



drishti

News Analysis (13 Apr, 2020)

[drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/13-04-2020/print](https://drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/13-04-2020/print)

## World Bank on India's Growth

### Why in News

The **World Bank** has released the **South Asia Economic Focus report**. The report saw **India's growth at 1.5-2.8% in 2020-21** which is the **slowest since 1991 economic reforms**.

### Key Points

- The **South Asian region** has been estimated to **grow by 1.8-2.8% in 2020**, down from the 6.3%, projected six months ago.
- For 2020-21, for India, estimated growth (1.5-2.8%) is lower than 4.1-5.4% estimated in October, 2019.
- It estimated that **India will grow 4.8% to 5% in the 2019-20** fiscal year that ended on March 31, 2020.
  - This is lower by 1.2-1% of the estimate made in October 2019.
- India is **likely to record its worst growth performance in 2020-21 since the 1991 liberalisation** as the coronavirus outbreak severely disrupts the economy.
  - Growth recovery estimated at the end of 2019 have been overtaken by the negative impacts of the global crisis.
- **Disruptions due to Coronavirus:**
  - The Covid-19 outbreak came at a time when **India's economy was already slowing** due to persistent financial sector weaknesses.
  - To contain it, the government imposed a lockdown, shutting factories and businesses, suspending flights, stopping trains and restricting mobility of goods and people.
  - This resulted in **domestic supply and demand disruptions**.

- **Impact :**
  - A sharp growth deceleration in FY21 (April 2020 to March 2021).
  - The **services sector** will be particularly hit.
  - A revival in domestic investment is likely to be delayed given enhanced risk aversion on a global scale, and renewed concerns about financial sector resilience.
- Growth is expected to rebound to 5% in Fiscal 2022 (2021-22) as the impact of **Covid-19** dissipates, and due to fiscal and monetary policy support.
 

India has set aside **just over 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** for programs to increase health sector spending and compensate the unemployed, with the bulk of the money going towards cash transfers, free food and gas cylinders, and interest-free loans.
- **Suggestions by the World Bank:**
  - India should focus on mitigating the spread of the disease, and to make sure that everybody has food.
  - It should also focus on temporary jobs programmes, especially at the local levels. These initiatives should be supported.
  - It should prevent bankruptcies, especially of a small and medium sized enterprise.
- **World Bank's Support to India**
  - The World Bank has **approved USD 1 billion to India**, of which the first tranche has already been released to deal with the emergency in the health care sector.
  - The first tranche aims at delivering civilian diagnostic equipment, put in place additional capacity to deal with testing and make testing available that benefits the entire population.
  - It is also working with India on two additional operations, which is anticipated to be ready in a matter of weeks.
 

These include, employment, banking and micro, small and medium enterprises sectors.
- **Other international agencies that have made a similar growth estimates:**
  - **The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** sees India's economic growth decrease to 4% in the current fiscal.
  - **S&P Global Ratings** has estimated the GDP growth forecast for the country to 3.5% from a previous downgrade of 5.2%.
  - **Moody's Investors Service** has slashed its estimate of India's GDP growth during the 2020 calendar year to 2.5%, from an earlier estimate of 5.3%.

## 1991 Economic Reforms

- **Year 1990-1991** Indian economy faced several uncertainties and strains. Inflation had increased to an annual rate of 17%.

- The fiscal deficit reached a peak of 8.2% of GDP while revenue deficit reached to a height of 2.6% of GDP, **growth rate decelerated to about 1%** showing symptoms of recession and industrial production falling at low level.
- The foreign exchange reserves of the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** had fallen to less than USD \$1 billion resulting in an unprecedented external debt crisis.
- Hence, the **New Economic Policy** was introduced, which consisted of a gradual process of **easing out government controls of industrial deregulations and some import liberalization.**

Significant changes in national policy with regards to Taxation, Industrial Licensing, Imports, Technology and Investment priorities were made.

### South Asia Economic Focus

- The South Asia Economic Focus is a **biannual economic update** presenting recent **economic developments and a near-term economic outlook for South Asia.**
- It aims at providing important **background information and timely analysis of key indicators and economic and financial developments** of relevance to **World Bank Group operations** and interaction with counterparts in the region, particularly during annual and spring meetings.
- This biannual series is prepared by the **Office of the Chief Economist for the South Asia region.**
- It includes a Focus section presenting more in-depth analysis of an economic topic of relevance for stability, growth, and prosperity in the region as well as country briefs covering **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.**
- It concludes with a data section providing key economic indicators for South Asia "at a glance."

Source :IE

---

## Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Expenditure

---

### Why in News

---

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has clarified that the contributions to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund or the State relief fund will not qualify as **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** expenditure, while any donation to the **PM CARES Fund** will.

### Key Points

---

- The Chief Minister's Relief Fund or State Relief Fund for **Covid-19** is **not included in Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013**, and therefore any contribution to such funds shall not qualify as admissible CSR expenditure.

Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013 provides the list of activities that can be included in CSR.

- Some political parties criticised this saying it is **discriminatory** and goes **against the constitutional principle of federalism**.
- However, **donations to the State Disaster Management Authority to combat Covid-19** can be counted as admissible CSR expenditure.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

---

- The term "Corporate Social Responsibility" in general can be referred to as a corporate initiative to assess and take responsibility for the **company's effects on the environment and impact on social welfare**.
- In India, the concept of CSR is governed by **clause 135 of the Companies Act, 2013**.
- India is the first country in the world to mandate CSR spending along with a framework to identify potential CSR activities.
- The CSR provisions within the Act is applicable to companies with an annual turnover of **1,000 crore and more, or a net worth of Rs. 500 crore and more, or a net profit of Rs. 5 crore and more**.
- The Act requires companies to set up a **CSR committee** which shall recommend a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy to the Board of Directors and also monitor the same from time to time.
- The Act encourages companies to spend **2% of their average net profit in the previous three years** on CSR activities.
- The indicative activities, which can be undertaken by a company under CSR, have been specified under **Schedule VII of the Act**. The activities include:
  - Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty,
  - Promotion of education, gender equality and empowering women,
  - Combating Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and other diseases,
  - Ensuring environmental sustainability;
  - Contribution to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central Government for socio-economic development and relief and funds for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, other backward classes, minorities and women etc.

**Source : TH**

---

---

## Why in News

---

Recently, the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** has initiated the **Science and Technology of Yoga and Meditation (SATYAM) programme**.

Under SATYAM, DST has **invited proposals to study appropriate intervention of yoga and meditation in fighting Covid-19** and similar kinds of viruses.

## Key Points

---

- **Objective:** DST is encouraging scientists, clinicians and experienced practitioners of yoga and meditation, with a proven track record, to **submit concept notes on the proposal covering:**
  - Aims and objectives of proposed work.
  - Existing literature.
  - Methodology.
  - Expected outcome.
  - Budget requirement.
  - Details of host institutions along with detailed bio-data of the principal investigator with latest publications included in scientific journal databases.
- **Aim:**

To **provide assistance to society** in today's critical condition arising due to pandemic Covid-19.

This is a **need-based call**, therefore, proposed work should be completed within 6-12 months.
- **Dimensions of Covid:** Covid-19 usually has **three dimensions**, related to:
  - Stress (worry, sitting at home).
  - Respiratory.
  - Immune system.
- **Scientific Investigation:** The **effects of yoga and meditation on the life** of a person during such stressful times have to be **scientifically investigated**.

Sometimes, there is an **empirical correlation in the actions and the outcome**, but it needs to be understood scientifically.
- **Modern Tools:** All the participants are expected to work together **using the modern tools of life science and bio-sciences** to understand what works and what does not.

If something works then what is the efficacy and in what conditions does it work.
- **Holistic Target:** The **project may address** improving immunity, improving respiratory systems and interventions to overcome respiratory disorders and other dimensions like stress, anxiety and depression-related issues due to isolation, uncertainty and disruption in normal life.

## Science and Technology of Yoga and Meditation Programme

---

- It was **conceptualized in 2015** by the DST under its **Cognitive Science Research Initiative (CSRI)**.
- **Aims:** To foster scientific research on the effects of yoga and meditation on physical & mental health and on cognitive functioning in healthy people as well as in patients with disorders.
- **Themes:**
  - Investigations on the effect of Yoga and Meditation on physical and mental health and well being.
  - Investigations on the effect of Yoga and Meditation on the body, brain, and mind in terms of basic processes and mechanisms.
- **Eligibility:**
  - Scientists/academicians with **research background in 'Yoga and Meditation'** and having regular positions are invited to participate in this initiative.
  - **Practitioners actively involved in yoga and meditation practices** are also encouraged to apply in collaboration with academic and research institutions of repute.
- **Project Duration:** The project is tenable for a maximum period of **three years**.

## Cognitive Science Research Initiative

---

- DST initiated this as a **highly focused programme in 2008** during the **11<sup>th</sup> Five year plan**.
- The DSRI facilitates a platform to the scientific community to work for better solutions of challenges related with cognitive disorders and social issues through various psychological tools & batteries, early diagnosis & better therapies, intervention technologies and rehabilitation programmes.
- **Aim:**

To foster scientific research in the interdisciplinary field of Cognitive Science for better understanding of Indian mind sets, languages and cognitive disorders etc.
- CSRI **revolutionizes research in various fields**, such as:
  - Nature and origins of mental disorders, of physiological, social and neuro-chemical origins.
  - Design of better learning tools and educational paradigm.
  - Design of better software technologies and artificial intelligence devices.
  - Streamlining of social policy formulation and analysis.
- **Activities Supported under CSRI:**
  - Individual R&D Projects.
  - Multi-centric Mega Projects.
  - Post Doctoral Fellowship.
  - Support for Schools, Training, Workshops, Conferences, etc.

## False Negative Tests: A Concern

---

### Why in News

---

Recently, there have been concerns about the manner in which some **Covid-19** patients have apparently relapsed due to **false negative** tests.

They have been tested positive only a few days after testing negative.

### False Negative Test

---

- There is a **possibility that the virus does not show up in the first test** because patients have not rid themselves of the virus. However, on **testing again, the virus shows up** and the patients test positive.
- According to the research on the subject of false negative tests, **no lab test is 100% accurate.**
- Although the tests based on detection of genetic material are very sensitive, they can be negative sometimes. Therefore, scientists and researchers have to constantly deal with the **positive and negative predictive values.**

### Possible Reasons

---

- The **swab is not obtained or processed correctly** or maybe **obtained too early.**
  - An initial swab sample may **not always collect enough genetic material** to provide an accurate test.
  - This problem may arise more often in patients who do not show many symptoms at the time of their test.
- The **test runs badly** due to some technical glitch.
- The **virus may shed in different amounts** and is **probably not present in the nose** while the swab is collected.
  - If the infection is in the lung, then a nose swab may not detect it.
  - According to a study on **SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)** respiratory swabs can be negative, but faeces may test positive in tests done at the same time which **proves that the virus can exist in the body even if not in the nose at a given time.**

### Suggestions

---

- The public data on false negative rates in the clinical setting is very limited so **each negative test must be guarded and analysed.**
- A **negative test does not mean** the person does not have the disease so the test results need to be **considered in the context of patient characteristics and exposure.**
- Public health officials **should stick to principles of evidence-based reasoning** regarding diagnostic test results and false-negatives.
- False negative test results may be reassuring for the low-risk individuals but for higher-risk individuals, even those without symptoms, the risk of such results **requires additional protective measures against the spread of disease**, like extended self-isolation.
- To be **confirmed negative after being positive**, a patient normally **needs two negative swabs 24 hours apart** to be sure.

Source: IE

---

## Neighboring Rights Law

---

### Why in News

---

The **French competition regulator has asked Google to negotiate with publishers and news agencies** the remuneration due to them **under the law relating to neighboring rights.**

- The French regulator has announced that Google must **start paying media for sharing their content**, as its practices had caused serious harm to the press sector.
- The order is an **interim decision**. Though the order is only for the French press, it has global ramifications for Google and the press, as it can set a legal precedent and shape the discourse around the economics of news on the net.
- The neighboring rights law that came into force on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 in France aims to set the conditions for a balanced negotiation between publishers, news agencies and digital platforms, in order to redefine, in favour of press publishers and news agencies, the sharing of the value between these actors.

## Neighboring Rights

---



- According to the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**, related rights, also referred to as neighboring rights, **protect the legal interests of certain persons and legal entities that contribute to making works available to the public or that produce subject matter which, while not qualifying as works under the copyright systems of all countries**, contains sufficient creativity or technical and organizational skill to justify recognition of a copyright-like property right.
- **Traditionally**, related rights have been granted to **three categories of beneficiaries**:
  - Performers (actors/musicians);
  - Producers of sound recordings (also referred to as phonograms); and
  - Broadcasting organizations.

## Protection in India

---

- The **Copyright Act, 1957** protects original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works and cinematograph films and sound recordings from unauthorized uses. Unlike the case with patents, **copyright protects the expressions and not the ideas**. There is no copyright in an idea.
  - Copyright is a right given by the law to creators of literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works and producers of cinematograph films and sound recordings. In fact, it is a bundle of rights including, inter alia, rights of reproduction, communication to the public, adaptation and translation of the work.
  - Copyright is an **Intellectual Property Right (IPR)**.
    - Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are the rights given to persons over the creations of their minds: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names and images used in commerce.
    - Other IPRs include trademarks, **geographical indications**, industrial designs, patents, etc.
- Copyright as provided by the Indian Copyright Act is valid only within the borders of the country. To secure protection to Indian works in foreign countries, **India has become a member of the following international conventions on copyright and neighbouring (related) rights**:
  - Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic works, 1886.
  - Universal Copyright Convention (Revised in 1971).
  - Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms against Unauthorised Duplication of their Phonograms, 1971.
  - Multilateral Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation of Copyright Royalties, 1979.
  - Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement, 1995.

**Source: IE**

---

# Use of ICT in Education

---

Recently, the **Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC)** has launched a mobile application and **plans to book a slot with the All India Radio (AIR) for the audio broadcast** of study materials for government school students.

The initiative aims to help the government school students, so that their studies do not suffer due to the **Covid-19** lockdown.

## Key Points

---

- The mobile application named **“Unnayan: Mera Mobile, Mera Vidyalaya”** has been launched for **Class VI to XII of over 70,000 government-run schools**.
- The app has been jointly developed by the **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**, the **Bihar government** and **Eckovation**, a social learning platform.
- In collaboration with UNICEF, **class-wise and subject-wise study materials are being prepared** which will be broadcast by AIR.  
Radio has a deep penetration into villages and is much simpler to operate.
- The BEPC has also encouraged students for the use of **online education portals like Diksha**.  
**On Diksha app NCERT books are available** free of cost for Class 1 to XII and have also integrated audio-visual media along with digital textbooks.

## Challenges

---

- **Digital Divide:** There is a **huge digital divide** that exists in Bihar.
- **Poverty:** Most of the **people in Bihar are poor and live below the poverty line** and are currently **struggling to meet their daily sustenance**. Expecting them to find ways to make their children digitally connect with schools or participate in online classes is irrational.  
Television and **Internet facilities are still luxury items** for many people
- **Capacity Development:** Expecting teachers to seamlessly move to online platforms **without adequate training** and support would also be unreasonable.
- **Inequalities:** In a State like Bihar **distance learning has also revealed glaring challenges** that stem from socio-economic, digital and educational inequalities.

## UNICEF

- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is a special program of the United Nations (UN) **devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children**.

- It was **created in 1946 as the International Children’s Emergency Fund (ICEF)** by the UN relief Rehabilitation Administration to help children affected by World War II.
- **Objective:** It is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly **to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.**

It is guided by the **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.**

- **Nobel Prize:** It was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1965 for “promotion of brotherhood among the nations”.
- **Headquarters:** New York City.

**Source: TH**

---

## Bharat Padhe Online and YUKTI Portal: MHRD

---

### Why in News

---

Recently, the **Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD)** has launched **two new initiatives - Bharat Padhe Online Campaign** and **YUKTI web-portal** - for improving and monitoring the online education ecosystem in India.

### Bharat Padhe Online

---

- ‘Bharat Padhe Online’ is a **week-long campaign upto 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2020** for crowdsourcing of ideas **for improving the online education ecosystem of India.**
- It aims to invite all the best brains in India to share suggestions/solutions directly with the HRD Ministry to overcome constraints of online education while promoting the available digital education platforms.
- **Students and teachers are the main target audience in it.**

### YUKTI Portal

---

- **YUKTI (Young India Combating Covid with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation)** is a unique portal and dashboard **to monitor and record the efforts and initiatives of MHRD.**
- It will also cover the **various initiatives and efforts of the institutions in academics, research especially related to Covid-19,** social initiatives by institutions and the measures taken for the betterment of the total wellbeing of the students.
- It will **allow various institutions to share their strategies for various challenges** which are there because of the unprecedented situation of Covid-19 and other future initiatives.

- The portal will also establish **a two-way communication channel** between the Ministry of HRD and the institutions so that the Ministry can provide the necessary support system to the institutions.
- This portal will help in **addressing critical issues** related to student promotion policies, placements related challenges and physical and mental well-being of students in these challenging times.
- **Objectives:** The portal will give inputs for better planning and will enable it to monitor effectively its activities for coming six months.
  - It aims to fulfil the goals of the Ministry in the wake of Covid-19 to keep the academic community healthy, both physically & mentally and to enable a continuous high-quality learning environment for learners.

**Source: PIB**

## Ebola Death in Democratic Republic of Congo

### Why in News

According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, the Democratic Republic of Congo recorded a second **Ebola death** in days following more than seven weeks without a new case.



- The Ebola outbreak has killed more than 2,200 people since August 2018. During this outbreak it **killed about two thirds of those it infected.**
- The cases appear when the **Democratic Republic of Congo** had been due to mark an end to the second-deadliest outbreak of the virus on record.
- **No clarity on contractions:** It is not yet clear how the new cases emerged. Neither there was any contact with other Ebola patients, nor the patient was a survivor of the virus which could have relapsed.

- **Flare-ups or one-off transmissions (sudden outburst) are common towards the** end of Ebola outbreaks, and a new case does not necessarily mean that the virus will spread out of control again.

## **Ebola Virus Disease**

- Ebola virus disease, formerly known as **Ebola haemorrhagic fever** was first discovered in **1976 near the Ebola River** in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then, the virus has been infecting people from time to time, leading to outbreaks in several African countries.
- **Transmission: Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family** are natural Ebola virus hosts.
  - **Animal to human transmission:** Ebola is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected animals such as fruit bats, chimpanzees, gorillas, monkeys, forest antelope or porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest.
  - **Human-to-human transmission:** Ebola spreads via direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with:
    - Blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola.
    - Objects that have been contaminated with body fluids (like blood, feces, vomit) from a person sick with Ebola or the body of a person who died from Ebola.
- **Incubation Period:** The incubation period, that is, the time interval from infection with the virus to onset of symptoms, is from 2 to 21 days.

A person infected with Ebola cannot spread the disease until they develop symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Symptoms of Ebola can be sudden and include:
  - Fever
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhoea
  - Symptoms of impaired kidney and liver function
  - In some cases, both internal and external bleeding

- **Diagnosis:** It can be difficult to clinically distinguish Ebola from other infectious diseases such as malaria, typhoid fever, and meningitis but confirmation that symptoms are caused by Ebola virus infection are made using the following diagnostic methods:
  - Antibody-capture Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA). It also tests **Acute Encephalitis Syndrome** and **Kyasanur Forest Disease**.
  - Antigen-capture detection tests
  - Serum neutralization test
  - Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) assay
  - Electron microscopy
  - Virus isolation by cell culture.
- **Vaccines:** An experimental Ebola vaccine, called **rVSV-ZEBOV** proved highly protective against EVD in a major trial in Guinea in 2015.
  - The rVSV-ZEBOV vaccine is being used in the ongoing 2018-2019 Ebola outbreak in DRC. Pregnant and breastfeeding women should have access to the vaccine under the same conditions as for the general population.
  - The public mistrust and militia attacks have prevented health workers from reaching some hard-hit areas for administering the vaccines.

**Source : TH**

---

## Women SHGs Fight Against Covid-19

---

### Why in News

---

Women members of around 63 lakh **Self Help Groups** (SHGs) across the country formed under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**, **Ministry of Rural Development** are contributing in every possible way to contain the spread of **Covid-19**.

### Key Points

---

- All **State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs)** have been made aware of the various aspects of the disease including the need to maintain personal hygiene, social distancing etc. through **Audio Visual (AV) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material and advisories**.
- SRLMs are using all the information to ensure that the correct message is communicated to the community by various means like telephone calls, wall writings, pamphlets/fliers, social media, etc.

- **Important Interventions by SRLMs:**

- **Bihar SRLM (JEEViKA):**

- Utilizing **Mobile Vaani Platform** to spread awareness among the community through voice messages and answering queries on Covid-19.
- **Mobile Vaani (MV)** is a mobile-based voice media platform for underserved areas in India whereby users generate content in their own local dialect through an **Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS)**.

- **Uttar Pradesh SRLM (Prerna):**

- Use of **rangolis** and markings such as lines and circles to re-emphasise the need for '**social distancing**'.
- Wall paintings to spread key messages about Covid prevention.

- **Jharkhand SRML:**

Initiated **Didi helpline**, which helps migrant labourers by providing them verified information 24 hours.

- **Kerala SRML:**

Dispelling the widespread fake news causing panic through its **WhatsApp groups** and propagating only the right information.

## Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission

---

- It was launched by the **Ministry of Rural Development** in **2011**.
- It **aims** at creating **efficient and effective institutional platforms** for the rural poor enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services.
- NRLM has set out with an agenda to cover 7 crore rural poor households, across 600 districts, 6000 blocks, 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats and 6 lakh villages in the country **through self-managed SHGs and institutions and support** them for livelihoods collectives in a period of 8-10 years.
- **Salient Features:**
  - It lays **special emphasis on targeting the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable communities (i.e. Antyodaya)** and their financial inclusion.
  - Innovative projects under **National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP)** to pilot alternate channels of financial inclusion, creating value chains around rural products, introduce innovative models in livelihoods promotion and access to finance and scale-up initiatives on digital finance and livelihood interventions.
  - DAY-NRLM provides for mutually beneficial working relationships and formal platforms for consultations between **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** and **Community Based Organizations (CBOs)**.
  - NRLM has also **developed an activity map to facilitate convergence in different areas of interventions** where NRLM institutions and PRIs could work together which has been disseminated to all SRLMs.

## Covid-19 Affects Odisha's Art and Festival

---

### Why in News

---

Recently, Odisha's Ganjam district administration banned the **Meru Jatra festival** and congregations related to it at temples on the occasion of **Mahavishub Sankranti (13<sup>th</sup> April, 2020)**, due to Covid-19.

Covid-19 has also affected the sale of **Pattachitra paintings**.

### Meru Jatra Festival

---

- Meru Jatra marks the end of the 21-day-long festival of penance named **'Danda Nata'**.
- Danda Nata is celebrated in the month of **'Chaitra'**.
  - Danda as the name implies, is **self-inflicted pain, which the danduas (people who participate in the festival) undergo** to pay their obeisance to the **lord Kali**. It is also a form of worshipping the lord Shiva and his consort Parvati.
  - The **origin of the festival** is generally traced to **8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> AD** after the decadence of Buddhism in Orissa.
- On the occasion of **Mahavishub Sankranti** thousands of devotees used to gather at the **Tara Tarini hill shrine** and other temples.
  - Tara Tarini hill shrine, located at a hilltop on banks of the **Rushikulya river**, is a major centre of Shakti worship in Odisha.
  - **The twin goddesses Tara and Tarini** represent one Shakti and are the main deity of Ganjam district (Odisha).
- **Mahavishub Sankranti** is the start of the **Odia New Year**.
- Earlier, the administrations had also banned the famous **Chaitra Jatra festival at Tara Tarini hill shrine** as a precautionary measure against Covid-19 infection.



## Pattachitra Painting



- Pattachitra style of painting is one of the **oldest and most popular art forms of Odisha**.
- The **name Pattachitra has evolved from the Sanskrit words Patta**, meaning **canvas**, and **Chitra**, meaning **picture**. Pattachitra is done on canvas and is manifested by rich colourful application, creative motifs and designs, and portrayal of simple themes, mostly mythological in depiction.
- Some of the popular themes represented through this art form are **Thia Badhia** - depiction of the temple of Jagannath; **Krishna Lila** - enactment of Jagannath as Lord Krishna displaying his powers as a child; **Dasabatara Patti** - the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu; **Panchamukhi** - depiction of Lord Ganesh as a five-headed deity.
- The Pattachitra, when painted on cloth, follows a traditional process of preparation of the canvas. First, the **base is prepared by coating the cloth with the soft, white, stone powder of chalk and glue made from tamarind seeds**.
- It is a tradition to complete the borders of the painting first. The painter then starts making a rough sketch directly with the brush using light red and yellow. The colours used are normally white, red, yellow, and black.
- When the painting is completed it is held over a charcoal fire and lacquer is applied to the surface. This makes the painting water resistant and durable, besides giving it a shining finish.

**Source: TH, TH**

## Renewable Energy Certificates

### Why in News

Recently, sales of **Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)** rose over 79 % to 8.38 lakh units in March compared to 4.68 lakh in the same month a year ago **owing to good supply**.

## Key Points

---

- Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) **is a market-based instrument to promote renewable sources of energy and development of the market in electricity.**  
One REC is created when **one megawatt hour of electricity** is generated from an **eligible renewable energy source.**
- REC acts as a **tracking mechanism for solar, wind, and other green energies** as they flow into the power grid.
- RECs go by many names, including **Green tag, Tradable Renewable Certificates (TRCs), Renewable Electricity Certificates, or Renewable Energy Credits.**
- Under **Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO)** bulk purchasers like discoms, open access consumers and capacitive users are required to buy a certain proportion of RECs. They can buy RECs from renewable energy producers.  
**RPO was instituted in 2011**, it is a mandate that requires **large power procurers to buy a predetermined fraction of their electricity from renewable sources.**
- The **proportion** of renewable energy for utilities **is fixed by the central and state electricity regulatory commissions.**
- In India, RECs are traded on **two power exchanges — Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) and Power Exchange of India (PXIL).**
- The price of RECs is **determined by market demand**, and contained between the **'floor price' (minimum price)** and **'forbearance price' (maximum price)** specified by the **Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC).**

### Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC).

- CERC is a **regulator of the power sector** in India.
- It intends to **promote competition, efficiency and economy** in **bulk power markets, improve the quality of supply, promote investments** and **advise** the government on the removal of institutional barriers to bridge the demand supply gap.
- It is a **statutory body** functioning with **quasi-judicial status** under **the Electricity Act 2003.**

**Source: ET**

---

## Yanomami Tribe

---

### Why in News

---

Recently, a **Yanomami indigenous** boy died in Brazil after contracting **Covid-19**, raising fears for the Amazon tribes.

## Key Points

---

- Brazil is home to an estimated 8,00,000 indigenous people from more than 300 ethnic groups.
- **Guarani, Kaingang, Pataxó Hã Hã Hã Tupinambá, Yanomami, Tikuna and Akuntsu** are popular tribe of Amazon.
- **Yanomami Tribe**
  - Yanomami, also called **South American Indians**, live in the remote forest of the **Orinoco River basin** in **southern Venezuela** and the **northernmost reaches of the Amazon River basin** in **northern Brazil**.
  - They numbered around 27,000 individuals throughout their range.
  - Yanomami live in small, scattered, semi permanent villages and speak the **Xirianá language**.
  - They practice **hunting and slash-and-burn agriculture**.
- It can be noted that recently, a Brazilian indigenous leader **Davi Kopenawa** who secured the land rights of the **Yanomami people** was awarded the **Right Livelihood Award-2019**, also known as **Sweden's alternative Nobel Prize**.

**Source: TH**

---