

## Maharashtra Weekly Current Affairs 01 to 06 April 2024

### Maharashtra State News

#### Blindness Prevention Week

- **Blindness Prevention Week** is observed annually from **April 1st to 7th**.
- It is an **initiative by the Indian government** to raise awareness about preventable causes of blindness and promote eye care.
- **Aim:** Educate the public about eye health, early detection of eye diseases, and the importance of regular eye checkups.
- **Significance:** India has a high prevalence of blindness, and many cases are preventable. This week aims to address this issue.
- **Activities:** Eye screening camps, awareness programs, and distribution of informative materials are organized during this week.

#### Theme:

- Theme for 2024 Blindness Prevention Week is **“Taking timely treatments for age-related eye conditions”**

#### Rly achieves 100% electrification of tracks in Nanded division

- The **South Central Railway (SCR)** achieved a significant feat by **completing the electrification of all existing broad gauge (BG) tracks in the Nanded division of Maharashtra**.
- This accomplishment marks a major step towards the **national mission of railway electrification**.
- This project involved electrifying the final stretch **between Mirkhal and Maltekdi, covering 43.3 kilometers**.
- With this addition, the **Nanded division now boasts 100% electrification** for its broad gauge network, excluding recently converted meter gauge lines.

#### Santosh Kumar Jha to assume role as chairman and managing director of Konkan Railway on April

- **Santosh Kumar Jha**, an Indian Railway Traffic Services (IRTS) officer of the **1992 batch**, assumed the role of **Chairman and Managing Director of Konkan Railway on April 1, 2024**.

- **Jha brings a wealth of experience to the position, with a background in operations, infrastructure planning, and business development. He previously served as the Director (Operations & Commercial) at Konkan Railway.**

#### Neonatal mortality drops in Maharashtra

- The state of Maharashtra has seen a **positive decline in neonatal mortality rates**.
- This encouraging trend is **attributed to a focus on providing high-quality early care for newborns**.
- **Early care encompasses various aspects crucial for a baby's well-being in the first 28 days of life.**
- This includes access to **skilled medical professionals, proper monitoring, and ensuring mothers receive guidance on breastfeeding and newborn care.**
- These improvements in early care likely play a **significant role in reducing deaths among newborns, leading to a brighter future for Maharashtra's infants.**

#### About:

- **Neonatal mortality** refers to the death of a newborn baby within the first 28 days of life.
- Each neonatal death can be **further clarified into viable and non-viable deaths** depending on the **gestational age at which they were born, and where they were born.**

#### Miraj's Sitar and Tanpura Craftsmen Receive GI Tags

- Craftsmen in **Miraj, renowned for their exceptional sitars and tanpuras**, have recently **received geographical indication (GI) tags for their craftsmanship**.
- These artisans use **unique wood and pumpkin gourds** to create these musical instruments, contributing to Miraj's rich musical legacy.

#### About:

- The town, located in the **Sangli district**, has been a hub for crafting these instruments since the mid-nineteenth century.

- Miraj city has the tradition of making string instruments since **1850**.
- GI tags will boost the city on tourist map as the 'music city exporting string instruments'.

### World Autism Awareness Day

- **World Autism Awareness Day** is observed annually on **April 2nd**
- It is a **UN-sanctioned day** to highlight the needs and rights of people with **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**.

It's a day to:

- **Raise awareness:** Increase public understanding of autism and the challenges faced by autistic individuals.
- **Promote acceptance:** Foster a more inclusive society where autistic people can thrive.
- **Celebrate strengths:** Recognize the unique talents and perspectives of the autistic community.

About:

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**, or simply autism, is a developmental condition that impacts how people interact with the world around them.
- **It's characterized by:** Social communication challenges: Difficulty with social interaction, understanding nonverbal cues, or expressing oneself clearly.
- **Restricted interests and repetitive behaviors:** A focus on specific topics, repetitive movements (stimming), or an insistence on routines.

Theme:

- The theme of World Autism Awareness Day 2024 is '**Empowering Autistic Voices**'
- It aims at **providing more support and power to the individuals** with this condition, in order to ensure they lead a meaningful life and even pursue successful careers.

### Only 7% of health budget allocated for meds spent in 23-24

- Barely **7% of Maharashtra's health budget allocated specifically for medicines and supplies** was spent in **2023-24**, said activists quoting data from the Budget

### Estimation, Allocation & Monitoring System (BEAMS)

- Their analysis showed that **71% of the public health department's budget** and **52% of the medical education department's budget** were spent in **2023-24**.

### Maharashtra secure men and women's titles in National Kho Kho Championships

- **Maharashtra emerged victorious in both the men's and women's categories** at the recently concluded **56th National Kho Kho Championships** held in New Delhi.
- The **men's final was a thriller, with Maharashtra edging past Railways in a close 52-50 contest**.
- The **women's category saw a more comfortable win for Maharashtra, defeating the Airport Authority of India 18-16**.
- This impressive performance marks Maharashtra's dominance in the sport.

### 3% of India's population affected by autism: IAP

- According to the **Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP)**, an estimated **3% of India's population is affected by Autism**.
- To address this growing concern, the **IAP launched a nationwide campaign called 'IAP Ki Baat Community Ke Saath' (IAP Speaks with the Community)** on World Autism Day (April 2).

About:

- The **Indian Academy of Pediatrics** was formed after amalgamating the Association of Pediatricians in India based at **Mumbai** and the Indian Pediatric Society based at **Calcutta** during its joint meeting at Hyderabad in 1963.
- The **IAP Secretariat is situated at Mumbai**.

### ECI appoints special observers to oversee elections in Maharashtra, five more states

- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** had appointed special observers (general and police) in six states, including Maharashtra, to "ensure a level-playing field" in the upcoming Lok Sabha and assembly elections.
- **Maharashtra, retired IAS officer Dharmendra S Gangwar** was made the

general special observer, while former IPS officer NK Mishra would be the police special observer.

About:

- Special observers (general and police) had been deployed in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar since the population was over seven crore each.
- In case of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, the decision was taken keeping in view, simultaneous polling for assemblies.



**Clean up marshals re-introduced on Mumbai streets**

- Mumbai's Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has relaunched its "Clean up Marshal" scheme, from April 2, to combat littering and public hygiene issues.

About:

- It will focus on high footfall areas such as the Gateway of India, Marine Drive, and CSMT.
- Fines for littering can range from ₹200 to ₹1,000.
- Marshals will use a mobile app to issue penalty receipts electronically.
- Also, now there is an option for online payment of penalties by scanning the QR code.

Did you know?

- The first clean-up marshal scheme launched in 2007 was discontinued by the BMC in 2011.

**World Cloud Security Day**

- World Cloud Security Day, celebrated annually on April 3rd.
- It is a reminder of the importance of securing data stored in the cloud.
- As cloud technology becomes increasingly integrated into our lives, this day highlights the potential security risks and emphasizes the need for vigilance.

About:

- Cloud storage is a cloud computing model that enables storing data and files on the internet through a cloud computing provider that you access either through the public internet or a dedicated private network connection.
- Cloud storage leverages several key technologies to function:
  1. Remote Servers
  2. Virtualization
  3. Data Distribution
  4. Networking
  5. APIs (Application Programming Interfaces)

Theme:

- The theme for World Cloud Security Day 2024 is "Evaluate the security of your digital identity"

**International Day of Mine Awareness**

- The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed annually on April 4th.
- It's a day to raise awareness about the dangers of landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) on civilians, particularly in conflict zones.

About:

- On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly declared that 4 April of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

Theme:

- The theme for International Day for Mine Awareness & Assistance in Mine Action 2024 is **'Protecting Lives, Building Peace.'**
- It focuses on the needs and rights of people with disabilities in areas affected by conflict.
- The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is highlighting the importance of including people with disabilities in mine action efforts and ensuring their safety and access to assistance.

### Crisis in state as dam water levels down to 37.52%

- **Water levels** in the MH state's dams have plunged to a critical level of **37.52%**, raising serious concerns about water scarcity.
- This situation is likely to have a significant impact on various sectors, including agriculture, industry, and households.
- **Impact on Agriculture:** Agriculture is the backbone of many states in India, and irrigation plays a vital role in ensuring crop yields. With depleted dam water, farmers may be forced to reduce cultivation or switch to crops that require less water. This could lead to a decline in agricultural output and potentially impact food security.
- **Impact on Industry:** Industries also rely on water for various processes.
- A water shortage could force industries to cut back on production or even shut down operations entirely. This could have a negative impact on the state's economy and lead to job losses.
- **Impact on Households:** Water scarcity can also severely impact households. With limited water availability, people may face challenges in meeting their daily needs for drinking, cooking, and sanitation. This could lead to health problems and a decline in the quality of life.

### Indian Navy Brings 9 Pirates Caught Off Somalia to Mumbai During Anti-Piracy Operations

- In a successful anti-piracy operation, the Indian Navy apprehended nine pirates off the coast of Somalia in late March.
- The pirates had hijacked an Iranian fishing vessel with Pakistani crew.

#### About:

- Following a **12-hour operation**, the Indian Navy rescued the crew and captured the pirates.
- The pirates were brought to Mumbai and handed over to the Mumbai Police.
- The arrested individuals now face **legal action under the Maritime Anti-Piracy Act of 2022.**
- This incident highlights the Indian Navy's commitment to protecting seafarers in the Indian Ocean Region.

### e-Mulakat brings ease of visitation across MH state prisons

- **Maharashtra Prison Department** data shows that altogether **21,963** of the total **1,38,672**, which is around **16 per cent** of the total meetings of inmates with their families and lawyers, have happened over the video conferencing system through e-Mulakat system.
- Since January this year, the system became fully functional across **60** prisons in Maharashtra.

#### About:

- The e-Mulakat platform is part of the e-prisons system under the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) launched by the Union government in 2022
- The ICJS comprises a dedicated and secure cloud-based infrastructure operated by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) and National Informatics Centre (NIC).

### Independent Artist Day

- Independent Artist Day is celebrated annually on April 3rd.
- It recognizes the contributions of artists who create and share their work outside the constraints of mainstream galleries, labels, or publishers.

#### About:

- It was established by the online art platform Minted in 2022.
- They announced the day to mark their 15th-anniversary celebration.

- This day **highlights the unique voice and vision independent artists bring to the world.**
- It's a chance to appreciate their creativity and support them directly.

### National Maritime Day

- **National Maritime Day** is celebrated in India every year on **April 5th.**
- It marks the **maiden voyage of the SS Loyalty in 1919,** a pivotal moment symbolizing India's journey as an independent maritime nation.

#### Key Points:

- Recognizes the vital role of the **maritime sector in India's history, economy, and development.**
- **Honors the contributions of seafarers** and those working in the maritime industry.
- **Raises awareness** about the importance of maritime trade and the challenges faced by the industry.

#### About:

- **SS Loyalty** is the first Indian merchant ship to **set sail under the Indian flag in 1919.**
- This historic voyage, **departing from Mumbai for London,** marked a significant step towards India's independence as a maritime nation.
- The **Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd.,** owned by the visionary industrialist **Seth Walchand Hirachand Doshi,** played a key role in this achievement.

#### Theme:

- The Theme for 2024 National Maritime Day is **"Navigating the future: safety first!"**

### Mum's AQI at 90, BMC credits 'deep cleaning'

- Mumbai's air quality has **shown signs of improvement, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaching 90.**
- This is an improvement from previous readings and is being **attributed to deep cleaning efforts undertaken by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).**

- While **90 still falls under the 'moderate' category** on the AQI scale, it indicates a **positive trend.**
- The BMC's deep cleaning initiatives including measures like **dust suppression and road cleaning,** are likely contributing to this improvement.

#### Note:

Read about AQI Index

### JN.1 variant has clinical features similar to previous Covid-19 variants: Study

- A **first-of-its-kind study** conducted by experts from **B J Medical College (BJMC) and ICMR National Institute of Virology (NIV)** has found that **JN.1,** the dominant Covid-19 variant in India, has **clinical features similar to previous circulating variants** in Maharashtra without increased severity.
- The study titled **'Appearance and prevalence of JN.1 SARS-CoV-2 variant in India and its clinical profile in the state of Maharashtra'** was published in the medical journal **'Cureus of Springer Nature Group'** on March 22.

#### About:

- **JN.1** is thus likely to cause similar symptoms, including fever, cough, fatigue, and trouble breathing.
- It **doesn't appear to cause more severe illness than previous strains.**

### Nagpur ATC may head air traffic mgmt across India

- **Nagpur City** may be chosen as the country's centre for a unified air traffic management set-up.
- A proposal on these lines is being **studied by the Airports Authority of India (AAI)**

#### About:

- **Nagpur airport** is managed by **Mihan India Limited (MIL),** which is a joint venture between state government's Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC) and AAI.

Nagpur Air Traffic Control (ATC):

- Nagpur ATC manages air traffic in its airspace, which likely covers **central India**.

#### Indian Airspace Management:

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is responsible for managing the Indian airspace.
- The AAI could potentially establish a **centralized air traffic management system** based in Nagpur, but this is speculative.

#### Cancer study by researchers from SUK gets two patents

- A crucial research to destroy cancer cells using nano composite-based materials by Prof Dr Sagar Delekar (director of Innovation, Incubation and Linkages of Shivaji University, Kolhapur) and three other researchers has received two patents from the govt of Germany.

#### About:

- The **vivo viability evaluation** (kidney, gills muscle tissue, brain and liver) of **superparamagnetic iron oxide and chitosan-coated iron oxide nanoparticles** was done on Kaveri Garra fish from Satara, and this nanocomposite was found to be **non-hazardous and biocompatible**.

#### International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

- **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP)** is celebrated **every year on April 6th**,
- IDSDP recognizes the power of sport to **drive positive change**.
- It's a day to **acknowledge how sports and physical activity can:**
  - Promote peace and understanding
  - Foster social development and inclusion
  - Encourage health and well-being

#### About:

- Creating a **historical link to the first modern Olympic Games in 1896**, 6 April was declared the **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace** by the **United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2013**, and has been **celebrated each year since 2014**.

#### Theme:

- The 2024 theme of IDSDP is **"Sport for the Promotion of Peaceful and Inclusive Societies"**
- It highlights how sports can bridge divides and create a more peaceful world.
- This day is a chance to celebrate organizations and individuals using sports to make a difference.

#### President Murmu launches indigenously-developed CAR T-cell therapy for cancer treatment

- President Droupadi Murmu launched India's first home-grown CAR-T cell therapy for cancer at Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) in Mumbai
- CAR-T cell therapy has been developed through collaboration between the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay and Tata Memorial Hospital in association with industry partner ImmunoACT.
- It provides a new hope for the whole of humankind. and will be successful in giving new lives to countless patients
- It is also an **example of the 'Make in India' initiative**; a shining example of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

#### About:

- **CAR T-cell therapy** is a powerful form of immunotherapy for certain blood cancers
- **Function:** It harnesses the body's immune system to target cancer. T-cells (immune fighters) are extracted, **genetically modified with a special receptor (CAR)**, and then **infused back into the patient**.
- **The CAR:** This chimeric antigen receptor helps T-cells recognize and destroy cancer cells with a specific antigen (marker) on their surface.
- **Treatment for:** CAR T-cell therapy is **effective for some leukemias, lymphomas, and multiple myeloma**, especially when other treatments fail.
- **Process:** It's a **multi-step process** involving T-cell collection, modification, expansion, and re-infusion.

## Shift to EVs losing momentum in Pune with just 7 percent spike this year

- Pune's initial surge in electric vehicle (EV) purchases appears to be waning.
- After a **significant 200% increase in EV registrations in 2022-23**, the growth rate has **slumped to just 7% in the current fiscal year (2023-24)** according to **Regional Transport Office (RTO) data**.
- This slowdown comes **despite a substantial overall rise in vehicle registrations in Pune**.
- While nearly **20,000 new vehicles were registered this year**, only around **2,000 were EVs**.
- **Motorcycles remain the dominant EV category**, with car registrations lagging far behind.

## Alibaug as 'Maynagnagri'

- Maharashtra assembly speaker **Rahul Narwekar** has urged the state government to **rename Alibaug as 'Maynagnagri'** in the memory of **admiral Maynak Bhandari**
- **Maynak Bhandari** played a **crucial role in Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's naval prowess**.

### About:

- Narwekar stressed that during the reign of Maratha warrior king Shivaji, **coastal security and coastal war campaigns were crucial to prevent foreign invasions and that Maynak Bhandari played a crucial role in it**.
- Bhandari's leadership is credited with **victories against the British, including a crucial one near Alibaug**.

## International Day of Conscience

- The **International Day of Conscience** is celebrated annually on **April 5**
- It is a **global day of awareness** commemorating the importance of human conscience.
- The day **encourages us to reflect on our values and how we can use them to build a better world**.

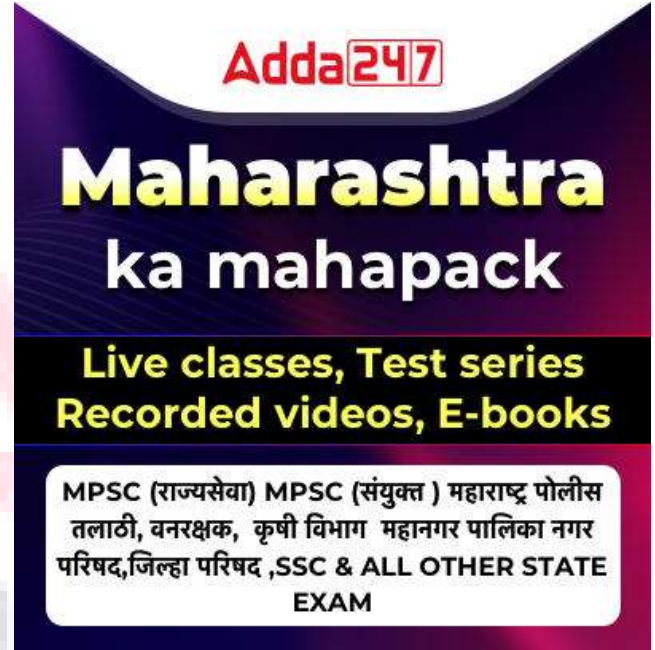
### About:

- It was established by the **United Nations General Assembly on July 25, 2019**, with the adoption of UN resolution **73/329**.

- On **April 5, 2020**, the first **International Day of Conscience** was celebrated.

### Theme:

- The theme for 2024 is **"Promoting the Culture of Peace with Love and Conscience."**
- This emphasizes using our conscience to guide actions that foster peace and respect for all.



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