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World Heritage Day: April 18th

- **World Heritage Day**, also known as **the International Day for Monuments and Sites**, is celebrated every year on **18th April** globally.
- The primary objective of this day is to educate people about the diverse range of heritage sites worldwide and the indispensable efforts required to safeguard and conserve them. It aims to raise awareness about the cultural heritage's diversity, vulnerability, and the essential measures needed for its protection and preservation.
- **Theme:** "Exploring and embracing diversity."
- **The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** actively promotes cultural heritage and a wide array of the world's monuments and heritage sites on this occasion.



- The proposal to commemorate World Heritage Day on April 18 was initially put forth by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in **1982**.
- **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** formally adopted and approved this date during its 22nd General Conference held in **1983**, From that onward, ICOMOS has taken the initiative to recommend a specific theme to guide the global celebrations for World Heritage Day each year.

Bank of Baroda World App has been banned by RBI

- Strict measures have reportedly been proposed by the Finance Ministry to protect citizens from cyber fraud.
- These measures came after a rise in incidents including the recent **Bank of Baroda World App scam**.
- These measures are considered part of a broader national effort to combat cybercrime.
- Only in 2023, more than **1.1 million cyber fraud** cases amounting to **Rs 7,488.63 crore (\$8.9 billion)** were recorded by **India's National Crime Records Bureau**.
- To deal with this growing threat, the **Home Ministry** established the **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center (I4C)**.
- To combat all types of cybercrime, this central agency coordinates efforts across the country.



- The ministry has called for stricter Know Your Customer (KYC) processes and more thorough due diligence by banks and financial institutions while onboarding new merchants.
- The proposal emphasizes the need for better data security and data protection practices at the merchant and BC levels.
- In October 2023, state-owned Bank of Baroda was barred from onboarding new customers on its mobile app 'BoB World' following material supervisory concerns by the RBI.

About Bank of Baroda:

Founded: 20th July 1908

Headquarters: Alkapuri, Vadodara, Gujarat

Chairman: Dr. Hasmukh Adhia

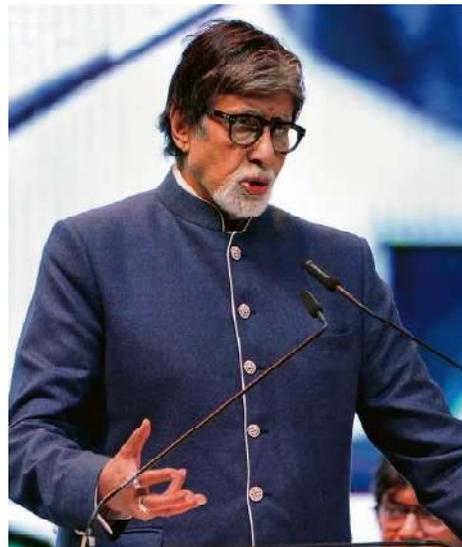
MD& CEO: Debadatta Chand

Tagline: India's International Bank

Amitabh Bachchan will receive Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar award

- Famous **Hindi cinema actor Amitabh Bachchan** will be honoured with the **third Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award** to be held this year.
- The award was announced at a press conference organized by the **Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smriti Pratisthan Public Charitable Trust** and the Mangeshkar family on 16 April 2024 in Mumbai.
- Music director Hridaynath Mangeshkar has announced the award in a press conference.
- Now another achievement has been added to the series of achievements and awards earned by the great hero of hindi cinema in his cinematic journey of five and a half decades.

Other artists honoured with Lata Dinanath Mangeshkar Award:



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- Indian music to composer **AR Rahman**
- Actress Padmini Kolhapuri awarded for her services in the field of cinema
- Roop Kumar Rathore awarded for his services in the field of music
- Actor Randeep Hooda received a special award for Best Film Production and Actor.
- Marathi actor Ashok Saraf
- Actor Atul Parchure

About Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award:

- This award was started by the Trust and the Mangeshkar family in the **year 2022** in the memory of Bharat Ratna and Swara Kokila late **Lata Mangeshkar**.
- This award is given to a person who has made a path-breaking and exemplary contribution to the people of the nation and society.
- Earlier, in the year **2022 and 2023**, this award was given to **PM Narendra Modi** and singer **Asha Bhosle** respectively.
- Amitabh will be given this award on 24 April 2024 in Mumbai on the occasion of the **82nd death anniversary of Lata Mangeshkar's father Deenanath Mangeshkar**.
- A total of 212 people have been honoured with this award in the last 34 years.

India aims to achieve debris-free space missions by 2030: ISRO

- **ISRO Chairman S Somanath** announced that India aims to achieve **debris-free space missions by 2030**.
- Addressing the **42nd Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC)** annual meeting organized by **ISRO**. China, Ukraine, Australia, Canada and Germany are among the 13 nations participating in the event.
- ISRO has a very clearly laid out plan as far as space exploration and space utilisation are concerned for the coming days.
- “It is one of the intent or initiative of India to ensure that debris-free space missions are conducted so as to ensure the sustainability of space.
- “This initiative aims to achieve debris-free space missions by all Indian space actors, governmental and non-governmental, by 2030.



- There are a total of 37,000 objects orbiting in the space and of them 10,000 are operational objects. By 2030, the number of operational objects will surpass the debut objects which we expect is about 60,000.”
- Presently, India has **54 spacecraft in orbit**, and many non-functional objects.
- ISRO had brought several old satellites and fourth stage of PSLV rockets back to the Earth through the deorbiting process as part of its zero orbital debris mission.
- India planning to set up its own space station ‘**Bharatiya Antriksh Station**’ by **2035**.

About ISRO:

Established: 15th August 1969

Headquarters: Bangalore, Karnataka

Chairman: S Somanath

Kashi's Tirangi Barfi and five other products of Uttar Pradesh got GI Tags

- Nearly **eight decades** after India's independence, the “**Tirangi Barfi**” of **Kashi**, a sweet treat regarded as the “**sweet weapon**” of freedom fighters during the **Quit India Movement**, has finally received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- As the name suggests, Tirangi Barfi is a sweet made with cashews and pistachios, coloured in the three stripes of the Indian flag: green, saffron, and white. It was first introduced in 1942 by Shri Ram Bhandar of Thatheri Bazar locality in Varanasi, following Mahatma Gandhi's call for decisive action
- The GI Registry awarded GI certification not only to the Banaras Tirangi Barfi but also to **five other Uttar Pradesh products**.
- These include **Banaras Metal Casting Craft, Lakhimpur Kheri Tharu Embroidery, Bareilly Cane and Bamboo craft, Bareilly Zardozi Craft, and Pilkhuwa Hand Block Print Textile**.



- With these six new additions, Uttar Pradesh retains its position as the state with the most GI-tagged products in India, reaching a total of **75** before it has **69**. **Tamil Nadu** follows behind with **58 GI products**.
- These six GI tags were supported by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow office.
- In **2008-09**, the state had only one GI product, the **‘Allahabad Surkha Amrood’**.
- On **March 30**, **seven products from the Varanasi region** were added to the GI club, including Banaras Tabla, Banaras Shehnai, Banaras Lal Bharwamirch, Chiraigaon Karonda, Banaras Lal Pedas, Banaras Mural Painting, and Jaunpur Imarti. With these two new additions, the Varanasi region boasts the highest number of GI products from a single geographical area, reaching a total of 32.

About Uttar Pradesh:

Capital: Lucknow

Chief Minister: Yogi Adityanath

Governor: Anandiben Patel

Dharamshala Stadium in Himachal Pradesh will get India's first 'Hybrid Pitch'

- The **Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA)** stadium in **Himachal Pradesh** has installed a new type of pitch that is the first of its kind to be approved by the BCCI.
- The **hybrid pitch** was installed by a company called **SISGrass**, which is based in the **Netherlands**.
- The new technology provides a more durable, consistent, and high-performing playing surface for international and IPL matches.
- SISGrass entered the Indian market after the ICC allowed the use of hybrid surfaces for T20 and 50-over competitions. After successfully installing hybrids in English cricket grounds, SIS decided to develop the technology in India.
- Polymer fiber is added to natural turf inside cricket stadiums to make the surface more resilient to the stresses created during play, prolong the life of the pitch, guarantee an even bounce, and ease pressure on ground staff.
- The Universal machine used in Dharamshala for the hybrid pitch will also be used in **Ahmedabad and Mumbai** to create more such pitches.



- Hybrid pitches are approved for T20 and 50-over competitions in the UK and will also be used in the four-day County Championship matches this season.
- The Universal machine has already been used to install SISGrass at various grounds in England, including Lord's, The Oval, Edgbaston, Old Trafford, and Trent Bridge.
- **Hybrid pitches**, also known as '**stitched pitches**', are cricket pitches with fine turf.
- They have plastic fibers, usually beige or green in color, stitched into them in a regular pattern of 20mm x 20mm grid to 90mm depth.
- These fibers remain at the same cut length as the grass on the pitch and are installed using a specialist machine that needle-punches the fibers into the ground.
- Hybrid pitches have greater wear resistance and can host more games. Foot holes are shallower and need repairing less. Pitches recover more quickly after use due to the fibers that retain the natural grass plants.
- Hybrid pitches maintain better and deeper drainage, which encourages better germination. They also maintain a more consistent pace and bounce due to uniform ground cover and reduced wear.

About Himachal Pradesh:

Capitals: Summer: Shimla , Winter: Dharamshala

Chief Minister: Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu

Governor: Shiv Prathap Shukla

India introduces direct Rupee-Kyat payment system for importers of Myanmar pulses

- The government said the payment mechanism for traders importing pulses from Myanmar has been eased and simplified.
- The importers have been asked to utilize **Rupee/ Kyat** direct payment system using **Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA)** through **Punjab National Bank**.
- India depends on imports of pulses to meet the domestic shortage. The country imports tur and urad dals from **Myanmar**.
- The **Rupee/Kyat Settlement Mechanism** has been **operationalised** from **January 25** this year to simplify trade transactions and to make them more efficient.
- The Central Bank of Myanmar released guidelines for payment procedures under SRVA on January 26, 2024.



- The Indian Mission also informed the secretary that the new mechanism will apply for both sea and border trade and for trade in goods as well as services.

About Myanmar:

Capital: Naypyidaw

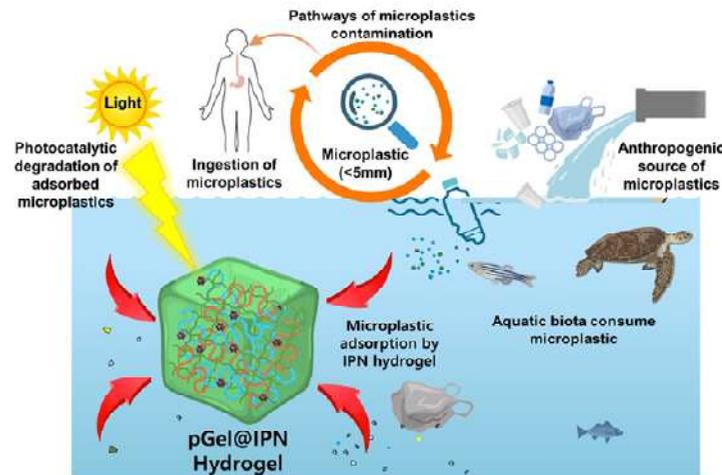
PM: Min Aung Hlaing

President: Myint Swe

Currency: Myanmar Kyat

IISc develops hydrogel to remove microplastics from water

- Scientists at the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)** have created a sustainable **hydrogel** to tackle the issue of **plastic pollution**.
- The hydrogel has a unique polymer network that can bind and degrade microplastics found in water using **UV light irradiation**.
- **Microplastics** are tiny particles of plastic that are less than 5 millimetres in size and have spread across the planet, from oceans to mountains.
- These tiny particles can enter our bodies through the water we drink, posing a serious threat to our health.
- Although scientists have attempted to eliminate microplastics through filtering membranes, the membranes tend to become clogged with the particles, making them unsustainable.



- As a result, the IISc team led by Professor **Suryasarathi Bose**, from the Department of Materials Engineering, turned to **3D hydrogels** as a solution.
- A team of researchers has developed a hydrogel made up of **three different polymer layers: chitosan, polyvinyl alcohol, and polyaniline**.
- The team infused the hydrogel with nanoclusters of a material called copper substitute polyoxometalate (Cu-POM), which are catalysts that can use UV light to degrade microplastics.
- The scientists crushed plastic lids and other common household items to make **two types of microplastics** found in nature: **polyvinyl chloride and polypropylene**.
- The hydrogel was highly efficient, **removing** about **95% and 93%** of the two types of microplastics in water at near-neutral pH (<“6.5).
- The scientists used a special coloring agent on the small plastic particles to keep track of how much of it was absorbed and broken down by a type of gel in different conditions.
- Once the hydrogel has reached the end of its usefulness, it can be repurposed into carbon nanomaterials that are capable of removing heavy metals from polluted water.

Proba-3 Mission of ESA to study sun will be launched by ISRO

- In a remarkable display of cutting-edge space technology, **India** is set to launch the **European Space Agency's (ESA)** revolutionary **Proba-3 mission** in **September 2024**.
- This groundbreaking mission is set to achieve a world-first in precision formation flying, using **two satellites** that have been designed to operate together in perfect unison, forming a 'large rigid structure' amidst the vastness of space.
- **The Proba-3 mission** is a remarkable feat of engineering and innovation, and marks a significant milestone in the quest to explore the final frontier.

About Proba-3 mission:

- **Two satellites** will work together to create a **144-meter long instrument** known as a **solar coronagraph**. This will help scientists to **study the Sun's corona** which is difficult to observe due to the brightness of the solar disk.



- The success of the mission depends on the precise positioning and coordination of the two spacecraft. To achieve this, the European Space Agency (ESA) has developed innovative technologies, including precision cold gas thrusters and vision-based detection systems.
- These technologies will enable the satellites to maintain their relative positions with millimeter-scale accuracy.
- The Proba-3 mission also serves as a testbed for future multi-satellite missions, which could operate as singular virtual structures.
- It is for the more complex and rich space stakeholders that Earth's principles, tenets and analogies involve radical changes in our approach.
- **The Proba-3 mission** will be launched using the **PSLV-XL rocket**, operated by the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)**.
- This collaboration between **ESA and ISRO** demonstrates the growing trend of international partnerships in space exploration, pooling resources and expertise to push the boundaries of what's possible.

About India's solar mission Aditya-L1:

- India sent a solar mission into space on **September 2, 2023**. It took around **127 days** and travelled about **1.5 million kilometers** to reach its final destination.

SBI Life introduces IdeationX for life insurance innovation

- **SBI Life Insurance**, one of the country's most trusted private life insurance companies, launched the **first edition of 'IdeationX'**. It is a pioneering initiative that promises to revolutionize the future of the insurance sector.
- This innovative platform aims to sensitize future leaders from B-schools (business schools) across the country about unconventional life insurance solutions.
- The main objective behind this initiative is to engage the young minds who are the future leaders of the country. Thus, various insurance needs can be identified and product solutions can be conceptualized to meet those needs.
- India's aim to become the **third largest economy by 2030** presents a huge opportunity for the **life insurance industry**.
- Currently only **3% people** in India have **insurance available**. It has immense potential for development because it provides financial security, digital transformation, employment generation and income generation to millions of people.



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- **SBI Life's 'IdeationX'** aligns with IRDAI's '**Insurance for All by 2047**' vision, fostering innovation and thought leadership.
- It also aims to engage, inspire and empower young minds which will prove beneficial for consumers and the sector.
- The first edition of SBI Life's IdeationX attracted over 1000 enthusiastic participants. These more than 1000 youth are from various business schools of the country.
- Around 320 budding students were selected after the XIMEI screening test in Hyderabad and Bangalore. The final round included eight teams, each with five members.
- SBI Life utilizes diverse perspectives and innovative ideas from young talent to pioneer cutting-edge life insurance solutions and better meet the growing needs of every consumer.

About SBI life Insurance:

Founded: March 2001

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Chairman: Dinesh Kumar Khara

MD& CEO: Amit Jhingran

Tagline: Apne liye, Apno ke liye

Olympic flame lit For Olympic Games Paris 2024 in Ancient Olympia

- **The flame for the Olympic Games Paris 2024** has been lit in **Ancient Olympia** on the eve of 100 days to go.
- **The Olympic flame**, a sign of peace and hope, is now ready to journey across **Greece** before reaching **France**.
- It will arrive in **Marseille on 8 May**, from where it will travel across the entire country, and some French territories, at the last will arrive at the **Opening Ceremony in Paris on 26 July**.
- The Olympic flame is the flame that is ignited in Olympia with the approval of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- In the context of the modern Games, the Olympic flame represents the positive values that humans have always associated with the symbolism of fire.
- This creates a connection between the ancient and modern Games. The Olympic flame symbolizes the spirit, knowledge, and life.



- The Torch Relay passes the flame from one person to another, representing the transfer of this symbolic fire from one generation to another.
- The Olympic Games, an event that represents the unity and enthusiasm of the human spirit, has the **motto “Citius, Altius, Fortius”**, which means **“Swifter, Higher, Stronger”** in Latin.
- The **Olympic rings** were created in **1913** by Coubertin to represent the five continents: **Africa, America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.**
- **The Paris Summer Olympics** are scheduled to take place in **Paris, France**, from **26th July to 11th August 2024.**
- This will be the **third time Paris** has hosted the Summer Olympics, having previously hosted the games in **1900 and 1924.**
- Approximately 10,500 athletes representing 206 National Olympic committees are expected to participate in the Paris Olympics in 2024. The games will feature four new sports including Breaking, Surfing, Sport Climbing, and Skateboarding.

President of Indian Olympic Association: P.T.Usha

About International Olympic Committee (IOC):

Founded: 23rd June 1894

Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland

Chairman: Thomas Bach

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Apple become the first company to export iPhones worth more than \$10 billion from India

- Apple has set a new record by **exporting \$10 billion** worth of **iPhones** from India during **FY24**, according to data provided to the government - a 100 per cent increase over the previous financial year under the **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme**.
- In terms of consumer products, this constitutes the largest-ever export of a single branded product by any company from India.
- iPhone exports accounted for **70 per cent** of **Apple's** total production in FY24.
- Of the **three suppliers**, **Foxconn** exported 60 per cent of its total iPhone output; **Pegatron** 74 per cent; and **Wistron** (now the Tatas) 97 per cent.



Samsung Unveils AI televisions in India

- **Samsung** launched in India its **QLED and OLED** range of **artificial intelligence-enhanced smart televisions**.
- Alongside, the **South Korean** electronics maker launched **world's first the glare-free OLED TVs**.
- The range of AI-enhanced Samsung televisions includes **Neo QLED 8K TVs, Neo QLED 4K TVs, and the glare-free OLED TV**.
- Samsung's Neo QLED 8K TVs are powered by the NQ8 AI Gen3 processor, and the 4K resolution QLED TVs are powered by the NQ4 AI Gen2 processor.
- Both the processors feature a dedicated Neural Processing Unit (NPU), which Samsung powers AI features on the devices.

About Samsung:

Founded: 1938

Headquarters: Suwon-si, South Korea

CEO: Kyung Kye-hyun, Han Jong-hee



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Adani infuses Rs 8,339 crore in Ambuja Cements, raises stake to 70.3%

- Billionaire **Gautam Adani's** family infused an additional **Rs 8,339 crore** in **Ambuja Cements**, raising its stake in the company to **70.3 per cent**, to help the cement maker's manufacturing capacity.
- The Adani family previously invested Rs 5,000 crore in the company on October 18, 2022, and Rs 6,661 crore on March 28, 2024. With the latest investment, it has completed **Rs 20,000 crore** planned infusion.
- The latest infusion raises the Adani family stake in Ambuja Cement by **3.6 per cent to 70.3 per cent**.
- In all, its holding in Ambuja Cement has increased from **63.2 per cent to 70.3 per cent**.
- The fund infusion will help Ambuja accelerate its growth ambitions to almost double its existing capacity to **140 million tonnes** per annum by **2028** from 76.1 million tonnes as of December 31.
- In 2022, the Adani group entered the cement sector with a USD 10.5 billion deal to buy Ambuja and ACC from Swiss giant Holcim.

About Ambuja Cement:

Founded: 1983

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra



Para archer Sheetal bags silver in Khelo India meet

- Asian Para Games gold-winner **Sheetal Devi (J&K)** grabbed a silver in **the Khelo India NTPC National Ranking archery** meet, finishing second behind **Haryana's Ekta Rani**, who is **able-bodied and a junior world champion**.
- In the competition held at the DDA Yamuna Sports Complex in new delhi, the 17-year-old Sheetal competed with able-bodied junior archers and lost 138-140 to Ekta in the individual compound event final.
- Sheetal was born with a rare physical condition called phocomelia which makes her the first and the only international para-archery champion without arms.
- Sheetal believes her performance in the Khelo India event will help her prepare for the challenges ahead
- The Khelo India ranking archery tournament was conducted in three categories - senior, junior and sub-junior in recurve and compound. Eighty-seven archers competed in this event.



Kyndryl unveils office space in Bengaluru's Embassy Manyata Business Park

- **U.S based company Kyndryl** has inaugurated a sprawling **250,000-square-foot office** in **Bengaluru's Embassy Manyata Business Park**.
- This facility will house Kyndryl's first-ever global Customer Experience Center (CEC), Security Operations Center (SOC), Network Operations Center (NOC), and the expansive Kyndryl Vital Studio.
- Designed for around 3,000 employees, the space boasts advanced technology to foster collaboration and provide customers with a seamless and immersive experience.
- It serves as an ideal space for co-creating the digital future by bringing together Kyndryl experts, alliance partners, and customers using co-creation methodologies to tackle complex business challenges.



India's economy projected to grow 6.5% in 2024: UNCTAD

- **Indian economy** is likely to carry forward the momentum in **2024**, growing **6.5%** compared with **6.7%** in the previous year, **United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** noted in its latest report released, revising India's growth forecast by **0.3 percentage points**.
- The global trade body pointed out that the factors that helped India grow by 6.7% in 2023 will help the economy achieve a similar growth rate in the current year as well.
- The economy projected in April-December expanded 8.2% in 2023.
- UNCTAD notes India's exports are also likely to perform better with countries looking to diversify their supply chains.



- India's exports were down **3.1% in FY24** compared with the previous year, but a pick-up was witnessed in the January-March period. Merchandise exports in March, at \$41.7 billion, were the highest in 12 months.
- UNCTAD was more critical of the global outlook. It raised its growth forecast for 2024 to **2.6% from 2.5% projected** earlier but noted that global growth is likely to slow down further from **2.7% in 2023** and remain below the pre-pandemic average of **3.2%**.

Global IT spending may raise 8% this year to 5tn dollar

- Worldwide IT spending is expected to total **\$5 trillion in 2024**, an increase of **8% from 2023**, according to the latest forecast by tech research and advisory firm **Gartner**.
- This is an increase from the previous quarter's **forecast of 6.8%** growth and puts worldwide IT spending on track to surpass **\$8 trillion** well before the end of the decade.
- “With spending on IT services on track to grow by 9.7% to eclipse \$1.5 trillion, this category is on pace to become the largest market.
- “In 2024, AI servers will account for close to 60% of hyperscalers’ total server spending.”
- In India, IT spending is estimated to record double-digit growth of 13.2% in 2024, totalling \$138.9 billion, up from \$122.6 billion in 2023.



Paytm gets nod for user migration to new UPI IDs

- The **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has allowed **One97 Communications (OCL)**, the company that operates **Paytm**, to start migration of users to a new payment service provider (PSP) the bank handles.
- **Four banks — State Bank of India (SBI), Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, and YES Bank —** will act as **PSPs to Paytm**.
- Users will now be asked for consent for using Paytm with a new UPI ID with one of the four banks' UPI handles.
- Once a Paytm user has been migrated, the current UPI ID with '@paytm' of these users will change to a new UPI ID with any of the four IDs: @ptsbi, @pthdfc, @@ptaxis and @ptyes
- On March 14, **NPCI** approved a **third party application (TPAP)** provider permit for **Paytm** in collaboration with **SBI, Axis Bank, Yes Bank and HDFC bank** for continuity of UPI transactions for the company's users.



- Paytm's UPI transactions were earlier being carried out through Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL) that has been barred by the Reserve Bank of India from accepting deposits, credit transactions, or top-ups in any customer accounts after March 15.
- **One97 Communications Limited (OCL)** holds a **49 per cent** stake in PPBL, while company's Founder and CEO **Vijay Shekhar Sharma** holds **51 per cent** stake in the beleaguered bank.