

## 1-17 March 2020 Current Affairs



**1)** On 11 March 2020 the World Health Organization declared novel Corona Virus as Global Pandemic as it is rapidly spreading across the world. Currently which is the other medical problem kept in the grade of pandemic? – [HIV/AIDS](#)

(The new Corona Virus (COVID-19) was graded as a global pandemic by the WHO as it the virus made its presence felt across all continents in the world and over 100 countries. As on 17 March 2020 there are over 180000 CONVID-19 cases across the globe with over 7 thousands deaths. It is worth mentioning that the only current global pandemic is AIDS/HIV. Other major medical conditions to be declared global pandemics in the past are various bouts of influenza, cholera, small-pox, tuberculosis, measles, yellow fever and malaria)

**2)** The Parliament of India on 13 March 2020 cleared the Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, 2020 as the Rajya Sabha passed the bill on this date. What is the main objective of this bill? – [To settle all the pending direct tax disputes in the country](#)

(The Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, 2020 seeks to resolve around 4.83 lakh direct tax cases that are currently pending in the various appellate forums of the country. It primarily aims to provide the taxpayers with an opportunity to settle all their direct tax disputes within the ongoing financial year)



**3)** During March 2020 which country became the world's first country to make the public transport completely free? – [Luxembourg](#)

(Luxembourg, the small and rich European country, from 1 March 2020 made all public transport in the country free. The measure was introduced with an aim to encourage Luxembourg's inhabitants to use it and curb the continued traffic problems the country is experiencing. From this date country's buses, trams, and trains became completely free of charge)

**4)** Union Cabinet approved the reconstruction of crisis-hit Yes Bank as per the scheme proposed by RBI. According to this reconstruction scheme State Bank of India will invest how much equity in Yes Bank? – [49%](#)

(Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 13 March 2020 announced that country's largest bank State Bank of India (SBI) will invest for 49% equity in Yes Bank and other investors are also being invited. There will be a three year lock-in period for all the investors)

**5)** On 12 March 2020 Iranian Government sought immediate financial assistance from the IMF to help it combat novel coronavirus. When was the last time that Iran had taken financial assistance from the IMF? – [1962](#)

(Iran has not received assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since a "standby credit" issued between 1960 and 1962. Iran is now seeking financial from the IMF for fighting one of the world's deadliest coronavirus outbreaks)

**6)** During March 2020 the Maharashtra cabinet approved a proposal to rename Mumbai Central station on name of which noted personality? - [Nana Shankarsheth](#)

(The Maharashtra cabinet on 12 March 2020 approved a proposal to rename Mumbai Central station in the city as "Nana Shankarsheth Mumbai Central Railway Station". Jagannath "Nana" Shankarsheth (1803-1865) was a Maharashtrian philanthropist and educationist famous for his contribution to Mumbai's development)



**7)** The Union Government on 7 March 2020 constituted the Delimitation Commission for delimitation of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland. Who was

appointed Chairperson of this commission? – [Justice RanjanaPrakash Desai](#)

(Justice RanjanaPrakash Desai, a former judge of the Supreme Court, was appointed the Chairperson of the Delimitation Committee for Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland. Delimitation in Jammu and Kashmir will be carried out per the provisions of J&K Reorganisation Act that split the state into two union territories of Jammu and Kashmir with an assembly and Ladakh without an assembly)

**8)** Which state topped in domestic solar rooftop installations in India as per information disclosed by the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy during March 2020? – [Gujarat](#)

(Gujarat has topped the solar roof top plants nationwide with 64% or around two-third of total domestic solar rooftop installations of 79,950 systems installed across the country. The state boasted 50,915 solar rooftop installation systems have a total capacity of 177.67 MW. It was followed by Maharashtra with 5,513 such installations)

**9)** During March 2020 Indian men's hockey team was ranked at which place in the latest FIH team rankings? – [4th place](#)

(The Indian men's hockey team climbed one spot to rank fourth in the world in the latest FIH team rankings. This is their highest rank since the inception of the world rankings in 2003. The standings are topped by world champions Belgium who are followed by Australia. In the women's list, India occupy the ninth spot)

**10)** During March 2020 who took over as the new Finance Secretary replacing Rajiv Kumar? – [Ajay BhushanPandey](#)

(Revenue Secretary Ajay BhushanPandey, a 1984 batch Indian Administrative Service officer of Maharashtra cadre, took over as the new Finance Secretary of India. He replaced Rajiv Kumar, who was holding the post since July 2019)

**11)** What is the rate of interest for the beneficiaries of the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) for current year (2019-20), as was announced on 5 March 2020? – [8.5%](#)

(The rate of interest on the EPF has been lowered to 8.5% for 2019-20. The Employees' Provident

Fund Organisation (EPFO) had provided 8.65% rate of interest on EPF for 2018-19 to its around six crore subscribers)



**12)** During March 2020 Uttarakhand Government named which place as state's new summer capital? – [Gairsain](#)

(Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat on 5 March 2020 announced that Gairsain was named as the new summer capital of the state. Uttarakhand is the second state in India after J&K to have two state capitals. Situated at 1,650 m above sea level, Gairsain is small town in state's Chamoli district and is over 250 km from main capital Dehradun)

**13)** Which major public sector bank during March 2020 done away with the minimum balance requirement for all of its savings bank accounts? – [State Bank of India](#)

(India's biggest lender SBI removed the minimum balance requirement for all 44.51 crore savings bank accounts. Currently, SBI customers need to maintain Average Monthly Balance of Rs. 3000, Rs. 2000 and Rs. 1000 in Metro, Semi-Urban and Rural areas respectively. The bank also rationalised interest rate on savings bank accounts to a flat 3% per annum for all buckets)



**14)** Who became the first Indian to receive Saudi Arabia's premium residency, the special permit also known as Saudi Green Card? - [M A Yusuff Ali](#)

(Abu Dhabi-based Indian retail tycoon M AYusuff Ali became the first Indian to receive Saudi Arabia's premium residency. This was disclosed by his office on 2 March 2020. Yusuff Ali is the chairman of the LuLu Group, who was ranked the richest expat in the UAE by the Forbes magazine last year. Saudi Arabia's premium residency grants expatriates the right to live, work and own business and property in the Kingdom without need for a sponsor)

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**15)** Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) earned which distinction in the financial year 2018-19? – **Manufacturing most locomotives in the year**

(The Chittaranjan Locomotive Works located in West Bengal produced 402 locomotives in the financial year 2018-19. CLW thus surpassed its own record of producing 350 locomotives which it had manufactured during the year 2017-18. CLW thus got the recognition from the Limca Book of Records)  
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**3)** On 17 March 2020 which entity became the first private entity in India to receive the licence for conducting coronavirus (Covid-19) tests? - **Roche Diagnostics India**

(French firm Roche Diagnostics' Indian subsidiary Roche Diagnostics India received the licence for conducting coronavirus tests after approval from Indian drug regulator Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) on 17 March 2020. It thus became the first private entity in the country to get such permission after the government decided to allow accredited private labs to test for COVID-19)  
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## 18-23 March 2020 Current Affairs



**1)** Which country became the first country to pull out of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games due to the coronavirus pandemic? – **Canada**

(Canada's Olympic and Paralympic Committees on 22 March 2020 called the organizers of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to postpone the Games as it decided to pull out of the Games formally. It thus became the first country to take this decision. The 2020 Olympics Games are to commence from 24 July 2020 but the organizers are under heavy pressure to postpone the Games due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic)  
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**4)** The 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of which iconic Bangladeshi leader was celebrated during March 2020? - **Sheikh MujiburRahman**

(Sheikh MujiburRahman, affectionately called "Bangabandhu" was the first President of Bangladesh and later he served as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh between 1971 and 1975. He was assassinated in 1975. He was the founder of Awami League. The present Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina is her daughter. MujiburRahman's 100<sup>th</sup> Birth anniversary was celebrated on 17 March 2020 with much fanfare despite global coronavirus scare. Indian Prime Minister NarendraModi participated in the event through tele-conferencing)  
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**2)** Which country overtook Hong Kong as the world's freest economy according to a report of Washington think tank Heritage Foundation? – **Hong Kong**

(Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based think tank Singapore overtook Hong Kong as the world's freest economy, a position it had been in since 1995. Hong Kong's economic freedom fell due to political and social unrest which led to a decline in investment freedom. The city's economic freedom score is 89.1, a drop of 1.1 points from last year)  
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**5)** Which country was named the world's happiest country in the World Happiness Report 2020? – **Finland**



(Finland has been named the world's happiest country, according to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's World Happiness Report 2020. It's followed by Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland and Norway, while India is ranked 144 on the list. Countries are ranked on six key variables, namely- GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and absence of corruption)

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**6)** Which country had advocated following the strategy of "Herd Immunity" to face the challenge of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and later announced that it will adopt conventional methods to face the viral pandemic? – [United Kingdom](#)

(The Government of the United Kingdom had earlier announced that to fight the menace of novel coronavirus menace it will is working on to adopt the strategy of "Herd Immunity" under which not very strict social-distancing measures are adopted. The government would no longer try to track and trace the contacts of every suspected case, and it would test only people who are admitted to hospitals. But the plan came under heavy criticism and later Prime Minister Boris Johnson declared that the county will adopt conventional methods to fight coronavirus)

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## 24-31 March 2020 Current Affairs



**1)** Indian Government on 26 March 2020 announced a relief package for the most vulnerable sections of the population in view of the three-week nationwide lockdown that started from 25 March 2020. What is the total value of this mammoth package? – [Rs. 1.7 lakh crore](#)

(The Rs. 1.7 lakh crore relief package was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 26 March 2020. Among other issues, this package aims to address the most basic need of millions of Indians' food security. Through the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, the government will make available 5 kilos of rice or wheat and a kilo of pulses free for the next three months. This scheme alone covers about two-thirds of the population, or 800 million people. A slew of measures, including cash transfers, cooking gas cylinders, provident fund contribution (both the

employee's and the employer's) for small companies employing less than 100 people for the next three months, insurance coverage for healthcare workers (Rs. 50 lakh per person) including Accredited Social Health Activists, collateral-free loans for self-help groups, financial assistance for registered construction workers)

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**2)** In view of growing coronavirus cases in the country, in an unprecedented decision Indian Railways announced suspension of all its passenger services from the midnight of 22 March 2020. Which train became the last train to complete its journey? – [Vivek Express](#)

(Dibrugarh-Kanniyakumari Vivek Express, became the last passenger train of the Indian Railway to complete its journey as it reached its destination Kanniyakumari on 25 March 2020. The train had started from Dibrugarh in Assam on the night of 21 March 2020 and while the train was on its way the services of all passenger trains were suspended. Vivek Express is country's longest-running passenger train covering around 4,200 km. This train thus became the last train of India to ferry passenger before halting complete services)

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**3)** During March 2020, which country became the 30th member of NATO? - [North Macedonia](#)

(The Republic of North Macedonia on 28 March 2020 became the 30th member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It is a small country in the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe. It gained its independence in 1991 as one of the successor states of Yugoslavia)

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**4)** The US President Donald Trump on 27 March 2020 signed into law a historic stimulus package for the American public and the US economy fight the devastating spread of Covid-19. What is the total value of this stimulus package which is the largest-ever stimulus package in US history? - [\\$2 trillion](#)

(The \$2 trillion stimulus is the largest emergency aid package in US history. It represents a massive financial injection into a struggling economy with provisions aimed at helping American workers,

small businesses and industries grappling with the economic disruption caused by coronavirus spread)

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**5)** What is the name given to the operation launched by Indian Army to extend help to civil authorities and prevent coronavirus spread in the force? – **“Operation Namaste”**

(“Operation Namaste” was launched by the Indian Army on 28 March 2020 with the primary aim of preventing spread of Coronavirus and also to extend help to civil authorities)

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**6)** What are the new dates of Tokyo Olympics, which were postponed due to coronavirus? – **23 July to 8 August 2021**

(The Tokyo Olympics will take place from 23 July to 8 August 2021 after the event was rescheduled due to the coronavirus pandemic)

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**7)** During March 2020 which startup became the first Indian licensee to make Covid-19 test kits? - **CoSara Diagnostics**

(Ahmedabad-based molecular diagnostics company CoSara Diagnostics has become the first and reportedly only Indian startup to receive a license from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation to manufacture RT-PCR COVID-19 test kits)



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**8)** Albert Uderzo, who passed away on 24 March 2020, was co-creator of which famous comic strip? - **'Asterix and Obelix'**

(Albert Uderzo of France, co-creator and illustrator of the 'Asterix and Obelix' comics, passed away at the age of 92 on 24 March 2020. Uderzo and author René Goscinny created Asterix in 1959. This comic strip was first published in Franco-Belgian comics)

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**9)** What is the name of the Pune-based company that successfully developed India's first indigenous coronavirus testing kit in record six weeks? - **Mylab Discovery Solutions Private Limited**

(Pune-based Mylab Discovery Solutions Private Limited announced that it has successfully developed India's first indigenous coronavirus testing kit. The kit has been approved by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). A single kit costs Rs. 80,000 and can test 100 patients)

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**10)** The first Covid-19 positive case from India's north-east was reported from which state? – **Manipur**

(A 23-year-old girl in Manipur, who had returned from the UK, tested positive for coronavirus (Covid-19) on 23 March 2020. This case thus became the first positive case for Covid-19 from India's northeastern region)

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**11)** The RBI reduced the Repo Rate by how many basis points on 27 March 2020 amid lockdown due to coronavirus? – **75 basis points**

(Shaktikanta Das, the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 27 March 2020 announced that the all-important Repo Rate has been reduced by 75 basis points to 4.4%. The reverse repo-rate was reduced by 90 basis points to 4%. This important step was announced amidst the growing business worries due to increasing impact of Coronavirus in India)

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**12)** Which country became the first to overtake China in number of confirmed cases of coronavirus? – **USA**

(The United States of America (USA) on 27 March 2020 became the first country to overtake China as far as number of confirmed cases of coronavirus (Covid-19) is concerned. China had over 81,700 cases on this date while the US reported more cases than it)

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**13)** Which African country went to polls amidst Covid-19 pandemic on 29 March 2020? – **Mali**

(The first round of long-delayed parliamentary elections were held in Mali on 29 March 2020 despite the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that this African country has reported several coronavirus cases. The second phase of the elections are scheduled on 19 April 2020)