Bureau of Indian Standards Bill 2015** with the approval from the **Rajya Sabha**, the upper house.
- With the help of engineered microbes, the **MIT Researchers** have turned the emissions of power stations, steel mills and garbage dumps into liquid fuels.
- Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched '**Santwana Yojana**' under which road accident victims will be given **free treatment** for the **first 48 hours at any hospital**.
- **Air India** on Monday said it flew the "**world's longest**" all-women operated and supported flight from the national capital to **San Francisco**.
- '**Maritime India Summit 2016**' to be held in **Mumbai** from 14th to 16th April, 'Maritime India Summit 2016' is a maiden flagship initiative of the Ministry of Shipping that will provide a unique platform for participants to explore potential business opportunities in Indian Maritime Sector.
- Parliament has passed the **National Waterways Bill**, which provides for declaring certain inland waterways as national waterways with the Rajya Sabha giving its nod to the legislation.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana**, a scheme for providing free LPG connections to women from BPL households.
- According to a top London-based forecast group, **Mumbai and Bangalore** are among the cheapest cities in the world.

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- Ridesharing services provider **Uber** has opened its first Asian engineering centre in **Bengaluru**.
- The **Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Bill, 2015**, which intends to protect home buyers, bring in transparency and plug the flow of unaccounted money into the sector, was passed by Rajya Sabha.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for signing and ratification of the Bay of Bengal Initiative on **Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters**.
- Government of India has cleared a proposal to amend the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act, 1957)** to allow transfer of captive mining leases not granted through auction.
- **Piyush Goyal**, Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal and New & Renewable Energy has announced the name '**UJALA**' for the **LED based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP)**, which is currently running successfully in over 120 cities across India.
- The Lok Sabha has passed the **Aadhaar Bill**, providing statutory backing to the unique identification number for transferring government subsidies and benefits, as a money bill after government overruled opposition objections.
- Project '**Mausam**' is the initiative of Ministry of Culture. The Project will be implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the nodal agency with research support of the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and National Museum as associate bodies**.
- Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu launched an online "**clean my coach**" service that allows travellers to get their compartments cleaned by sending an SMS or by using an app or a designated website.
- Government aims to computerise the PDS sector to help check pilferages and plug leakages by installing electronic **Point of Sale (ePoS) devices** at all fair price shops across the country by March 2019 (rpt 2019).
- The Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar launched an interactive web portal of **Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) Secretariat**, under the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (ESW) of Defence Ministry.
- One of the two 220 MWe units at the **Kakrapar Atomic Power Station (KAPS) in Gujarat** had to be shut down at 9 am on Friday (March 11, 2016) after leakage of heavy water from its coolant system.
- A survey has found out that on **average 4.73 per cent** of calls get dropped in the country, much higher than the global average of three per cent.

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- Government of India has approved a new policy for exploration and also defined the norms for pricing of existing and new discoveries made in difficult areas.
- Consumers can now file complaints against misleading commercials by companies to advertising watchdog **ASCI** through mobile messaging app **WhatsApp**.
- **Abysmally** low level of water in the **Farakka Feeder Canal** has caused the National Thermal Power Corporation to shut down five units of its power plant at **Farakka in Murshidabad** district of West Bengal.
- As part of its project to promote clean food, food safety regulator **FSSAI** will train about **20,000** street food vendors in the nation capital over the next four weeks. The decision to launch '**Project Clean Strategy Food**' was announced at an event to connect with corporates, media specialists and food experts to promote food safety.
- The Union Home Ministry recently published new rules allowing women to apply as direct-entry officers in border guarding force **ITBP**, the only paramilitary which hitherto did not allow ladies to join in supervisory combat roles owing to its primary task of guarding the difficult Sino-India border.

International Round-up

- North Korean leader **Kim Jong Un** said the country has miniaturized nuclear warheads to mount on ballistic missiles and ordered improvements in the power and precision of its arsenal.
- The **UN Security Council** has adopted a resolution to take strong action to confront the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeepers.
- The **Wikimedia Foundation** is currently developing a speech synthesis engine to its encyclopedia. In parallel with the release of its **new app for iOS**, the Wikimedia Foundation is currently developing a multilingual engine in partnership with the Royal Institute of Technology KHT.
- Prominent activists ranging from **Edward Snowden to Pussy Riot** have planned to spread online protests against growing government restrictions on citizens' expression, marking an annual world day against cyber censorship.
- **Malaysia** has banned the recruitment of new foreign workers after widespread criticism of its decision to bring in **5 million Bangladeshis** to work in the country, a move that may also affect Indian labourers.

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- According to a **UN Report**, the **South Sudanese government** has conducted a “**scorched earth policy**” against civilians caught up in the country’s civil war.

India and the World

- **Indo-Indonesia Joint Training Exercise GARUDA SHAKTI** is conducted as part of military diplomacy between Indian and Indonesian Army alternatively in India and Indonesia respectively.
- **India** signed a landmark agreement with **Bangladesh** extending **\$2 billion** to the country in its biggest ever overseas credit line, five years after it inked a credit agreement worth \$1 billion with its neighbour.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its ex-post approval for the **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between **India and United Arab Emirates (UAE)** on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber-Crime signed last month.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for entering into the **MoU between India and International Monetary Fund (IMF)** for setting up of South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC).
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bahrain** on cooperation for prevention of human trafficking especially trafficking in women and children; rescue, recovery, repatriation and re-integration of victims of trafficking.
- **India and the US** have launched the Fulbright-Kalam Climate Fellowship, in a new initiative to advance bilateral cooperation on climate change, that will enable Indian research scholars to work with American institutions in the field.
- **India** will supply **18 Meter Gauge 1350 HP Diesel Electric Locomotives to Myanmar** to augment locomotive fleet of Myanmar Railways to meet increasing demand for passenger and freight traffic.

Snippets from the state

- **Maharashtra and Telangana** sign historic pacts on water sharing. Both states agree to construct five barrages to share water for irrigation.

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Science and Technology

- A total of five **healthcare ATMs** have come up in four states — Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh — under a Health Ministry pilot that combines telemedicine with a rudimentary free drugs programme.
- **Indian scientists** have developed a herbal medicine against dengue, which accounts for 50 per cent of the global population estimated to be at risk from the disease.
- **ISRO scientists** will place the sixth navigational satellite IRNSS-1F in orbit on March 10.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the country's sixth navigation satellite **IRNSS-1F** from the spaceport at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- **NASA** announced that it has moved back its next unmanned mission to **Mars to 2018**, after a component of the Mars spacecraft was found to have a leak in its key science instrument.
- Private space travel company **Blue Origin** expects its first test flights with people in **2017**.
- **Scientists in Japan** have discovered a form of bacteria that can digest the plastic in disposable plastic water bottles, raising hopes it could be used to dispose of some of the 311 million tons of plastic produced annually worldwide.
- To demonstrate that communication can be delivered with good aesthetics, state-run **BSNL plans to install 50 'zero base' mobile towers**, which are better looking and multi-functional.

Sports Point

- Indian men's doubles **duo of Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis (Badminton)** continued their superb form to emerge victorious at **the II Peru International Series 2016 in the Peruvian capital of Lima**.
- **Five-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova** announced at a news conference that she failed a drug test at the Australian Open.
- **Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL)** has entered into a four-year partnership with the Board of Control for **Cricket in India (BCCI)** as an associate sponsor for all international matches at home.

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Obituaries

- **Record producer Sir George Martin**, known as the “fifth Beatle”, has died, aged 90.
- Acclaimed **Brazilian percussionist Nana Vasconcelos** has died at age 71.

Important Days

- March 8 - **International Women’s Day**
- March 10 - **World Kidney Day**

Tit-bits

- Food technology start-up **Innerchef**, which operates in the ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat meals segments, has acquired two food start-ups, **Flavour Labs in Gurgaon and EatOnGo in Bengaluru**.
- **India** has become the **56th country** to sign a pact on conservation of birds of prey in **Africa and Eurasia**.



THANK YOU :-) :-) :-)