



## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 14, 2019**

### **NATIONAL**

- **Vistara Airlines – gets the approval of Government to commence foreign trips**



- ✓ The Tata group-Singapore airlines JV has become the first private airline to be allowed to fly abroad under recently amended rules
  - ✓ The Government had changed the 5/20 rule in 2016, which required an airline to complete five years of operations and have 20 planes in its fleet, to 0/20
  - ✓ At present, Vistara joins Air India, AI Express, Jet, IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir to operate foreign services
  - ✓ Go Air launched these flights only last October
  - ✓ Vistara airlines started flying on January 9, 2015
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- **India and the United States - to build six American nuclear power plants in India**



- ✓ The two nations made the announcement through a joint statement issued at the conclusion of the 9th round of India-US Strategic Security Dialogue, held in Washington DC on March 13, 2019
- ✓ The dialogue was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, who had led the Indian delegation and Andrea Thompson, the US under secretary of state for arms control and international security
- ✓ India and the US had signed a historic agreement to cooperate in the civil nuclear energy sector in October 2008

## **COURT VERDICTS**

- **Supreme Court -appointed senior advocate PS Narasimha as mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration within BCCI on March 14, 2019**



- ✓ Narasimha is assisting the apex court as amicus curiae in the BCCI matter

- ✓ He will hear the BCCI's stand and then make recommendations to Committee of Administrators (CoA)
  - ✓ PS Narasimha informed the bench of Justices SA Bobde and A M Spare that Justice (retd) D K Jain assumed charge as the Ombudsman of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)
  - ✓ Justice DK Jain was the first court-appointed ombudsman for the BCCI in February 2019
  - ✓ The Supreme Court on February 21, 2019 appointed Lieutenant General Ravi Thodge as the third member of the CoA for BCCI
  - ✓ In 2017, the apex court had appointed a four-member CoA, headed by former Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Vinod Rai, and other members Diana Edulji, historian Ramachandra Guha and banker Vikram Limaye
  - ✓ It was created to run the affairs of BCCI and implement the court-approved recommendations of the Justice R M Lodha panel
  - ✓ Following the resignations of Guha and Limaye, the CoA was left with only two members
- **Madras High Court – directed the Government to constitute a monitoring committee – to supervise the attendance and assess the performance of Government doctors and maintenance of Government medical hospitals across the state**
  - ✓ Justice SM Subramaniam also directed the Government to recover adequate compensation from government doctors who violate terms of service, after completing post-graduation under government quota
- **The Madurai bench of Madras High Court – issues ‘guidelines’ for transfer of Government school teachers**
  - ✓ The court criticized the state school education department for irregular transfer of teachers on administrative grounds
  - ✓ As per the new guidelines issued by a division bench of Justice K K Sasidharan and Justice P D Audikesavalu, teachers who were not transferred during the general transfer counseling should not be given transfers on administrative ground during the concerned academic year
  - ✓ The applicant must have worked for a minimum of one year in the present school to be eligible for general transfer
  - ✓ However, no such norms were framed for the transfers on ‘administrative grounds’
  - ✓ The annual transfers including the vacancies due to promotion/upgrading of schools must only be on the basis of general counseling, which must be intimated by a GO issued from the department well in advance
  - ✓ In order to fill vacancies, there should be at least two counseling sessions, preferably one in August and another in September, after the general counseling in June

# INTERNATIONAL

- **Boeing – suspends the entire fleet of 737 MAX after US President announced the grounding of the aircraft**
  - ✓ It said that the grounding is out of an abundance of caution and in order to reassure the flying public of the aircraft safety
  - ✓ India has already announced its decision not to fly Boeing 737 MAX over its airspace on March 13 with effect from 4pm on the said day
  - ✓ SpiceJet was the country's only carrier to use the plane in the country (12 flights), which had also decided to ground them following the Government's decision
  - ✓ Jet Airways' five Max are already grounded for a long time due to non-payment of lease rentals
  - ✓ 42 countries had already banned the flight following the crash of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302, killing all 157 people on board on March 10
  - ✓ In October 2018, a 737 Max 8 operated by Lion Air, an Indonesian carrier, crashed killing 189 people on board
- **China – has blocked UN proposal to blacklist the Pakistan-based terrorist, Masood Azhar for the fourth time**

**BEIJING BATS FOR TERROR**

**2009:** India moved a proposal at UN by itself to designate Jaish chief Masood Azhar

**2016:** India again moved the proposal with the P3 – the US, UK and France – in the UN's 1267 Sanctions Committee to ban Azhar

**2017:** P3 nations moved a similar proposal again

**On all occasions, China, a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN Security Council, blocked India's proposal from being adopted by the sanctions committee**

**This is the first time such a proposal was brought immediately after a terror attack**



Masood Azhar

**WHAT IT WOULD HAVE MEANT**

A UNSC ban would have subjected Azhar to an assets freeze, travel ban and an arms embargo

- ✓ The move to ban the Jaish-e-Mohammad chief followed the efforts of various countries, including France, US and UK
- ✓ China was the only country to block the proposal, apparently to protect its investments in Pakistan



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi - inaugurated the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology at Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh on March 9



- ✓ Prime Minister also unveiled the statue of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya during the inauguration of the institute

## INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina - jointly unveiled e-plaques for development projects in Bangladesh through video conferencing on March 11, 2019



- ✓ The projects include -- Supply of buses and trucks, Inauguration of 36 community clinics, Inauguration of 11 water treatment plants and Extension of National Knowledge Network to Bangladesh
- ✓ The National Knowledge Network will connect scholars and research institutes in Bangladesh to India and the world
- ✓ This multi-gigabit National Research and Education Network (NREN) provides a unified high speed network backbone for educational institutions in India
- **India - launched its third IT corridor in China**
- ✓ National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) entered into a partnership with China's Xuzhou city from Jiangsu Province in China to help develop the IT corridor
- ✓ The earlier two corridors are at Dalian and Guiyang cities
- **The new visa agreement between India and Maldives – comes into effect on March 11, 2019**



- ✓ The new agreement provides a liberal visa policy for Maldivian citizens seeking medical treatment as well as education and business opportunities in India
- ✓ Under the agreement, Maldivian businessmen and tourists can stay in India for 90 days without a visa
- ✓ It also makes it easier for Indians to travel to the Maldives for business purposes
- ✓ India and Maldives had exchanged diplomatic notes for the implementation of the visa facilitation agreement in February 2019

## **PERSONALITIES**

- **India's Soumya Swaminathan - was promoted from the position of Deputy Director-General to Chief Scientist in World Health Organisation (WHO)**



- ✓ Swaminathan was one among the three Deputy Director-Generals supporting the Director-General in overseeing all programmes
- ✓ She was the first Indian to hold the coveted post

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) spacecraft - has observed water molecules moving around the dayside of Moon**



- ✓ It was identified by the Lyman Alpha Mapping Project (LAMP), an instrument aboard the LRO, tightly bound to the regolith until surface temperatures peak near lunar noon
- ✓ Lunar water can potentially be used by astronauts to make fuel or to use for radiation shielding or thermal management



# APPOINTMENTS

- **Government – has appointed M R Kumar as Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) for a period of 5 years**



- ✓ He replaces V K Sharma, who retired in December 2018
  - ✓ Kumar was earlier the zonal manager of the northern zone of LIC
  - ✓ The centre has also named Suseel Kumar and Vipin Anand as Managing directors of the corporation
  - ✓ Currently LIC has 3 Managing directors - Hemant Bhargava, who's also officiating as Chairman, B Venugopal and Sunita Sharma
  - ✓ The Chairman of LIC will be the non-executive chairman of IDBI Bank, as well as per the terms of acquisition of IDBI Bank shares
- **US Senate – confirmed Indian-American 'Neomi Rao' as a judge on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals**



- ✓ She replaces Brett Kavanaugh, who was elevated to the Supreme Court
- ✓ Rao currently heads up the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs at the Office of Management and Budget



- ✓ She has served in all three branches of government including Associate Counsel and Special Assistant to President George W Bush
  - ✓ After being sworn in, she would be the second Indian-American on this court, which is considered only next to the US Supreme Court
  - ✓ She will join Justice Sri Srinivasan, who also serves on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals
  - ✓ Rao is also the first Parsi Zoroastrian to be appointed to an appellate court
- **The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - has appointed Indian-American television personality and food expert, Padma Lakshmi as its new Goodwill Ambassador**



- ✓ In her new role, the award-winning author will help mobilise support for the Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on fighting inequality and discrimination in the world
- ✓ Padma Lakshmi is an Indian-American author, actress, model, television host, and executive producer

## AWARDS

- **President of India, Ram Nath Kovind - conferred Gallantry and Distinguished Service awards to armed forces personnel at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on March 14, 2018**
- ✓ This year, the Gallantry awards included 3 Kirti Chakras and 15 Shaurya Chakras, among which two Kirti Chakras and one Shaurya Chakra was given posthumously
  - ✓ The distinguished service awards included 15 Param Vishisht Seva Medals, one Uttam Yudh Seva Medals and 25 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals



- ✓ The Gallantry awards are given for displaying conspicuous gallantry, indomitable courage and extreme devotion to duty
- ✓ The distinguished service awards were conferred to senior officers of the armed forces for distinguished service of an exceptional order.

## SPORTS

- **Special Olympics World Games 2019 - began at Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates on March 14, 2019**



- ✓ 7,500 athletes from 200 nations will take part in 24 Olympic-style sports over a period of 7 day games show that is held in West Asia for the very first time
- ✓ Saudi Arabia would be sending female athletes for the very first time
- ✓ Hosts UAE would also be fielding its largest-ever squad of athletes at a World Games, followed by India and the United States
- ✓ Among the 200 nations, 195 will compete in the Games and five will observe

# RANKINGS

## ➤ Mercer's 2019 Quality of Living Ranking

- ✓ Vienna, capital of Austria – topped the ranking for the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row, followed by Zurich at second spot
- ✓ Top five cities in the ranking were unchanged from last year's edition, though Vancouver rose to joint third from fifth



- ✓ Indian cities of New Delhi (162), Kolkata (160), Mumbai (154), Chennai (151), Bengaluru (149), Pune (143) and Hyderabad (143) were ranked in the bottom section among the 231 cities ranked on liveability
- ✓ Globally, Iraq's capital Baghdad is at the bottom of the list due to an economic, security and societal crisis.
- ✓ Safest City
- ✓ Luxembourg was the safest city in the world
- ✓ In 105th place, Chennai ranks as the Asia-Pacific region's safest city, while Karachi (226) is the least safe
- ✓ The comprehensive survey is done with many factors being considered like housing, crime, political stability, personal safety, leisure, air pollution, infrastructure, health system, education and economy.

# INTERNATIONAL DAY

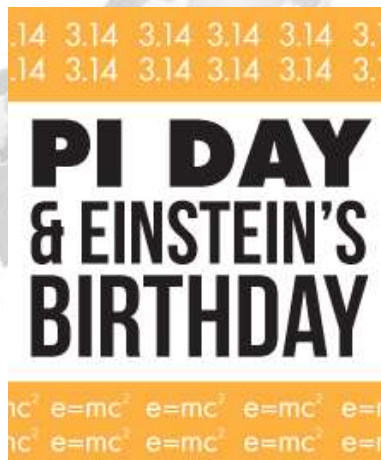
## ➤ **World Kidney Day 2019- March 14, 2019 (Second Thursday of March)**





- ✓ The observance of the day intends to raise awareness about the importance of our kidneys
- ✓ Theme 2019 - "Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere"
- ✓ The day is jointly observed by the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF)

➤ **World Pi Day – March 14**



- ✓ Pi Day is observed on March 14 (3/14 in the month/day format) since 3, 1, and 4 are the first three significant digits of  $\pi$
- ✓ The day was first observed in 1988 at San Francisco, organized by a physicist Larry Shaw
- ✓ On March 12, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution recognizing March 14, 2009 as National Pi Day
- ✓ The entire month of March 2014 (3/14) was observed as "Pi Month"
- ✓ In the year 2015, March 14 was celebrated as "Super Pi Day", as it had a special significance, i.e., the date is written as 3/14/15 in month/day/year format and at 9:26:53, the date and time together represented the first 10 digits of  $\pi$
- ✓ Pi Approximation Day is observed on July 22 (22/7 in the day/month format), since the fraction  $\frac{22}{7}$  is a common approximation of  $\pi$ , which is accurate to two decimal places



➤ 30 years of the World Wide Web (WWW) - March 12, 2019



- ✓ Google Doodle celebrated 30 years of the World Wide Web (WWW) on March 12, 2019 with an animation showing block graphics that were common earlier
- ✓ In 1989, Sir Tim Berners-Lee developed the first web browser, the World Wide Web, writing the HTML language, the HTTP application, and the first Web browser 'WorldWideWeb.app'
- ✓ The web was made public in April 1993 and the first search engine 'Mosaic' was launched in November 1993 to accept pictures

**30 YEARS OF WORLD WIDE WEB**

While the web has made our lives easier, its inventor **Tim Berners-Lee** has lamented that it has also created opportunity for scammers and made all kinds of crime easier to commit. He, however, believes that the web can be changed for the better in the next 30 years.

**Tim Berners-Lee** was a 33-year-old software engineer when he invented the World Wide Web (WWW)

Working at CERN, Switzerland, Berners-Lee laid out the basic concepts of the **WWW** in a proposal which included ideas like HTML, URL and HTTP

The **WWW**, commonly known as the Web, is an information space where documents and other web resources are identified by Uniform Resource Locators (URLs)

Berners-Lee's proposal was titled "Information Management: A Proposal"

By 1991, the external Web servers were up and running, ushering in the information age

Currently there are nearly 2 billion websites online

Today, half of the world is online

JANS GRAPHICS

- ✓ The WWW is an application that enables the exchange of information over the internet.
- ✓ In 2004, Sir Tim Berners-Lee was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his pioneering work
- ✓ He has also been named in Time magazine's list of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th century.

