

Weekly Current Affairs 15<sup>th</sup> April to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - English

## National News

**India Donates Ambulances and School Buses to Nepal**

In a gesture of solidarity and support, India has donated 35 ambulances and 66 school buses to various organizations in Nepal, bolstering infrastructure in the crucial sectors of health and education. Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, officiated the handover ceremony alongside Finance Minister Barshaman Pun.

**India's Tree Cover Loss Since 2000: Insights from Global Forest Watch**

The Global Forest Watch reveals that India has experienced significant tree cover loss since 2000, totaling 2.33 million hectares. This loss includes both natural disturbances and human-induced factors, impacting the country's carbon balance and climate change.

**J&K High Court Upholds Rule of Law, Quashes Detention under Public Safety Act**

In a significant ruling, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the detention of Jaffar Ahmad Parray under the Public Safety Act. Justice Rahul Bharti emphasized that India operates under the rule of law, asserting that citizens cannot be detained without proper legal grounds. Parray had been held since May based on allegations of being associated with terrorist groups, but the court found the detention illegal and ordered his immediate release.

**PEN Required for Students Starting Academic Year 2024-25**

In a move to simplify and streamline the process of students' transition from one school to another, the School Education Department in the state has made the use of Permanent Education Number (PEN) mandatory from the academic year 2024-25. PEN is a unique identification number assigned to every student by the Union Ministry of Education, through the UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus) portal, which covers more than 14.89 lakh schools, 95 lakh teachers, and 26.5 crore children.

## International News

**Kuwait's New Prime Minister: Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**

Kuwait's Emir has appointed Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as the new Prime Minister following the resignation of Sheikh Mohammed Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. Sheikh Ahmad, born in 1952, brings extensive experience in finance and government, having held various ministerial positions.

**Nigeria Becomes First Country to Roll Out New Meningitis Vaccine**

In a groundbreaking move, Nigeria has become the inaugural nation to introduce the innovative Men5CV vaccine, recommended by the WHO, targeting five strains of meningococcal bacteria. This historic milestone holds immense promise in combating meningitis, a severe threat in Africa, particularly in Nigeria. The vaccine rollout, funded by Gavi, is a crucial step towards achieving the WHO's goal of eliminating meningitis by 2030.

## Economy News

**India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) Report: March 2024**

March 2024 witnessed a positive inflation rate of 0.53% in India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI) compared to March 2023. This inflation was primarily attributed to increased prices in food articles, electricity, crude petroleum & natural gas, machinery & equipment, and other manufacturing sectors.

## Rankings &amp; Reports News

**Alia Bhatt Named to TIME's 100 Most Influential People of 2024 List: A Testament to Global Impact**

Alia Bhatt's inclusion in TIME Magazine's '100 Most Influential People of 2024' underscores her remarkable ascent as a global icon. Renowned director Tom Harper, lauding her as a "truly international star," highlights her multifaceted talent and magnetic presence both on and off-screen.

**Top Indian Banks in Asia-Pacific Region**

According to a recent report by S&P Global, three Indian banks—State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank—have secured positions among the top 50 banks in the Asia-Pacific region based on their assets.

## Appointment News

**Senior IPS Officer Anurag Kumar Appointed as Joint Director of CBI**

In a significant development in India's law enforcement landscape, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of senior IPS officer Anurag Kumar as the Joint Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). This move, which comes into effect immediately, underscores the government's confidence in Kumar's leadership and expertise to serve in this crucial role.

**Senior Bureaucrat Vandita Kaul Appointed as Secretary, Department of Posts**

In a significant development, Senior Bureaucrat Vandita Kaul, a seasoned professional with a wealth of experience in financial services and banking, has been appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Posts. Kaul, a 1989-batch Indian Postal Service officer, currently serves as Member (Banking & Direct Benefit Transfer) of the Postal Services Board. She will succeed Vineet Pandey upon his superannuation.

**Justice Aniruddha Bose Appointed Director of National Judicial Academy**

Supreme Court Justice Aniruddha Bose has been named the new director of the National Judicial Academy (NJA) in Bhopal, as announced by Supreme Court Chief Justice DY Chandrachud during a ceremonial bench held on April 10. The NJA, established in 1993, operates under the guidance of the Supreme Court and aims to enhance the skills of judges and facilitate court administration.

**Kristalina Georgieva Re-appointed as IMF Managing Director**

Kristalina Georgieva has been re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new 5-year term starting on 1 October 2024. She was the sole candidate nominated for the position this year, and her appointment was made by the IMF executive board.

**BharatPe Appoints Nalin Negi as Chief Executive Officer**

BharatPe, the fintech company that has been making waves in the Indian payments landscape, has officially elevated Nalin Negi as its chief executive officer. This move comes 15 months after Negi took charge as the company's interim CEO and chief financial officer, during a period of significant upheaval and transition.

**SPACE India named Sanjana Sanghi as its Brand Ambassador**

Since its inception in 2001, SPACE India has been on a mission to integrate Astronomy and Space Science into school curricula nationwide, inspiring over 1.5 million students across 1,000 schools. The organization has been instrumental in demystifying rocket science and making space education accessible to all.

**Saurabh Garg Appointed as Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**

In a significant move, the Central Government has entrusted IAS officer Saurabh Garg with the additional charge of Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). This decision, communicated through an order issued by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), underscores Garg's extensive experience and expertise in the realm of public administration.

**Nalin Prabhat Appointed as Director-General of NSG**

In a significant move, the appointments committee of the Cabinet has approved two key appointments in India's premier security agencies. Nalin Prabhat, a 1992 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the Director-General of the National Security Guard (NSG), while Sapna Tewari, a 1992 batch IPS officer of the Odisha cadre, has been appointed as the Special Director in the Intelligence Bureau (IB).

**Santosh Viswanathan Appointed India Region Head of Intel**

In a strategic move to capitalize on the rapid economic growth in India and fortify its presence in the Asia-Pacific region, Intel Corporation has announced the appointment of new executives for its Sales, Marketing, and Communications Group (SMG). This reorganization is part of the company's ongoing transformation initiatives.

**Banking News****RBI Approves Ajith Kumar KK as Dhanlaxmi Bank's MD & CEO Amid Capital Raise**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) greenlights Ajith Kumar KK's appointment as Managing Director & CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank, marking a pivotal moment amidst the bank's preparations for a ₹300 crore rights issue. The leadership transition follows a series of senior management exits amid internal conflicts.

**RuPay Launches 'Link it, Forget it' Campaign at IPL 2024 to Promote Credit Card on UPI**

RuPay, in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), introduces the 'Link it, Forget it' campaign during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024. This initiative aims to showcase the seamless integration of RuPay credit cards with UPI, emphasizing the convenience of leaving physical wallets behind.

**CRED Secures In-Principle Approval for Payment Aggregator License**

CRED, the Bengaluru-based fintech start-up, has recently obtained in-principle approval for a payment aggregator license, as reported by the Economic Times. This significant development allows CRED to broaden its services beyond its focus on reward-based credit card payments. With the new license, CRED can now facilitate merchant payments directly, enhancing its role in the digital payments ecosystem.

**Airtel Payments Bank Launches NCMC-enabled Debit and Prepaid Cards**

Airtel Payments Bank has introduced NCMC-aligned debit and prepaid cards in collaboration with NPCI, powered by RuPay. These cards are designed to support India's One Nation, One Card initiative. Savings account holders can avail NCMC-enabled

debit cards, while wallet users can opt for prepaid cards. Crafted from eco-friendly e-PVC material, these cards offer versatility in payment options, including offline transit transactions, online shopping, and enhanced security with EMV Chip protection.

## Science & Technology News

### European Astronomers Uncover the Largest Stellar Black Hole in Our Galaxy

European astronomers have made a groundbreaking discovery – the largest stellar black hole in our Milky Way galaxy. Named ‘BH-3’, this celestial behemoth has a staggering mass 33 times greater than our Sun and is located a mere 2,000 light-years away from Earth.

### Meta Unveils Upgraded AI Assistant Powered by Llama 3

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has announced the launch of the company’s advanced AI assistant, Meta AI, powered by the state-of-the-art language model Llama 3. The new AI offering is designed to enhance the user experience across Meta’s popular apps, including WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and Messenger, while also being available on a dedicated website, meta.ai.

### India’s Commitment to Debris-Free Space Missions by 2030

At the 42nd Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) annual meet, ISRO Chairman S. Somanath announced India’s pledge to achieve debris-free space missions by 2030. This commitment aligns with global efforts to ensure the sustainability of space exploration.

## Schemes and Committees

### Central Government Committee on LGBTQ+ Community Welfare

In the landmark *Supriyo Chakraborty vs. Union Of India Case 2023*, the Special Marriage Act of 1954 was challenged for its exclusion of same-sex marriages, citing a violation of Article 14 of the fundamental rights. Despite the Act allowing marriages between individuals of different religions, it did not extend this provision to same-sex couples. The Supreme Court upheld this exclusion, prompting the government to establish a committee to address the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community without legally recognizing their relationships as marriages.

## Awards & Honors News

### Kannada Poet Mamta G. Sagar Honored with Prestigious World Literary Prize

Mamta G. Sagar, a renowned Kannada poet, writer, academic, and activist based in Bengaluru, has added another feather to her cap by winning the prestigious World Literary Prize from the World Organization of Writers (WOW). This prestigious accolade recognizes Sagar’s exceptional contributions to the world of literature, solidifying her status as a trailblazing literary icon.

### World Economic Forum names Nykaa’s Adwaita Nayar as a 2024 Young Global Leader

The World Economic Forum has named Adwaita Nayar, the co-founder of Nykaa and CEO of Nykaa Fashion, as a ‘2024 Young Global Leader’. This prestigious recognition highlights Nayar’s remarkable achievements as a change-maker and entrepreneur, solidifying her place among the most influential young leaders in the world.

### Deepika Soreng Honoured with Asunta Lakra Award

Deepika Soreng, the promising forward of the India Women’s Hockey Team, has been honoured with the prestigious Hockey India Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year during the Hockey India 6th Annual Awards 2023. The award recognizes her outstanding performance and immense potential as a rising star in the sport.

### Kaushik Rajashekara Honored with International Fellowship by the Engineering Academy of Japan

Kaushik Rajashekara, a distinguished professor at the University of Houston’s Cullen College of Engineering, has been elected as an International Fellow of the prestigious Engineering Academy of Japan. This honour recognizes his outstanding contributions to the field of power conversion and the electrification of transportation.

## Important Dates News

### World Hemophilia Day 2024

World Hemophilia Day is an annual observance held on April 17th to raise awareness about hemophilia, a rare and inherited bleeding disorder. This year, the theme for World Hemophilia Day 2024 is “Equitable access for all: recognizing all bleeding disorders.” This article will explore the history, significance, and importance of this important health observance.

### World Heritage Day 2024

World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites, is observed annually on April 18. This year, the special day falls on Thursday, April 18, 2024. The observance of this day aims to raise awareness about the diversity and importance of the world’s cultural heritage, and the need to protect and preserve it for future generations.

### National Civil Service Day 2024

National Civil Service Day is celebrated annually on April 21st in India. This year, the theme for National Civil Service Day 2024 is yet to be announced, but it is likely to focus on a current challenge or opportunity facing the Indian civil service. The first ever National Civil Services Day in India was celebrated on April 21, 2006. It was recognized to commemorate the first Home Minister of India – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

**Sports News**

**Rashmi Kumari Wins National Women’s Carrom Title For The 12th time**

In a display of unparalleled skill and consistency, Rashmi Kumari has etched her name deeper into the annals of Indian carrom history by claiming her 12th National Carrom Championship title. The three-time World Champion overcame a tough challenge from K Nagajothi in the women’s final, emerging victorious with a scoreline of 25-8, 14-20, 25-20.

**Stefanos Tsitsipas Triumphs at the Monte Carlo Masters for the Third Time in Four Years**

Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece swept aside his opponent, Casper Ruud of Norway, with a convincing 6-1, 6-4 victory to win the prestigious clay-court Monte Carlo Masters for the third time in four years. The emotional triumph was marked by Tsitsipas’ tears of joy as he sat in his chair, reflecting on his hard-fought journey to this momentous achievement.

**Rohit Sharma Achieves Historic Milestone, Becomes First Indian to Hit 500 T20 Sixes**

In a remarkable display of power-hitting, India and Mumbai Indians star batter Rohit Sharma has become the first Indian cricketer to smash 500 sixes in the T20 format. This historic achievement was reached during Rohit’s stellar performance in the Indian Premier League (IPL) match against Chennai Super Kings at the Wankhede Stadium.

**Pat Cummins and Sciver-Brunt Named Wisden’s Top Cricketers**

In the 2024 edition of the prestigious Wisden Cricketers’ Almanack, two exceptional talents have been crowned as the Wisden Leading Cricketers in the World, Australian captain Pat Cummins and England all-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt.

**Rohit Sharma becomes 2nd player after MS Dhoni to play 250 matches in IPL**

Rohit Sharma, the former captain of the Mumbai Indians, etched his name in the annals of Indian Premier League (IPL) history by becoming only the second player to feature in 250 IPL matches. This remarkable milestone was achieved during a match against the Punjab Kings in Mullanpur, Chandigarh, further solidifying Rohit’s status as an IPL legend.

**Obituaries News**

**Former Cricket Australia (CA) chair, Jack Clarke Passes Away at 70**

The Australian cricketing community has lost a true icon with the passing of former Cricket Australia (CA) chair, Jack Clarke, at the age of 70 in Adelaide. Clarke’s contributions to the sport spanned decades, and his tenure as the CA chair from 2008 to 2011 was

marked by significant milestones that reshaped the landscape of Australian cricket.

**Legendary English Cricketer Derek Underwood Passes Away at 78**

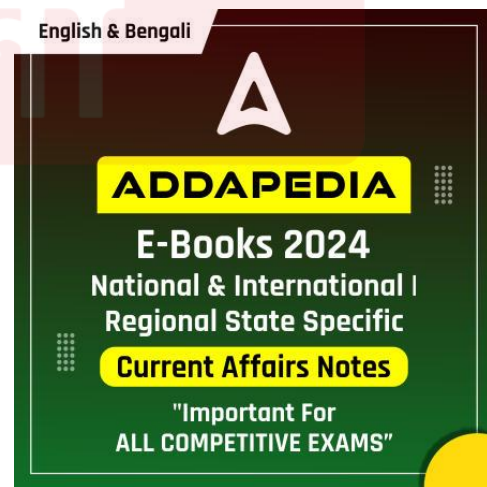
The cricket world is in mourning as it bids farewell to one of its most revered figures, Derek Underwood, who has passed away at the age of 78. Underwood, a legendary spinner who represented England for over 15 years, was a true icon of the game, leaving an indelible mark on the sport with his exceptional skill and unwavering dedication.

**Renowned Carnatic Musician K.G. Jayan Passes Away at 90**

K.G. Jayan, a towering figure in Carnatic music and Malayalam cinema, passed away, at his residence in Thrupunitura, Kerala. He was 90 years old. The legendary musician had been battling various age-related ailments.



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