



**UPSC**

**CURRENT  
AFFAIRS  
CAPSULES**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

Adda247 has taken another initiative to help UPSC IAS aspirants by launching monthly current affairs capsules. Current affairs are the most important part of Civil Services Exam and every year majority of questions directly or indirectly comprises current affairs topics. Adda247 UPSC Current Affairs monthly capsule will help aspirants by providing them all information at one place.

### September 2020

#### 1. THE WEST BENGAL (PREVENTION OF LYNCHING) BILL, 2019

The West Bengal Assembly has passed the West Bengal (Prevention of Lynching) Bill, 2019 to prevent and punish mob assaults and lynching. The legislation has provision for the death sentence. The Bill also, while defining terms such as “lynching” and “mob”, says the West Bengal Lynching Compensation Scheme may be framed under this Act.

The bill aims to protect the constitutional rights of vulnerable persons and prevent incidents of lynching. It also proposes action against those involved in perpetrating the crime. It also says that nodal officers will be appointed to monitor and coordinate prevention of lynching.

It proposes a jail term from three years to life for those involved in assaulting and injuring a person. In case of death of the victim, persons responsible for the incident would be punished with rigorous life imprisonment and fine up to Rs 5 lakh.

The bill also has provisions for punishment to those who obstruct the legal process by threatening the victims or witnesses. Those held guilty of such activity can be sentenced to jail for 3 to 5 years.

#### 2. FORMER PRESIDENT BHARAT RATNA SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE PASSED AWAY

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has condoled the passing away of former President Bharat Ratna Shri Pranab Mukherjee. During his political career that spanned decades, Shri Pranab Mukherjee made long-lasting contributions in key economic and strategic ministries. He was an outstanding Parliamentarian, always well-prepared, extremely articulate as well as witty.

### **3. FIRST-EVER GUIDELINES ON ACCESS TO SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWD)**

The United Nations (UN) has released its first-ever guidelines on access to social justice for People with Disabilities (PwD) to make it easier for them to access justice systems around the world.

The outlines of the guidelines are a set of 10 principles. These are:

PwD shall not be denied access to justice on the basis of disability.

Facilities and services must be universally accessible without discrimination of PwD.

PwD that including children with disabilities have the right to appropriate procedural accommodations.

PwD have the right to access legal notices and information in a timely and accessible manner on an equal basis with others.

PwD are entitled to all substantive and procedural safeguards recognized in international law on an equal basis with others, and States must provide the necessary accommodations to guarantee due process.

PwD have the right to free or affordable legal assistance.

PwD have the right to participate in the administration of justice on an equal basis with others.

PwD have the right to report complaints and initiate legal proceedings concerning human rights violations and crimes.

Effective and robust monitoring mechanisms play a critical role in supporting access to justice for PwD.

All those working in the justice system must be provided with awareness-raising and training programmes addressing the rights of PwD.

The UN has defined the word persons with disabilities in its convention on the Rights of PwD (UNCPRD), which was adopted in 2006, as those “who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”.

India ratified the Convention in October 2007 and the Parliament enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 with a view to fulfilling the obligations under the UNCPRD.

#### **4. INDEX OF EIGHT CORE INDUSTRIES**

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade is releasing Index of Eight Core Industries for the Month of July, 2020. The eight core industries are; Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, and Electricity.

The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stood at 119.9 in July, 2020, which declined by 9.6 (provisional) per cent as compared to the Index of July, 2019. Its cumulative growth from April to July, 2020-21 was -20.5%.

The final rate of growth of Index of Eight Core Industries for April 2020 is revised at -37.9%. The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included within the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

#### **5. RASHTRIYA KHEL PROTSAHAN PURUSKAR 2020**

Air Force Sports Control Board was conferred with 'Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2020' for the outstanding contribution in helping sportsperson to excel in their respective disciplines and implement robust sports welfare measures.

The award is for sustained efforts towards encouragement and promotion of sports within the country and IAF especially. Air Marshal MSG Menon, Air Officer-In-Charge Administration and President, Air Force Sports Control Board received the award from Hon'ble President of India in an organised online ceremony at Vigyan Bhawan on 29 August 2020.

Air Force Sports Control Board (AFSCB) is the apex body for planning and conduct of sports activities within the IAF and at Inter-Services level. It has been the constant endeavour of AFSCB to enhance standards of IAF teams and to guide them in career progression as sportsmen in IAF. The promotion of sports at grass root level aims at encouraging sports culture within the environment and motivates young Air Warriors to incorporate sports activities as a way of life.

#### **6. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SIGNED CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN COMPANIES**

To boost the 'Make in India' initiative within the Defence Sector, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed contracts with M/s. Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. (BEML), M/s. Tata Power Company Ltd. (TPCL) and M/s. Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for supply of Six Pinaka Regiments to the Regiment of Artillery of the Indian Army at an approximate cost of Rs. 2580 Crores. This project under Buy (Indian) categorisation, with 70% Indigenous Content.

These Six Pinaka Regiments comprise 114 Launchers with Automated Gun Aiming & Positioning System (AGAPS) and 45 Command Posts to be procured from M/s TPCL and M/s L&T and 330 Vehicles to be procured from M/s BEML.

These Six Pinaka Regiments are going to be operationalised along the Northern and Eastern Borders of our country further enhancing the operation preparedness of our Armed Forces. Induction of Six Pinaka Regiments is planned to be completed by 2024. This is a flagship project showcasing public-private partnership under the aegis of Government of India (DRDO & MoD) enabling “Aatmnirbharta” in cutting edge Defence technologies.

## **7. DISCOVERY OF THE FARTHEST STAR GALAXIES IN THE UNIVERSE**

India's first Multi-Wavelength Space Observatory “AstroSat” has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy located 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth. A team of Astronomers led by Dr Kanak Saha from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) Pune has discovered the galaxy and named it AUDFs01.

The discovery has published by the leading international journal “Nature Astronomy”, Britain.

The unique discovery of the galaxy could not achieve its accomplishment by AstroSat/UVIT until the background noise in the UVIT detector which is much less than one on the Hubble Space Telescope of US-based NASA.

India's first Space Observatory AstroSat was launched by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on September 28, 2015. It was developed by a team led by ShyamTandon, Ex Emeritus Professor of IUCAA with the full support of ISRO.

## **8. SWACHHTA PAKHWADA**

The Government of India is observing Swachhta Pakhwada from 1st-15th September 2020. All PSUs and other Organizations under the Union Department of Fertilizers are participating in the Swachhta Abhiyan in a big way.

## **9. THE US-INDIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM (USISPF)**

Addressing the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) through a virtual conference, the Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal has invited the US business and industry to work with their Indian parallel company to take the bilateral trade to greater heights.

Shri Piyush Goyal says the two nations can be resilient trusted partners in the global value chain and India is ready to sign the initial limited trade package with America. On the issue of trade agreement between the US and India, he said India is ready to sign initial limited trade package, and it is up to the US to move ahead.

The outline of the steps being undertaken in the country to facilitate industry and investments are:



1. The GIS-enabled land bank has been launched on a pilot basis, with six states on board, which will help the investors in identifying the land and location.
2. There is the single-window system for clearances, which is being developed in cooperation with various approving authorities and agencies at the Central, State and Municipal levels.

### **10. AUSTRALIA-INDIA-JAPAN MINISTERS' MEETING ON SUPPLY CHAINS RESILIENCE**

India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, Australia's Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Senator Mr Simon Birmingham, and Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Mr Kajiyama Hiroshi held a ministerial video conference.

In the conference, the Ministers confirm the validity of their determination to take a lead in delivering a free, fair, inclusive, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade and investment environment and in keeping their markets open.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the global-scale changes in the economic and technological landscape recently, the Ministers underscored the necessity and potential to enhance the resiliency of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific region and called for other countries in the region to participate in the initiative.

In the background of necessity for regional cooperation on supply chain resilience in the Indo-Pacific, the Ministers shared their intention to work toward the launch of a new initiative to achieve the objective through cooperation and decided to launch the new initiative later this year.

### **11. SECOND INDIA-CHINA INFORMAL SUMMIT**

The second India-China informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping has been decided to be held in the historic coastal town of Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) in Tamil Nadu. The leaders are likely to make a visit to the ancient monuments in the coastal town.

Mamallapuram also hosted the Defence Expo 2018 or known as Defexpo, the Union Defence Ministry's annual event with international participation.

### **12. A NEW SUSTAINABLE POLICY FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET**

In the backdrops of recurring natural calamities, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) required to formulate a new sustainable policy for the future of the planet. It brought out a special report on Climate Change and Land that covers desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems.

The report makes it clear that unless the land is managed in a sustainable manner, the diminishing chance that humanity will survive climate change will become smaller still. There are various examples of successful civil society movements that involve in sustainable development. They are; La-Via Campesina, the Transition Network, and Bioregionalism. More recently, Fridays for Future and Fossil Fuel Divestment are part of such evolving initiatives.

### **13. AADHAAR CARDS TO NRIs**

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) will issue Aadhaar cards to NRIs with Indian passports without the mandatory 180 days waiting period. The scheme was announced in the Budget.

For the issuing the Aadhaar cards, there will need appropriate technological changes that will be implemented and an appointment facility will be provided where people outside the country. They also can apply for a time slot and specify the place in India, where they would like to collect their Aadhaar card.

After the fourth Aadhaar Seva Kendra (ASK) in Hisar, the UIDAI which has made operational two more in Bhopal and Chennai. UIDAI is confident of meeting its target of opening 114 such centres in the coming months.

### **14. THE NEW CAPITAL OF INDONESIA**

Due to climate change, the water levels in the Java Sea are rising and weather events are becoming more extreme and also Jakarta prone to be submerged. In the backdrop of this, Indonesia's President has announced to relocate its capital, Jakarta to East Kalimantan province on Borneo Island.

East Kalimantan was once almost completely covered by rainforests and also the mineral-rich province.

Jakarta is the largest Indonesian city and is located on the North West coast of the most populous island in the world, Java. Jakarta was built on a marsh, (already a few meters below sea level), thereby Jakarta is among the world's fastest sinking city.

### **15. HINDI, KASHMIRI AND DOGRI AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

In addition to Urdu and English, the Government has approved a Bill to introduce Hindi, Kashmiri and Dogri as official languages in Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office Jitendra Singh said: "It is not only a fulfilment of a long-pending public demand of the region but also in keeping with the spirit of equality which was ushered after 5 August 2019." The state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated on August 5, with Ladakh becoming a separate Union Territory.

## **16. NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR CIVIL SERVICES CAPACITY BUILDING (NPCSCB)**

Government of India has approved the launching of a National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) with the institutional framework namely; Prime Minister's Public Human Resources (HR) Council, Capacity Building Commission, Special Purpose Vehicle for owning and operating the digital assets and the technological platform for online training, and Coordination Unit headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

NPCSCB is designed to establish the foundations for capacity building for Civil Servants so that they keep good attitudes towards the Indian Culture and sensibilities and remain connected with their roots. The Programme will be delivered by setting up an Integrated Government Online Training-iGOTKarmayogiPlatform.

## **17. MoU BETWEEN INDIA AND JAPAN**

India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japan for improving quality and testing of Indian textiles and Clothing for the Japanese market. This MoU has been taken place between Textiles Committee, India and M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan.

According to the MoU, Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, in assigning Textile Committee as their cooperative Testing and Inspection service, has provided a platform to India for Textiles & Apparel products including technical textiles and any other products.

## **18. MoU BETWEEN INDIA AND FINLAND**

India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Finland for cooperation in the field of geology and mineral resources. The MoU has been taken place between the Geological Survey of India and the Geological Survey of Finland (Geologiantutkimuskeskus).

The MoU provides a platform of cooperation in the field of geology, training, mineral prognostication and suitability analysis, 3/4D modeling, Seismic and other Geophysical surveys finalised with the intent of reinforcing and strengthening scientific links between the two Organisations.

## **19. SAKSHAM YOJANA**

The Government of Haryana has launched an employment scheme called the Saksham Yojana. Under the scheme, the government has set a target to provide employment to two lakh youth in the State.

The government also focuses on other areas of opportunity under the scheme like; job opportunities in industrial units, and in medical facilities. Increasing the job opportunity in the field of medical facilities, Government has planned to establish a trauma centre at every 60 km to provide instant medical facilities to those injured in road accidents on national highways.

Under this scheme, Rs.9000 per month will be offered for working 100hours a month. It is mandatory to register online to start taking the benefits.



## **20. GOVERNMENT BLOCKS 118 MOBILE APPS**

Government of India has decided to block 118 mobile apps which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India. Because Government has received many complaints from various sources including several reports about the misuse of some mobile apps available on Android and iOS platforms for stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India.

Doing this, Government has used its power under section 69A of the Information Technology Act. The Ministry of Electronics and Information This move will safeguard the interests of crores of Indian mobile and internet users. This decision is a targeted move to ensure safety, security and sovereignty of Indian cyberspace.

## **21. WATER HEROES CONTEST 2.0**

Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the 'Water Heroes: Share Your Stories' contest from September 1, 2020. The aim of the contest is to reach out to people on the important subject of water conservation and management. The participants who want to participate will have to post their success stories on water conservation through a specially made video of 1-5 minutes depicting the efforts and significant contributions to conserve and manage water resources along with a write-up of up to 300 words and some photographs/pictures. This series of Contest will end on 31st August 2021.

## **22. CCI APPROVES INCREMENTAL ACQUISITION BY SABIC INTERNATIONAL HOLDINGS B.V. IN CLARIANTAG UNDER**

Under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has been approved the incremental acquisition of 6.51% shareholding by SABIC International Holdings B.V. (SABIC BV) in ClariantAG.

SABIC (Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Corporation) is a listed joint-stock company established by Royal Decree of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is mainly active in products such as petrochemicals, agro-nutrients, metals, and specialities materials.

ClariantAG is a Swiss chemicals company which headquartered is located in Muttenz. It is mainly active in products such as personal care, oil and mining, crop solutions and industrial applications.

The CCI approval is taken place without prejudice to the proceedings under Section 43A of the Act.

### **23. HEALTHY AIR: A HERBAL-BASED IMMUNITY BOOSTING ROOM FRESHENER**

Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune has developed herbal-based immunity-boosting room freshener product named "Healthy Air" to control the spread of COVID-19. Healthy Air supports respiratory condition in a healthy way.

It has no harmful substances that affect brain neural sensing. It is very useful for people suffering from allergic reactions, breathing problems related to asthma, headache, nasal irritation, or soreness in the throat as the product is mainly made of natural herbal extracts which work as an immunity booster.

This product is freely available for Indian technology start-ups and companies in its fight against the current pandemic situation.

### **24. REVIEWING PROGRESS OF ECLGS, PCGS 2.0 AND SUB-ORDINATE DEBT SCHEME**

Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman held a meeting with the heads of Scheduled Commercial Banks and NBFCs to examine their state of preparedness for implementation of the loans resolution framework for COVID-19 related stress.

The Finance Minister reviewed the progress made by various lenders under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme (PCGS) 2.0 and Sub-ordinate Debt Schemes announced as part of the 'Aatmnirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan', and advised lenders to try and extend the maximum possible relief to borrowers before the festive season.

As on 31st August, 2020, an amount of Rs. 1.58 lakh crore has been sanctioned under ECLGS, out of which more than Rs. 1.11 lakh crore has also been disbursed. Under PCGS 2.0, Bonds/CPs of Rs. 25,055.5 crore have been sanctioned for purchase by Public Sector Banks, out of which Rs. 13,318.5 crores amounting to more than 53% of the portfolio pertains to Bonds/CPs.

### **25. NTPC WON THE AIMA-CHANAKYA (BUSINESS SIMULATION GAME) NATIONAL MANAGEMENT GAMES 2020**

It is the first time that NTPC won the prestigious All India Management Association (AIMA)- Chanakya (Business Simulation Game) National Management Games 2020 in five years. This award is won by the team from NTPC Vallur, Tamil Nadu.

AIMA Chanakya National Management Games are an online Business Simulation Game which is conducted every year with aimed at ensuring that participating executives from various industries get an introduction to the complexities of operating an organisation and gain expertise and skills from this event.

National Management Games (NMG) is one of its kind platforms for Corporate Managers to face the thrill of Managing Business in a competitive mode. It is one of the most anticipated and reputable annual events based on Business Management Simulation, conducted by AIMA.

## 26. EXPORTS FROM INDIA SCHEME (MEIS)

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has amended the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 with immediate effect.

Two new paragraphs namely, 3.04A and 3.04B are inserted in the Foreign Trade Policy are as below:

**3.04A:** The total reward which may be granted to an Importer Exporter Code (IEC) holder under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) shall not exceed Rs 2 crore per IEC on exports made in the period September 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020.

**3.04B:** Benefits under MEIS shall not be available for exports made with effect from January 1, 2021.

Further, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said the 98 % of exporters, especially MSMEs will benefit under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) with reward cap of Rs. 2 crore/ Importer Exporter Code from September 1 to December 2020.

The Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) is to offset infrastructural inefficiencies and associated costs involved in the export of goods/products, which are produced or manufactured in India, especially those having high export intensity, employment potential and thereby enhancing India's export competitiveness.

## 27. THE STATE OF YOUNG CHILD IN INDIA REPORT

The Vice President, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu has released the 'State of Young Child in India' report. It's a comprehensive account of the challenges associated with early child development in India.

The report has been prepared by Mobile Creches. It is published by Taylor & Francis Group. Mobile Creches is a policy advocacy organisation which works with the underprivileged children across India.

The report said that there are 159 million children aged below 6 years in India in which 21 per cent are undernourished, 36 per cent are underweight and 38 per cent do not receive full immunization.

According to the ranking and values of the Young Child Outcome Index (YCOI), the report named Kerala, Goa, Tripura and Tamil Nadu to be among the top performers, while eight states namely; Assam, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar with scores below the national average lagged behind.

## **28. FIRST EVER VIRTUAL BUYER SELLER MEET FOR LOOSE DIAMONDS COMMENCES**

Government of India has inaugurated first Virtual Buyer and Seller Meet for loose diamonds. It is being organised by the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC). GJEPC is the apex body for the promotion of Gems and Jewellery Exports. The Virtual Buyer and Seller Meet will give an opportunity for buyers and exhibitors to connect and talk business over the virtual platform.

## **29. ACQUISITION OF METSO OYJ'S ("METSO") MINERALS BUSINESS BY OUTOTEC OYJ ("OUTOTEC")**

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approves the acquisition of Metso Oyj's ("Metso") minerals business by Outotec Oyj ("Outotec"). This acquisition is done under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.

The all such assets, rights, debts, and liabilities of Metso that relate to, or primarily serve, its minerals business (comprising the mining, aggregates, minerals consumables, minerals services, pumps, and recycling businesses) will be acquired by Outotec. The approval is subject to modifications that are aimed at eliminating the likely anticompetitive effects of the proposed combination.

## **30. 5TH BRICS CULTURE MINISTERS' MEET**

The 5th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting was held through video conference under the Chairpersonship of the Russian Federation on September 3, 2020. All the delegates from Culture Ministries of BRICS member participated in the meet.

The meeting was held to discuss the impact of the epidemiological situation on the cultural sphere in the BRICS countries and review of the possible implementation of joint cultural online-projects within BRICS.

The Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel addressed participants of the meeting and presented India's perspective to strengthen the cultural cooperation within BRICS through alternative mechanisms of sharing and organizing cultural events in the online format given the prevailing pandemic situation.

## **31. INDRA NAVY – 20**

The 11th edition of a biennial bilateral maritime exercise INDRA NAVY between Indian Navy and Russian Navy is scheduled in the Bay of Bengal from 04-05 September 2020. The exercise would be undertaken in a 'non-contact, at sea only' format due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The main aim of the exercise INDRA NAVY-20 is to further consolidate inter-operability built up by the 2 Navies over the years and also to reinforce understanding and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations.

The scope of this edition of exercise includes wide-ranging and diverse activities across the spectrum of maritime operations.

The Indian Navy is going to be represented by guided-missile destroyer Ranvijay, indigenous frigate Sahyadri and fleet tanker Shakti, along with their integral helicopters. Sahyadri has been presently redeployed to provide assistance to MT New Diamond, which has caught fire off the coast of Sri Lanka. The Russian Federation Navy is going to be represented by destroyer Admiral Vinogradov, destroyer Admiral Tributs and fleet tanker Boris Butoma of the Pacific Fleet, based at Vladivostok.

In December 2018, the last edition of the exercise was conducted at Visakhapatnam.

### **32. CSIR-CMERI DEVELOPS AFFORDABLE SOLAR POWERED BATTERY BASED SPRAYERS**

CSIR-CMERI has developed the affordable solar-powered battery-based Sprayers to tackle water crisis in agriculture. This revolutionary technology will help in generating agricultural avenues even in arid and semi-arid regions because the water scarcity will no longer be feared by the farming community. The CSIR-CMERI developed sprayers provide a cost-effective socio-economic solution for both marginalised and small-scale farmers. The affordable pricing profile helps to generate or provide opportunities to cottage and micro-industries in furthering the outreach factor of the technology widely.

### **33. DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TESTS HYPERSONIC TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATOR VEHICLE**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for successful flight of the [Hypersonic Test Demonstration Vehicle](#). He also said that the scramjet engine developed by our scientists helped the flight achieve a speed 6 times the speed of sound!

As per DRDO, this successful testing puts India in a select club of nations that have demonstrated this technology.

It is a hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology that was successfully demonstrated by DRDO on 7 September, 2020. The flight test of the Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV), will lead to the development of hypersonic cruise missiles and vehicles in future.

In June 2019, the test of the technology demonstrator was conducted.



The HSTDV took off at 11.03 a.m on 7 September, 2020 from the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam launch complex at Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast.

According to the DRDO statement "The hypersonic cruise vehicle was launched using a proven solid rocket motor, which took it to an altitude of 30 km, where the aerodynamic heat shields were separated at hypersonic speed."

### **34. FIT INDIA FREEDOM RUN**

Online interaction with Table Tennis player Madhurika Patkar was organised by the Sports Authority of India regional center in Mumbai on 7 September, 2020.

At the virtual National Sports Awards that were awarded last month, the paddler, who won the Arjuna Awards in 2020 spoke on the importance of the ongoing Fit India Freedom Run.

Fit India Freedom Run was organised by the Sports Ministry and it is the largest country-wide Run that was launched on 14 August by the Union Minister Sports & Youth Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju.

Till 2 October, the run, to go on and has been lapped up by the sportspersons and non-sportspersons from all spheres and seen major reception.

### **35. ROLE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 IN TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION**

On 7 September, 2020, President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated a virtual Conference of Governors on '[Role of National Education Policy 2020 in Transforming Higher Education](#)' in New Delhi.

The inaugural session was addressed by the PM Narendra Modi and was also attended by the Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', MoS for Education Shri Sanjay Dhotre, Governors, Lieutenant Governors/ Administrators of states and also some State Chief Ministers and Education Ministers.

President Kovind said that education is the most effective way for social justice and hence the National Education Policy calls for an investment of about 6 per cent of GDP jointly by the Centre and the States.

He also appreciated Dr. Kasturirangan and Ministers and also the officials of the Education Ministry for giving shape to the National Education Policy through an elaborate process. It took into consideration more than two lakh suggestions received from 2.5 lakh gram panchayats, more than 12,500 local bodies and about 675 districts.

PM Narendra Modi said the National Education Policy focuses on 'Learning' rather than 'Studying' and goes beyond 'Curriculum' to emphasizes 'Critical Thinking'. He said there is more emphasis is given on 'Passion', 'Practicality' and 'Performance' than on 'Process'.

### **35. PRIME MINISTER TO INAUGURATE PATRIKA GATE IN JAIPUR**

The Patrika Gate in Jaipur will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi through video conference on 8 September, 2020.

The Iconic Gate is built by the Patrika Group of Newspapers on the Jawaharlal Nehru Marg in Jaipur.

Prime Minister Shri Modi shall also release two books written by the Group Chairman on the occasion.

### **36. TENSIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA-GERMANY**

Tensions between Russia and Germany have deepened recently. It is over the alleged poisoning of Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

Against Russia, Germany has threatened sanctions which in turn has accused Germany of delaying the investigation on the matter.

### **37. 'MOPLAH RIOTERS' NOT FREEDOM FIGHTER: REPORT**

ICHR member Issac seeks removal of Malabar Rebellion leaders from martyrs list.

In 2016, a report was submitted to the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR). It recommended the de-listing of Wagon Tragedy victims and Malabar Rebellion leaders Ali Musliyar, Variamkunnath Ahmad Haji, and therefore the latter's two brothers from a book on martyrs of India's freedom struggle.

In all, the report had sought the removal of names of 387 'Moplah rioters' from the list.

In 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the book, Dictionary of Martyrs: India's Freedom Struggle 1857-1947.

The dictionary had left the Sangh Parivar leaders red-faced when the Moplah leaders, whom they believe killed several Hindus and converted many to Islam, found a place on the list of freedom fighters.

The report describes Haji as the "notorious Moplah Riot leader" and a "hardcore criminal," who "killed innumerable innocent Hindu men, women, and children during the 1921 Moplah Riot, and in a well deposited their bodies which is locally known as Thoovoor Kinar".

Army arrested the Haji and tried in the army court. He was shot dead on 20 January, 1922. The review report becomes relevant since the ICHR recently constituted a three-member committee, including Mr. Issac, to review the entries within the dictionary, including those of Haji and Ali Musliyar.

The review report also noted that "almost all the Moplah outrages were communal. They were against the Hindu society and done out of sheer intolerance. Thus the following names should be deleted from the yet-to-be-published project."

### **38. BUSINESS REFORM ACTION PLAN (BRAP) RANKING**

The 4th edition of Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) ranking of states, 2019 is released by the Finance Ministry. This Plan was started in 2015. The ranking has been decided on the basis of access to information, single window system, labour, environment, Ease of Doing Business, etc. in which the most important is Ease of Doing Business.

The top ten states for 2019 are: 1. Andhra Pradesh, 2. Uttar Pradesh, 3. Telangana, 4. Madhya Pradesh, 5. Jharkhand, 6. Chhattisgarh, 7. Himachal Pradesh, 8. Rajasthan, 9. West Bengal, 10. Gujarat.

This time Government decided the ranking on the basis of the feedback from over thirty thousand respondents at the ground level, who gave their opinion about the effectiveness of the reforms. This ranking will help to attract investments, foster healthy competition and increase Ease of Doing Business in each State.

### **39. NATIONAL AWARDS TO TEACHERS, 2020**

On the occasion of Teachers' Day, the President of India, Shri Ramnath Kovind presented the National Awards to Teachers for the year 2020 via video conferencing today. Forty-seven teachers from various states have been awarded the prestigious honour. Out of them, Sangeeta Sohni and Narayan Chandrakant Mangalaram have been awarded for their unique contribution towards the field of education.

Ms. Sangeeta Sohni teaches chemistry at the Atomic Energy Central School, Anushaktinagar, Mumbai. She teaches through the use of fun-filled practical exercises, applicative uses and ICT tools. At the same time, she also motivates her students to achieve very good academic results in higher secondary.

A teacher at Zilla Parishad Primary School, Rahuri, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra Mr. Narayan Chandrakant Mangalaram has received the award because he is an extremely progressive educator and has created a model primary school.

### **40. START-UP VILLAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME (SVEP)**

The Ministry of Rural Development has implemented the Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana -National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The main objectives of the SVEP are:

To support the rural poor come out of poverty.

To support the poor rural to set up enterprises and provide support till the enterprises stabilize.

To focus on providing self-employment opportunities with financial assistance and training in business management and soft skills while creating local community cadres for promotion of enterprises.

*Important key areas of SVEP are:*

It addresses three important pillars of rural start-ups namely; finances, incubation and skill ecosystems.

Activities under SVEP are strategically designed to promote rural enterprises, one of the key areas is to develop a pool of community resource persons-enterprise promotion (CRP-EP) who are local and support entrepreneurs setting-up rural enterprises.

To promote the block resource center (BRC) in SVEP blocks and monitor and manage the community resource persons, also appraise SVEP loan application and acts as the repository of enterprise-related information in the concerned block. BRCs play the role to support a sustainable revenue model to operate effectively and independently.

#### **41. MACHINE LEARNING-BASED SOLUTION TO EXPLORE CAUSES OF EARTHQUAKE**

Before several years scientists were struggling with the manual interpretation of growing seismic data to explore causes of an earthquake, particularly when the area is geologically complex, but now they invented the machine learning-based solution that can help in the automatic interpretation of this data. This data is very important for understanding the geotectonic, basin evolution, resource exploration, and process that causes earthquakes (seismogenesis) of an area.

To automate the process and accelerate the interpretation, scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) have developed a neural-based (machine learning-based) practical approach for automatic interpretation of 3D seismic data. It is the first of its kind approach that has been developed by computing a new attribute called meta-attribute.

#### **42. INDO-PACIFIC CLUB**

Germany has joined the Indo-Pacific club with an objective to secure the trade routes from aggressive China. Germany has drafted 40-page guidelines as it formally adopts a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region. The move by Germany augurs well for the Quad which is constituted by the United States, Japan, Australia, and India.

Germany is the second European nation after France to formally adopt a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region. The strategy allows Germany to make an active contribution to shaping the international order in the Indo-Pacific.

#### **43. EAT RIGHT INDIA MOVEMENT**

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has launched a mass media campaign on the Eat Right India movement. With the aim to cut down salt/sugar and oil consumption by 30% in three years and also to engage and enable citizens to improve their health and well-being by making the right food choices.

This movement gives support to the government's flagship public health programmes such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukt Bharat, Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Swachh Bharat Mission.

#### 44. GROUND-LEVEL OZONE

Researchers from the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital have evaluated the near-surface ozone in the Brahmaputra River Valley (BRV). They found that in compared to the other urban locations in India, over Guwahati the concentration of Ozone level is relatively low.

The examination has done on the basis of the construction of nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide, and ozone and suggested that this site is well influenced by local sources such as adjacent major national highway. During the day time, the site is in or nearly in a photo-stationary state, indicating a low impact of organic species on the ozone concentrations.

The Tropospheric situation or ground-level ozone is created by chemical reactions between oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds (VOC).

#### 45. SVANIDHI SCHEME

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has held the 'Svanidhi Samvaad' with street vendors from Madhya Pradesh. The PM-Svanidhi scheme had launched on 1st June, 2020 for providing affordable capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that are adversely affected because of Covid-19 lockdown.

4.5 lakh street vendors were registered in Madhya Pradesh, with over 4 lakh vendors having been given identification and vendor certification. Arrangements for beneficiaries of the scheme in the state to look at the program publically that has been made easy through LED screens in 378 municipal bodies.

#### 46. PATRIKA GATE

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Patrika Gate in Jaipur also released the Samvad Upanishad and Akshar yatra books written by the Patrika Group Chairman Shri Gulab Kothari.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said the Gate reflects the culture of Rajasthan and shall grow to be a major domestic and international tourist attraction. Referring to the two books, the Prime Minister said they are a true representation of Indian culture and philosophy and that authors play a great role in educating society.

#### 47. MONETISATION OF ASSETS OF POWERGRID

The Government of India has approved the monetisation of assets of POWERGRID through Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) model. POWERGRID is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Power. This is the first time that any PSU in Power Sector will undertake asset recycling by monetising its assets through the InvIT model and using the proceeds to fund the new and under-construction capital projects.



This approval would help POWERGRID to monetise in the first lot, assets with gross block value over 7000 crore. These assets are held by POWERGRID in form of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) that to be are mainly High Voltage Transmission lines and substations and the assets are held by POWERGRID in form of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs). The proceeds from the asset monetisation would be deployed by POWERGRID in their new and under-construction projects.

#### **48. TWO NEW CSTS CENTERS AT BHAGALPUR AND VARANASI**

Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) has been planned to establish the two new Centres for Skilling and Technical Support (CSTS) at Bhagalpur, Bihar and Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Presently CIPET has 43 operational centres and 9 more centres are in the process of establishment across the country catering to the needs of Polymer and allied industries.

It has currently 31 Skilling and Technology Support CST Centres where Diploma, PG Diploma and Skill development training programmes are being organised in the field of Polymer Science, Engineering and Technology.

CIPET is actively contributing towards several initiatives of Government of India like; Skill India, Make in India, Swatchh Bharat Abhiyan, Stand up India, Start-Up India and Digital India, etc.

#### **49. HUNAR HAAT**

After a gap of about 6 months due to the Corona pandemic, Hunar Haat has been restarted from 09th October 2020 with the theme of Local to Global and focus on indigenous exquisite Indian toys.

The Minority Affairs Ministry has organised over the two dozen Hunar Haat so far across the country where lakhs of artisans, craftsmen have been provided employment and employment opportunities through these Hunar Haat. In the coming days, Hunar Haat will be organized at Jaipur (23 Oct -1 November 2020), Chandigarh (7- 15 November 2020), Indore (21 to 29 November 2020), Mumbai (22 to 31 December 2020), Hyderabad (8 to 17 January 2021), Lucknow (23 to 31 January 2021), New Delhi (13 to 21 February 2021), Ranchi (20 to 28 February 2021), Kota (5 to 14 March 2021), Surat/Ahmedabad (20 to 27 March 2021) etc.

## **50. WORLD SOLAR TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT**

First World Solar Technology Summit (WSTS) has been organised by International Solar Alliance (ISA) and FICCI to bring together key stakeholders such as leading academic scientists, technology developers, researchers and innovators. In the Summit, the stakeholders have to present and discuss the recent highlights of solar technologies, cost-wise; technology-wise, technology transfers, challenges and concerns in the field.

The main objective of WSTS is to bring the state of the art and next-generation solar technologies to worldwide and to give an opportunity to decision-makers and stakeholders to meet and discuss their own priorities and strategic agenda towards a bigger integration.

## **51. REAL MANGO: SOFTWARE**

Now-a-days the touring activities are increased, therefore, to drive against touts; the Railway Protection Force (RPF) has disrupted the operation of illegal software called Real Mango used for cornering confirmed Railway reservation.

Operation of an illegal software called Rare Mango, later changed its name to Real Mango was revealed in August during action against touts by the field units of RPF. RPF units of North Central Railway (NCR), Eastern Railway (ER) and Western Railway (WR) apprehended some suspects and initiated the process of understanding and unravelling the operation of RareMango/Real Mango Software.

## **52. ATAL INNOVATION MISSION LAUNCHES AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ARISE-ANIC INITIATIVE**

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog launched one of its most awaited programmes, the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges.

It is launched to spur applied research and innovation in Indian MSMEs and startups.

The programme is going to be driven by Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), four ministries - Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Food Processing Industries; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and associated industries to facilitate innovative solutions to sectoral problems.

The Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-ANIC programme will support deserving applied research-based innovations by providing funding support of up to Rs 50 lakh for quick development of the proposed technology solution and/or product.

### **53. WESTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED (WCL) TO DOUBLE RAIL DESPATCH TO MEET COAL DEMAND**

Western Coalfields Ltd. (WCL), a subsidiary of Coal India Ltd.(CIL) has drawn an ambitious roadmap to almost double its coal dispatch capacity through rail mode to satisfy or to meet the additional demand of consumers of Power Sector.

‘Mission 100 Days’ is set by the company an agenda to streamline activities to reach peak dispatch of 50 rakes per day from January, 2021 with support from Railways.

At a cheaper landed price, WCL had recently offered additional coal to Power consumers of Central, West & South India.

On discussion with State Gencos of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, NTPC & IPPs, WCL expects additional coal demand of around 25 Million Tonnes per year from these consumers after getting swapped from other Subsidiaries of CIL & SCCL.

### **54. DekhoApnaDesh WEBINAR SERIES ON “PUNJAB-A HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE”**

This webinar series is an effort to showcase the rich diversity of India under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme.

As we all know that Punjab is known as ‘the land of Five Waters’. These rivers are Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas.

### **55. NSO SURVEY ON DIGITAL EDUCATION DIVIDE**

National Statistical Organisation recent report on survey shows the stark [digital divide](#) across States, cities and villages, and income groups.

The survey is based on household social consumption related to education which is a part of NSO’s 75th round of Sample Survey.

Due to COVID-19, schools across the country are closed for six months. That is those people who have access to digital resources are getting an education and those who do not have such resources are devoid of education.

*The digital divide:*

Rural households with computer – 4.4%

Urban households with computer – 23.4%’

Rural households with the internet – 14.9%

Urban households with the internet – 42%

ODF+ and ODF++

*According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA):*

All the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in Haryana have been certified Open Defecation Free (ODF), 21 ULBs ODF+ and 13 ODF++.

All cities in Punjab have been certified ODF, 33 are ODF+ and 17 are ODF++. Chandigarh is certified ODF++ and 3 Star (GFC).

In March 2016, the original ODF protocol was issued and according to it "A city/ward is notified as ODF city/ward if, at any point of the day, not one person is found defecating in the open."

In August 2018, ODF+ and ODF++ were launched to further scale up and sustain the work undertaken by the cities after achieving the ODF status under Phase I of the Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-Urban).

Cities that had been certified ODF at least once, on the basis of the ODF protocols, are eligible to declare themselves as SBM-ODF+ & SBM-ODF++.

A city, ward or work circle could be declared ODF+ if, "at any point of the day, not a single person is found defecating and/or urinating in the open, and all community and public toilets are functional and well-maintained."

## 56. GAP IN VACCINATION OF CHILDREN

'Health in India' report is recently published by the National Statistical Organization (NSO) which stated that the full immunization programme is not completed among 40% of the children.

The report is based on the 75th round of the National Sample Survey (July 2017-June 2018) on household social consumption related to health.

Only 59.2% of children under five years across the country are fully immunized.

Across the country, about 97% of children received at least one vaccination — mostly BCG or the first dose of OPV at birth.

Only 67% of children are protected against measles.

Only 58% got their polio booster dose, while 54% got their DPT booster dose.

Manipur (75%), Andhra Pradesh (73.6%) and Mizoram (73.4%) recorded the highest rates of full immunization.

Poor Performance by Nagaland (12%), followed by Puducherry (34%) and Tripura (39.6%).

In Delhi, less than half of all children are fully immunized.

## 57. PM MATSYA SAMPADA YOJANA, e-GOPALA APP 7 SEVERAL INITIATIVES IN BIHAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, e-Gopala App & several initiatives linked to studies and research in fisheries production, dairy animal husbandry and agriculture in Bihar. It is the largest programme ever launched for the Fisheries Sector in the country.

The scheme shall provide new infrastructure, modern equipment and new markets to Fish Producers

The goal of the scheme is to double the Fish Exports in the next 3 to 4 years. The scheme is launched in 21 States of the country with an investment of Rs 20,000 Crores which would be spent in the next 4-5 Years. And out of this project worth Rs 1700 are being launched recently.

According to the PM Narendra Modi, the scheme will empower our villages and make India Self-Reliant (AatmaNirbhar Bharat) in the 21st Century.

Under this scheme, several facilities have been inaugurated in Patna, Purnia, Sitamarhi, Madhepura, Kishanganj and Samastipur.

## **58. A LIVING LEGEND OF STATISTICS PROF. C.R.RAO FELICITATED ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY**

Padma Vibhushan Professor Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, the Living legend of statistics, was felicitated on the occasion of his 100th birthday at an online symposium held on 9 September, 2020.

The felicitation was conferred by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, for Professor Rao's "path-breaking contributions in the field of statistics, for recognising and facilitating the critical role of data and computing to handle scientific and social challenges, for mentoring inspiring and nurturing generations of students and researchers and for developing world-class statistical infrastructure in India".

His work not only influenced statistics, but has had far-reaching implications for fields as varied as economics, genetics, anthropology, geology, national planning, demography, biometry, and medicine, continues to contribute to his field as actively today.

## **59. KEEL LAIF FOR THE THIRD STEALTH FRIGATE OF PROJECT 17A**

On 10 Sep 2020, Vice Admiral S R Sarma-COM & CWP&A of the Indian Navy and Shri V L Kantha Rao Additional Secretary (Defence Production) laid the keel of the third ship (Yard- 12653) of the prestigious P17A class stealth frigates.

The ceremony was conducted through an e-platform in the presence of Vice Admiral R B Pandit, Chief of Staff, HQWNC and Vice Admiral Narayan Prasad (IN Retd.) – CMD MDL.

Seven frigates under P17A series will be constructed of which four are being constructed in MDL and three in GRSE with MDL as the lead yard.

The P17A class frigates are being built using indigenously developed steel and fitted with weapons and sensors alongside the Integrated Platform Management System. These ships are having stealth features.

Construction of P17A ships differs in the very concept of warship building by way of adoption of the modern technology 'Integrated Construction (IC)' where the blocks are pre-outfitted before joining to reduce the build period of warships. When commissioned the platforms will enhance the combat capability of the Indian Naval fleet.



## 60. DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES IN GANDHINAGAR DISTRICT

Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated and dedicated to the people development schemes in Gandhinagar district and city worth Rs. 15.01 crores via video conferencing on 10 September, 2020.

He also laid the foundation stone of various developmental projects worth Rs. 119.63 crores.

Development schemes include Smart City projects, up-gradation of gardens, road widening and new classrooms in Girls School.

Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Nitin Patel also attended the function via video conferencing from Rupaal village.

These development projects will give a boost to the development of Gandhinagar.

## 61. SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A two-day Conclave on “School Education in 21st Century” organised by Ministry of Education as part of Shikshak Parv 2020 virtually commenced on 10 September, 2020.

Shikshak Parv is being celebrated from 8th September- 25th September, 2020 to felicitate the Teachers and to take New Education Policy 2020 forward.

Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy Smt Anita Karwal inaugurated the Conclave on 10 September, 2020.

The discussions were held in two technical sessions on six subjects of New Education Policy 2020.

The first technical session started with a discussion on the subject of ‘Foundational Literacy and Numeracy’ from the perspective of practitioner’s.

The key speakers in the session were Shri Rakesh Gupta, IAS, Nodal Officer-Saksham Haryana; Shri Satinder Kumar Sorat, Principal, Govt. Sr. Secondary School, Faridabad, Haryana and Shri Sarvesh Kumar, Principal, Basti, UP, (Winner of National Awards for Teachers 2018).

The discussion on the subject ‘Art Integrated and Toy Integrated Pedagogy’ from the perspective of practitioners was held.

The session was coordinated by Dr. Pawan Sudhir from NCERT. The two speakers were Ms. Sunitha S. Rao, Principal, Delhi Public School, Secunderabad and Dr. Anju Kauwr Chazot, founder of the Mahatma Gandhi International School (MGIS), Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat.

The discussion on the subject ‘Early Childhood Care and Education’ also took place.

The session on ECCE was moderated by Dr. Vinita Kaul, the subject Expert. During the session, two speakers – Mrs. Nisha Sharma, Teacher, Kotkhai, Shimla and Mrs. Kalpana Chaudhry, Principal, N H Goel World School, Raipur spoke about the topic or subject & made their presentations individually.

The discussion on the subject 'Teaching in Mother Tongue' was coordinated by Dr. Shakeela T. Shamsu.

The discussion on 'No hard separation' was coordinated by Prof. Manjul Bhargava.

## **62. SOUTH INDIA'S 1ST AND COUNTRY'S 2ND KISAN TRAIN**

The inaugural run of South India's 1st and country's 2nd Kisan Rail between Anantapur and New Delhi flagged off.

The inaugural run of Anantapur - New Delhi Kisan Rail was flagged off through video link by Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, and Shri Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

The programme was presided over by Shri Suresh C. Angadi, Union Minister of State for Railways.

The Kisan train will run between Anantapur in Guntakal Division of South Central Railway and Adarsh Nagar in Delhi.

It will help in strengthening the agricultural economy and the state's popular fruits will now be able to reach other areas in the country easily.

On 7th August, the first Kisan Rail was flagged off between Devlali in Maharashtra and Danapur in Bihar as a weekly service. Due to increasing demand, later it was made bi-weekly. Now the 2nd Kisan Rail will benefit farmers of the states coming en route.

AP has 1st rank in the country in the production of tomatoes, coconut, papaya and chillies and is the biggest fruit-producing state in South India.

It'll also help within the speedy transportation of farm produce to distant places, in keeping with the goal of doubling farmers' income. Farmers can now sell their produce wherever they get a better price without spoilage due to the reduction in transportation time. This facility will also help in increasing agricultural exports.

## **63. CONSTRUCTION OF LILOOF KISHENGANJ-DARBHANGA 400kV TRANSMISSION LINE**

Shri R. K. Singh, the Union Minister of State(I/C) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, laid the foundation stone for construction of LILO of Kishenganj-Darbhangha 400kV Transmission Line at Saharsa in Bihar through a virtual event.

The project to improve the power scenario of the Saharsa along with Supaul, Khagaria and Begusarai districts.

The execution agency for the ₹ 100 crores worth project is POWERGRID Ltd., a central PSU under the Ministry of Power.

#### **64. THREE KEY PROJECTS RELATED TO THE PETROLEUM SECTOR IN BIHAR**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three key projects related to the Petroleum sector in Bihar.

The projects include the Durgapur-Banka section of the Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur Pipeline Augmentation Project and two LPG Bottling Plants.

They have been commissioned by IndianOil and HPCL, PSUs under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

The Durgapur-Banka section (about 200 km) is an important gas pipeline project for which PM Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone about one and a half years ago.

#### **65. 'GRIH PRAVESHAM'**

Prime Minister's address at 'Grih Pravesham' and inauguration of 1.75 lakh houses built under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin at Madhya Pradesh on 12 September, 2020. It is a major step to give pucca houses to every homeless person in the country.

This programme is also a moment which reinforces the hopes of the homeless in the country. Those who don't have their own house, one day they will also have their own house, their dreams will also be realized.

#### **66. IPFT DEVELOPS NEW "DISINFECTANT SPRAYS"**

Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology- IPFT an autonomous Institution under the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers has successfully developed two new technologies namely "Disinfectant spray for surface application" and "Disinfectant spray for Vegetables & fruits."

IPFT has developed; alcohol-based "Disinfectant Spray" for the surface applications containing botanical anti-microbial which may be effective in prevention from various diseases caused by microbes, bacteria and virus.

The formulation is volatile and evaporates quickly after disinfecting the surface and does not leave any stains, odour and residue etc.

IPFT has also developed Disinfectant Spray to remove pesticide residues leftover on the surface of fruits and vegetables.

To make fruits and vegetables 100 percent safe for human consumption IPFT has developed a water-based formulation. The decontamination procedure using the formulation is simple; vegetables or fruits are soaked in the diluted solution of this formulation for 15-20 minutes thereafter rinsed with fresh water. This simple procedure makes fruits and vegetables totally pesticide-free.

IPFT was established in May 1991 under the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers as an Autonomous Institution. Institute has been working towards the development of safer, efficient and environment-friendly pesticide formulations.

## 67. PARESH RAWAL A NEW CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA SOCIETY

Veteran Actor Paresh Rawal has been appointed as Chairman of National School of Drama Society by President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind.

Mr. Paresh Rawal has been appointed to the post of Chairman, NSD Society for four years. Mr. Rawal is an actor par excellence in both Theatre and Film. It's been almost four decades of him serving the film and theatre industry for which he has won numerous awards, including the prestigious National Film Award for Best Supporting Actor in 1994. In 2014, he was conferred with the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India, for his contribution to the entertainment industry. He also served as a former member of Parliament.

Established in 1959, the National School of Drama is an autonomous organization, fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. One of the foremost theatre training institutions in the world, NSD had its inception under the aegis of the Sangeet Natak Akademi and became an independent entity in 1975.

It offers a 3-year, full-time, residential training program in various aspects of theatre.

## 68. INDIA-CHINA AGREE ON 5-POINT ACTION PLAN

India and China have agreed on a five-point course of action to disengage and reduce tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

*The five-point plan is:*

- Following the consensus between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping to “not allow differences to become disputes”.
- Disengaging quickly to ease tensions.
- Abiding by the existing India-China border protocols and avoiding escalatory action.
- Continuing the dialogue between the Special Representatives, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Mr. Wang, as well as the other mechanisms.
- Working towards new confidence-building measures (CBMs).

## 69. JAMMU AND KASHMIR INTEGRATED GRIEVANCE REDRESS AND MONITORING SYSTEM (JK-IGRAMS)

Launched on a pilot basis for Jammu, Srinagar, and Reasi districts.

The system will replace the current portal launched by the government in 2018.

This is the first UT that will be linked to the central government system—CPGRAMS.

Deputy Commissioners have been placed at the primary level for receiving, disposing of and monitoring grievances, the J&K administration.

All SPs and DCs will be made available at designated times five days a week. They will be available in their offices and anyone can go and meet them.

Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) developed by National Informatics Centre (Ministry of Electronics & IT [MeitY]), in association with Directorate of Public Grievances (DPG) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).

## **70. LAUNCH OF VIRTUAL HEARING IN QUASI-JUDICIAL CASES**

The Government of India has launched the virtual hearing in quasi-judicial cases under EPF & MP Act, 1952. This is part of a series of initiatives taken by EPFO to enhance the ease of doing business.

The virtual court is a concept that geared towards the eliminating need for the physical presence of litigant and lawyers by facilitating adjudication of the case through online mode.

To facilitate this, virtual hearing utilities are integrated with EPFO's e-Court process on Compliance e-Proceedings Portal. This will facilitate issue of e-notices, real-time recording of proceedings and communication of orders. Case status including the daily and final orders will now be accessible to all parties on the portal.

## **71. THE PESTICIDES MANAGEMENT BILL, 2020**

The Government has introduced the Pesticides Management Bill, 2020 which was approved by the Union Cabinet in February 2020 and will replace the Insecticides Act, 1968. The Bill faces criticism from many experts. They have warned that few provisions in this bill will affect the farmers' livelihood. Therefore, they have called for wider consultations on the bill and asked it to put it before a select committee.

The provisions in this Bill that will affect the farmers' livelihood are;

It would not allow the manufacture and export of pesticides not registered for use in India even if these are approved in other countries.

The bill will increase the import of formulations and will damage the export of agro-chemicals.

The bill gives powers to Registration Committee (RC) to subjectively review registration of a pesticide and then suspend, cancel or even ban its usage. This would be done without any scientific evaluation.

It also provides for re-registration of pesticides already registered under the erstwhile 1968 Act. This will bring instability in the pesticides industry.



## **72. METHANE DEPOSIT IN KRISHNA-GODAVARI (KG) BASIN**

The Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) has found that the methane hydrate deposits are located in the Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin. It is of biogenic origin. The found estimated that it Basin is twice that of all fossil fuel reserves available worldwide.

Researchers have also predicted the rate of biogenic methane generation in KG Basin hydrates to be 0.031 millimoles methane/gTOC/Day, resulting in total deposits of methane around 0.56 to 7.68trillion cubic feet (TCF).

## **73. THE AERO INDIA-21**

The 13th edition of Aero India-21 will be held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru from 3-7 February 2021. On this announcement Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh has launched the Aero India 2021 website with an aim to go ahead for space-booking.

Aero India 2021 website will be a contactless online interface for Asia's largest Aeroshow and host all online services associated with the event for both the exhibitors and visitors besides hosting informative content about Ministry of Defence's recent policies, initiatives as also product profile of indigenous aircraft and helicopters.

## **74. G-20 AGRICULTURE AND WATER MINISTERS MEETING**

A virtual meeting of G-20 Agriculture and Water Ministers has been held and attended by G-20 Member countries and special invitees. This time the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was the current Presidency of G-20.

The Meetings was held on sustainable and resilient water management, thereby optimizing the impacts of water-related activities in the G-20 forum through collaboration, knowledge sharing on different aspects of water.

## **75. LIVING PLANET REPORT 2020**

The living planet report is released by the international non-profit World Wide Fund for Nature. It is published every 2 years. The living planet report is a comprehensive study of trends in global biodiversity and the health of the planet. The report presents a comprehensive overview of the state of the natural world through the Living Planet Index (LPI).

It is a measure of the state of the world's biological diversity based on population trends of vertebrate species in terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats.

Living Planet Report 2020 is the 13th edition of the biennial publication tracking wildlife populations around the world. This year the report is a collaboration between WWF International and the Zoological Society of London.

## **76. TOYS (QUALITY CONTROL) ORDER, 2020**

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India today issued a notification, extending the date of implementation of Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020 as 1.1.2021 in place of 1.9.2020.

This decision will provide domestic manufacturers an extra time of four months to make necessary arrangements for compliance of standards in view of difficulties arising out of COVID-19 pandemic.

## **77. INDIA AND U.S. DEFENSE DELEGATIONS**

The 10th Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) Group Meeting was held virtually on September 15, 2020.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Raj Kumar, Secretary, Defence Production, from the Indian Ministry of Defence and Ms. Ellen M. Lord, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, from the U.S. Department of Defense. DTTI Group Meetings are normally held twice a year, alternating between India and therefore the United States. Due to COVID-19, a meeting was held virtually.

The aim of the DTTI Group is to bring sustained leadership focus to the bilateral defense trade relationship and make opportunities for co-production and co-development of defense equipment.

Four Joint Working Groups focused on land, naval, air, and aircraft carrier technologies have been established under DTTI to promote mutually agreed projects within their domains.

Further efforts to encourage U.S. and Indian industry to cooperatively develop next-generation technologies under the DTTI Group were highlighted by the first DTTI Industry Collaboration Forum (DICF), which happened virtually on September 10, 2020.

The DICF was convened by Shri Sanjay Jaju, Joint Secretary (Defence Industries Production), Mr. Michael Vaccaro, Director, International Armaments Cooperation, and Ms. Amy Murray, Director, Small Business Programs.

This forum offers a chance for Indian and U.S. industry to be directly involved in DTTI and facilitates dialogue between government and industry on issues that impact industrial collaboration.

## **78. MEKEDATU PROJECT**

The government of Karnataka is likely to take a delegation to bring pressure on the Centre to approve the construction of the Mekedatu balancing reservoir that has been proposed to store water for drinking purposes.

Mekedatu is a location along Cauvery in Kanakapura Taluk of Ramanagara District of Karnataka.

To meet Bengaluru's water problem, Karnataka wants a reservoir across Cauvery at [Mekedatu](#).

The current status of the project is:

Karnataka State government in 2017 approved Rs. 9,000 crore project.

Union Water Resources Ministry gave its approval for the detailed project report and is awaiting approval from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF).

Tamil Nadu has approached the Supreme Court against the project.

## **79. USA SANCTIONS AGAINST ICC OFFICIALS**

The USA announced sanctions which include asset freezes and visa bans against two officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their investigation into alleged war crimes by the USA forces and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Afghanistan since 2003.

The USA has considered the ICC a threat to USA sovereignty and announced the strict punitive measures that are generally reserved to be used against terror groups and those people accused of abusing human rights.

USA had never ratified the "Rome Statute", which created the ICC in 1998, and thus is not subject to its rulings.

The USA administration also called ICC a thoroughly broken and corrupted institution.

ICC's Stand on USA Sanctions: An unacceptable attempt to interfere with the rule of law and the Court's judicial proceedings.

The USA decision has been criticised by the United Nations, the European Union, 10 members of the UN Security Council, including the UK and France, as well as several international human rights agencies, all of which have called for the sanctions to be reversed.

## **80. SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS**

The Centre has sought Parliament approval for a gross additional expenditure of ₹2.35 lakh crore for 2020-21.

The Minister of Finance presented the first batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for this financial year in the Lok Sabha.

Out of the gross additional expenditure of Rs 2.35 lakh crore, Rs 1.67 lakh crore is the net cash outgo and Rs 68,868 crore is matched by savings of the Ministries/Departments or by enhanced receipts/recoveries.

*Due to Covid-19 pandemic, this year's supplementary demand includes additional allocations to pay for:*

- In March 2020, Relief measures announced as part of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana including insurance schemes, food security, cash transfer, help to small companies for paying employees etc.
- In May, 2020, Aatmanirbhar Bharat stimulus package was announced and expected to focus on land, labour, liquidity and laws.
- Grants-in-aid for the State Disaster Response Funds, in accordance with the interim recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission.
- Grants for bank recapitalisation
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme etc which is suffering from a fund crunch.

## 81. METHANE HYDRATES IN KRISHNA-GODAVARI BASIN

Recently, a study was conducted by the researchers on biogenic methane hydrate in the Krishna-Godavari (KG) Basin at the Agharkar Research Institute (ARI). It is an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. Biogenic Methane is produced from the metabolic activities of living organisms.

The research team has identified the methanogens that produced the biogenic methane trapped as methane hydrate, which may be a big source of energy.

Methanogens are microorganisms that produce methane as a metabolic by-product in hypoxic (low levels of oxygen) conditions.

The ARI team has documented a predominance of genus Methanosarcina in the KG basin, followed by a few other genera Methanoculleus, Methanobacterium.

Methane hydrate is formed when hydrogen-bonded water and methane gas come into contact at high pressures and low temperatures such as in oceans.

## 82. CORAL REEF PROGRAM

A Global Initiative to scale back Land Degradation and Coral Reef program has been launched at G20 Environment Ministers Meet.

The Environment Ministerial Meeting (EMM) of the G20 countries took place on 16 September, 2020 through video conferencing under the Presidency of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

According to Shri Javadekar, India is committed to work with G20 nations for a better world. He said, India is blessed with vast bio-diversity and ecosystem and measures have been taken to enhance coral reef conservation.

Through the National Coastal Mission Programme the government has taken several steps to protect and sustain coral reefs in the country.

He also shared the efforts made by India towards achieving land degradation neutrality, and towards the attainment of worldwide goals of global climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Global Initiative is launched to reduce Land Degradation and Coral Reef program and two documents on climate change associated with managing emissions and climate change adaptations under the G20 this year.

The worldwide initiative on Reducing Land Degradation aims to strengthen the implementation of existing frameworks to prevent, halt, and reverse land degradation within G20 member states and globally, taking into account possible implications on the achievement of other SDGs and adhering to the principle of doing no harm.

The Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform is an innovative action-oriented initiative. Its objective is to create a global research and development (R&D) program to advance research, innovation and capacity building in all facets of coral reef conservation, restoration, and adaptation, and strengthen ongoing efforts and commitments made to enhance coral reefs conservation and their further degradation.

### **83. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION**

The Ministry of Education organized a webinar on Faculty Development for Quality Education on 15th September, 2020 under Shikshak Parv Initiative.

The objective of the webinar is to reflect the roles and responsibilities of teachers in the light of NEP and to understand various aspects of capacity development and career progression of the faculty.

Shikshak Parv is being celebrated by the Ministry of Education from 8th September- 25th September, 2020 to felicitate the Teachers and to take New Education Policy 2020 forward.

### **84. NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020**

The bill is proposed to be introduced in this Parliament session.

It seeks to amend the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 pertaining to the powers and function of the Delhi government and the Lieutenant Governor.

*Highlights of the proposed Bill:*

- The bill proposes about the functions of the Council of Ministers and the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) by giving more discretionary powers to the L-G.
- In matters related to the All India (Civil) Services and the Anti Corruption Branch, as per a provision, the L-G could act in his discretion in any matter that is beyond the purview of the powers of the Legislative Assembly of Delhi.
- Also, the validity of any decision taken as per such discretion shall not be questioned.



## **85. SALARY ALLOWANCES AND PENSION OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020**

The Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 was unanimously passed by the members of the Lower House.

The Lok Sabha passed a bill to cut salaries of all MPs by 30 per cent for a year, to meet the exigencies arising out COVID-19 pandemic commencing from April 1, 2020.

These include constituency allowance and office expenses allowance.

## **86. ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES BILL PASSED**

Lok Sabha passed the [Essential Commodities \(Amendment\) Bill, 2020](#) to deregulate food items, including cereals, pulses and onion, a move aimed at transforming the farm sector and raising farmers' income.

The extraordinary circumstances mentioned in the Bill are war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamity of grave nature.

The Ordinance requires that imposition of any stock limit on agricultural produce must be based on price rise.

A stock limit may be imposed only if there is: (i) a 100% increase in the retail price of horticultural produce; and (ii) a 50% increase in the retail price of non-perishable agricultural food items.

The increase will be calculated over the price prevailing immediately preceding twelve months, or the average retail price of the last five years, whichever is lower.

## **87. PRADHAN MANTRI SWASTHYA YOJANA (PMSSY)**

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar will be established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY). It is approved by the cabinet. Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) was announced in 2003. The aim of the yojana is correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/reliable tertiary healthcare services and also to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country.

The PMSSY is implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

## **88. THE FARMERS' PRODUCE TRADE AND COMMERCE (PROMOTION AND FACILITATION) BILL, 2020 AND THE FARMERS' (EMPOWERMENT AND PROTECTION) AGREEMENT OF PRICE ASSURANCE AND FARM SERVICES BILL, 2020**

Two bills were passed by Lok Sabha on 17 September, 2020. The aim was to transform agriculture in the country and increase the income of farmers.

2 bills are namely [The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce \(Promotion and Facilitation\) Bill, 2020](#) and [The Farmers \(Empowerment and Protection\) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020](#).

On 14th September 2020, these bills were introduced in Lok Sabha by Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, to replace ordinances promulgated on 5th June 2020.

According to the Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, farmers will now have freedom for direct marketing of their produce and will be able to get better prices, MSP procurement system will continue, consumers will also benefit.

The reforms will accelerate agricultural growth through private sector investment in building agricultural infrastructure and supply chains for Indian farm produce in national and global markets, create employment opportunities and strengthen the economy.

### **89. HIGH-TEMPERATURE TURBINE ROTOR TEST**

India may soon manufacture its own super alloy steam turbine rotors for efficient coal-based thermal power plants.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) to establish a high-temperature turbine rotor test rig for efficient coal-based Thermal Power Plants.

It'll be the first facility in India for experimental validation of the design of the AUSC steam turbine rotor. And also the only one of its kind in India in terms of establishing a real size engineering experimental set-up.

Project taken up under the Clean Energy Research Initiative of DST.

It'll subject the turbine rotor segments of weight up to 9000 kilograms to varied damage conditions almost like that within the plant operation, like high temperatures up to 800 degree Celsius, high speed up to 3600 Revolutions Per Minute(RPM), followed by long term steady-state operation and controlled heating and cooling.

The facility will pave the way towards Atmanirbhar Bharat in this sector.

### **90. JOINT G20 FINANCE AND HEALTH MINISTERS MEETING**

Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare attended Joint G20 Finance and Health Ministers Meeting through video conference on 17 September, 2020.

Saudi Arabia bestowed with the Presidency of G20 grouping hosted the session.

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said "Flattening the COVID-19 curve globally would require international, multi-sectoral collaborative efforts in order that health systems have sufficient capacities to deal with the flux of complicated cases".

## 91. SEWA DIWAS

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) extended the benefits of various employment generation schemes to just about 1500 persons in 10 Indian cities to celebrate "Sewa Diwas" on 17 September, 2020.

The day marks the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

14 programs were organised from by KVIC Arunachal Pradesh on the North Eastern Frontier to Bikaner on the Western Border and from Chandigarh and New Delhi in the North to Madurai and Coimbatore down South to expand the ambit of its welfare projects to create local employment.

Minister of State for MSME, Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi inaugurated SFURTI Cluster of 500 artisans for creating hand-knotted carpets in Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh.

KVIC Chairman Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena launched six different programs in Varanasi, the Parliamentary constituency of the Hon'ble Prime Minister. It includes the first Footwear Training cum Production Center in Varanasi for leather artisans (Mochi) in collaboration with Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI), Agra.

He distributed 6 innovative cycle-mounted Tea/Coffee Selling units under Project DigniTEA which will enable tea-sellers to earn a good and respectable livelihood while selling tea/coffee hygienically.

He distributed electric potter wheels to 300 Kumhar families under Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana and 200 bee boxes to 20 farmers families under Honey Mission.

The KVIC Chairman also distributed 6 hand-operated Agarbatti making machines at Sewapuri Block in Varanasi under the Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission while also launching the plantation of 100 saplings of Bambusa Tulda, a bamboo species used for creating Agarbatti sticks.

Within the scenic village of Chullyu in Arunachal Pradesh, Saxena inaugurated state's first Silk Training cum Production Center which will create local employment to artisans and increase the production of local Silk.

KVIC has renovated a dilapidated government school building to develop the Silk Training cum Production Center.

Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena also distributed 6 cycle-mounted Tea/Coffee Selling units to local unemployed youths each in New Delhi, Jaipur and Chandigarh.

## 92. NATIONAL WATER POLICY

To deal with the present challenges in the water sector, revision of National Water Policy has been envisaged and a drafting committee has been constituted on 5th November, 2019 to revise the National Water Policy within a term of six months.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the term of the Committee has been extended up to 31st October, 2020.

The proposed National Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (NBWUE) will have the general responsibility of improving water use efficiency across various sectors, namely irrigation, drinking water supply, power generation, industries, cities and all other areas where water is used.

### **93. CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS IN BIHAR**

Water Resources Projects are planned, funded, executed and maintained by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities.

So as to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Government of India provides technical and financial assistance to encourage sustainable development and efficient management of water resources via several schemes and programmes including Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) etc. under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) according to the guidelines of such schemes.

As intimated by the Central Water Commission (CWC), no Major and Medium Irrigation Project proposal like the construction of dams in Mithila Region/ Darbhanga district of Bihar has been received from the State Government during last five years.

On 12th June, 2020, it received a proposal of Dagmara Hydro Electric Project from Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for clearance from inter-state aspects.

On 24th June, 2020, the same was accepted by CWC. The project is a Run of the River scheme with an installed capacity of 130.1 MW.

It envisages constructions of the concrete barrage and an earthen dam across Kosi River in Mithila region of Bihar.

### **94. WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY**

On the occasion of the second World 'Patient Safety Day', Ministry of Health and Family Welfare & National Health System Resource Centre organised a webinar on 17 September, 2020.

To provide impetus to the endeavours directed towards improving the safety of patients as well as health care worker, since both are closely interlinked.

The theme for Patient Safety Day 2020 is "Health Worker Safety: A Priority for Patient Safety".

The Slogan is "Safe health workers, Safe patients."

The Webinar was inaugurated by Sh. Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary MoHFW.

## **95. 32 EARTH OBSERVATION SENSORS CURRENTLY IN ORBIT**

The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that there are 32 earth observation sensors.

The 32 earth observation sensors are currently in orbit with advanced capabilities providing space-based information.

Since January, 2018, five earth observation satellites and five communication payloads were realized.

Information support was provided for all the major disaster events like floods, cyclones and forest fires occurred since January 2020.

About 2,51,000 value-added data products were disseminated to users since April 2020.

The value-added products comprise of geophysical & remote sensing data products derived using the data from meteorological, oceanographic and land remote sensing satellites.

The total number of satellites launched by ISRO that are no longer operational (life ended) and currently in orbit are 47 (26 satellites are in LEO/Low-Earth-Orbit and 21 are in GEO/Geosynchronous-Equatorial-Orbit).

## **96. IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON RURAL HEALTHCARE**

“Public Health and Hospitals” being a State subject the first responsibility of implementation of varied health care schemes including National Health Mission lies with respective States.

All the States/ UTs are given necessary financial support under India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package, with the flexibility to use the resources supported on their context and priorities.

During FY 2020-21, funds of Rs 4256.81 crore are released to the States/ UTs as on 10.09.2020.

To deal with the healthcare challenges, particularly in rural areas, the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched in 2005 to supplement the efforts of the State/UT governments to supply accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to all or any those that access public health facilities. Currently, NRHM is a sub-mission of National Health Mission (NHM).

States have also been allowed to supply negotiable salaries draw in Specialists including flexibility in strategies such as “You quote, we pay”.

The States also are encouraged to adopt flexible norms for engaging specialists for public health facilities. These include ‘contracting in’ and ‘contracting out’ of specialist services and engaging specialists outside the government system for service delivery at public facilities under NHM.



## **97. ACTION IN ADVANCE FOR MANAGEMENT FOR AIR POLLUTION**

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Dr. P. K. Mishra chaired the meeting of the High-Level Taskforce constituted to improve the air quality in National Capital Region of Delhi. Chief Secretaries of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, Secretaries of various department/ministries of the central government including M/o of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Agriculture, Road, Petroleum and Central Pollution Control Board were present in the meeting.

A review of the main sources of air pollution, measures taken and the progress made by the State Governments and several Ministries was carried out. It was noted that the incidence of stubble burning has reduced by more than 50% in the last two years and the number of Good AQI days have gone up.

Government of GNCT-Delhi was requested to make sure measures to control local sources of pollution.

Principal Secretary mentioned that special emphasis should be laid on the deployment of teams for control of open burning of waste, IT-enabled monitoring of mechanical road sweepers, improvement in utilization of construction & demolition waste and site-specific implementation of an action plan for identified hot spots.

## **98. PRIME MINISTER TO LAY FOUNDATION STONE OF NINE HIGHWAY PROJECTS**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of nine highway projects in Bihar through video conference on Monday, 21st September 2020.

He shall also inaugurate the Optical Fibre internet services where all the 45,945 villages of Bihar are going to be connected through Optical Fibre Internet Service.

These nine highway projects involve a road length of about 350 kilometers at a price of Rs 14,258 Crore.

Paving the way for the development of Bihar, these roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience and economic growth in and around the State. Movement of individuals, people and goods will also improve substantially, especially with the neighbouring States of Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.

The Prime Minister had declared a special package for significant infrastructure development of Bihar within the year 2015. This included 75 projects worth Rs 54,700 crore, of which 13 projects are completed, work is undergoing at 38 and others are in the DPR/Bidding/Sanction stage.

With the completion of these projects, all rivers in Bihar will have bridges conforming to 21st-century specifications, and all major NHs will stand widened and strengthened.

Under the PM's package, total number of bridges over river Ganga are going to be 17, with a lane capacity of 62. This way, on an average, there'll be a bridge over rivers within the State at every 25 KMs.

## 99. HIV/AIDS PATIENTS IN INDIA

As per the latest HIV estimates report (2019) of the Government, India is estimated to have around 23.49 lakh people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in 2019.

The HIV epidemic has an overall decreasing trend in the country with estimated annual New HIV infections declining by 37% between 2010 and 2019.

HIV infection in India is mainly caused by engagement in high-risk behaviours.

The main high-risk behaviours identified for HIV infection in India includes unprotected heterosexual behaviour, unprotected homosexual behaviour, and unsafe injecting drug use behaviour.

Under the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) of the Government, as on July 2020, there are 570 Anti-retroviral treatment (ART) Centers and 1264 Link ART Centers.

## 100. INDIA'S FIRST CRISPR COVID-19 TEST

The Tata CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats) test, powered by CSIR-IGIB (Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology) [FELUDA](#), received regulatory approvals from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for commercial launch, as per ICMR guidelines, meeting high-quality benchmarks with 96% sensitivity and 98% specificity for detecting the novel coronavirus.

This test uses an indigenously developed, cutting-edge CRISPR technology for detection of the genomic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 virus. CRISPR is a genome-editing technology to diagnosing diseases.

The CRISPR test of Tata is the world's first diagnostic test to deploy a specially adapted Cas9 protein to successfully detect the virus causing Covid-19.

It is an important achievement for the Indian scientific community, moving from R&D to a high-accuracy, scalable and reliable test in less than 100 days.

The Tata CRISPR test achieves accuracy levels of traditional RT-PCR tests, with quicker turnaround time, less expensive equipment, and better ease of use. Moreover, CRISPR is a futuristic technology that can also be configured for detection of multiple other pathogens in the future.

## 101. SPECIAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY POST COVID-19

Against the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, International Energy Agency (IEA), in collaboration with NITI Aayog, launched a 'Special Report on Sustainable Recovery'.

The report was virtually launched by IEA Executive Director Dr Fatih Birol and NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, in the presence of Minister of Railways and Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal.

Part of IEA's flagship World Energy Outlook series, the report proposes a number of actions that could be taken over the next three years to revitalize economies and boost employment while making energy systems cleaner and more resilient.

The report mentions key sectors for creating jobs: electricity, transportation, buildings, industry and sustainable biofuels and innovations. A combination of policy actions and targeted investments will offer huge benefits to the economy and generate jobs.

## **102. SCHEMES OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

The Ministry of Science & Technology has formulated the following schemes to provide attractive avenues and opportunities to Indian researchers who are residing in foreign countries to work in Indian Institutes and Universities.

Visiting Advanced Joint Research (VAJRA) Faculty Scheme

Ramanujan Fellowship

Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship

Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)

Scientists/ Technologists of Indian Origin (STIO) in Indian research Laboratory

Senior Research Associateship (SRA) (Scientist's Pool Scheme)

## **103. MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICES (MSP) FOR RABI CROPS**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all mandated Rabi crops for marketing season 2021-22.

This increase in MSP is in line with the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission.

In view of nutritional requirements and changing dietary pattern and to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses and oilseeds production, the Government has fixed relatively higher MSP for these crops.

The highest increase in MSP has been announced for lentil (Rs. 300 per quintal) followed by the gram and rapeseed & mustard (Rs. 225 per quintal each) and safflower (Rs. 112 per quintal).

For barley and wheat, an increase of Rs. 75 per quintal and Rs 50 per quintal respectively has been announced.

The Umbrella Scheme "Pradhan Mantri AnnadataAaySanraksHan Abhiyan" (PM-AASHA), comprising Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS), and pilot Scheme of Private Procurement and Stockist Scheme (PPSS) will aid in the procurement of pulses and oilseeds.

## 104. OCEAN SERVICES, MODELLING, APPLICATIONS, RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGY (O-SMART) SCHEME

Some of the objectives of O-SMART (Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology) scheme of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Govt. of India are:

To generate and regularly update information on Marine Living Resources and their relationship with the physical environment in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

To periodically monitor levels of seawater pollutants for health assessment of coastal waters of India, to develop shoreline change maps for assessment of coastal erosion due to natural and anthropogenic activities.

To develop high-resolution models for ocean forecast and reanalysis system.

To generate and disseminate a suite of user-oriented ocean information, advisories, warnings, data and data products for the benefit of society.

To develop algorithms for validation of satellite data for coastal research and to monitor changes in the coastal research.

To develop technologies to tap the marine bioresources.

To develop technologies generating freshwater and energy from the ocean.

To develop underwater vehicles and technologies.

Establishment of Ballast water treatment facility, etc.

## 105. FinCEN and FIU-IND

Recently, over 2100 Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) were filed by banks with the United States Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

The FinCEN files identify at least USD 2 trillion in transactions between 1999 and 2017 flagged as possible evidence of money laundering or other criminal activity by compliance officers of banks and financial institutions.

## 106. KAKATIYA DYNASTY

Kakati Devi temple was built by Ganapati Deva, Kakatiya ruler in Dharanikota (Andhra Pradesh) which is converted into an abode of local Goddess 'Balusulamma'.

*Important Points:*

- At this 13th-century temple, the presiding deity was Kakati Devi, the tutelary deity of [Kakatiya rulers](#).
- Ganapati Deva is the first king who introduced the worship of Kakati Devi into the coastal region of Andhra and outside the dominions of his kingdom.
- Architectural significance of the temple is that the ceiling bears decorations of lotus medallions and no sikhara on its top. These architectural features are totally akin to their counterparts found in shrines at Hanamkonda and Warangal fort etc.

## **107. FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION (REGULATION) AMENDMENT BILL, 2020**

It was introduced in the Lok Sabha. It seeks to make significant changes to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).

Proposed amendments of the Bill are:

- It seeks to prohibit 'public servants' from receiving any foreign funding.
- It proposes to reduce the use of foreign funds to meet administrative costs by NGOs from the existing 50 per cent to 20 per cent.
- It seeks to "prohibit any transfer of foreign contribution to any association/person".
- It proposes to make Aadhaar cards a mandatory identification document for all office-bearers, directors and other key functionaries of NGOs or associations eligible to receive foreign donations.

## **108. INDIAN SPACE PROMOTION AND AUTHORISATION CENTRE**

The Government of India has launched the Indian Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE). It is a kind of institutional and regulatory mechanism to promote private investment and innovation in the space sector. Financial provisions don't seem to be covered under this mechanism. The IN-SPACE would have been facilitated and supported the private sector in the following ways:

- Provide technical support
- Share cash-intensive facilities
- Allow to establish temporary facilities in DOS premises
- Allow to bid for requirements coming from NSIL
- Partner in science and space exploration missions

## **109. ABHYAS - HIGH SPEED EXPENDABLE AERIAL TARGET (HEAT)**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully flighted the air vehicle ABHYAS-High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) from the Interim Test Range, Balasore in Odisha. During the trials, two demonstrator vehicles were successfully test flown.

Abhyas is designed & developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of DRDO. The air vehicle is launched by using twin under-slung booster. It is powered by a small gas turbine engine and has a MEMS-based Inertial Navigation System (INS) for navigation along with the Flight Control Computer (FCC) for guidance and control. The vehicle is programmed for fully autonomous flight. The check out of air vehicle is done using laptop-based Ground Control Station (GCS).

The vehicle is used as a target for evaluation of several missile systems.



## **110. NRITYANJALI**

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has started an online film festival on Indian Classical Dance and Maestros Nrityanjali that will be held from 23rd to 25th September, 2020.

The first part of 'Nrityanjali' will showcase 10 films on the life and works of India's leading classical dancers. The festival will be streamed on the Films Division website.

Indian Classical Dance is an umbrella under which various performing arts whose theory and practice can be traced to the Sanskrit text, Natya-Shastra, the foundational treatise by Bharata Muni. Prominent traditional dance forms like Bharat Natyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Kathakali, Sattriya, Manipuri and Mohini Aattam, include music and recitation in the local language or Sanskrit, and that they represent a unity of core ideas in an exceedingly diversity of styles, costumes and expression.

## **111. MEDICAL DEVICES PARK IN KERALA**

The Government of India has announced to build the first medical device parks in Kerala. It is a joint initiative of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC).

The objective behind the Park to focus on the high-risk medical device sector to provide a full range of services for the medical devices industry like R&D support, testing, and evaluation.

This medical device park will stand out with its emphasis on the high-risk medical device sector involving medical implants and extracorporeal devices, in which SCTIMST scores with its knowledge.

## **112. MAKE-IN-INDIA PROGRAM FOR WEAVERS**

The Government of India has announced Make-In-India' Program for Weavers. As the handloom weaving/production is inherently an integral part of Make-in-India programme. All kept in mind, the Government of India has announced a special economic package viz. Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan for boosting the economy of the country and making India self-reliant.

These relief and credit support measures have been announced for various sectors including MSMEs. The weavers & artisans/karigars can avail the benefits of these relief and credit support measures to revive their businesses.

The handloom weavers and artisans across the country are to be supported by the government to enable the wider market for handloom weavers/artisans/producers, steps have been taken to on-board weavers/artisans on Government e-Marketplace (GeM) to enable them to sell their products directly to various Government Departments and organisations.

### **113. CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD CELEBRATES ITS 46TH FOUNDATION DAY**

A webinar was organised to commemorate 46th year of the establishment of Central Pollution Control Board on 23 September, 2020.

According to the Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sh. Babul Supriyo, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been doing remarkable work in terms of collecting and collating the data related to pollution. To improve air quality, it is acting as a key policy input for the government and the concerned agencies. CPCB also provides real-time data.

On 23 September, 1974, the CBCB was established under The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 as a technical arm of Central Government for environmental research, monitoring, regulation and enforcement in the country.

### **114. TRACKCHILD PORTAL**

A web portal "TrackChild" has been developed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to track the missing and found children.

The TrackChild Portal is implemented with the help of several stakeholders like Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Railways, State Governments/UT Administrations, Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, National Legal Services Authority, etc.

Regular training programmes will be organised by the National Informatics Centre on Trackchild portal as per the requirement of the States/UTs.

### **115. MEASURES TO MODERNISE JUTE MILLS**

Every year, Government fix MSP for raw jute. This is done to protect the interest of the jute farmers.

In the year 2012-13, the MSP of raw jute was Rs. 2200 per quintal which has now increased to Rs. 4225 in the year 2020-21.

Incentive Scheme for Acquisition of Plant & Machinery (ISAPM) is implemented by the Government to modernise the jute mills.

Under the scheme, several efforts are being made to increase the productivity of the jute mills by providing capital subsidy to replace the old machines with new and technologically advanced machines.

To modernise jute mills and JDP units, capital subsidy amounting to Rs. 49.71 crores have been released during 2014-15 to 2018-19.

### **116. TECHNOLOGY LICENSE AGREEMENT**

A Technology License Agreement (TLA) ceremony on “Brucella abortus S19Δ per vaccine” developed by ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) was held on 22nd September, 2020 through a virtual platform.

The Agreement was between Dr. R.K. Singh, Director, ICAR-IVRI, Izatnagar, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, CEO and MD, Hester Biosciences Limited, Ahmedabad, Ms Anju Bhalla, MD, DBT-Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) and Dr Sudha Mysore, CEO, Agrinnovate India Limited.

During the ceremony, Dr T. Mohapatra DG ICAR emphasized the importance of the Brucella vaccine in India and its perspective abroad. He also highlighted its economic, social and developmental impact.

The technology was developed by the scientists of ICAR-IVRI Dr Pallab Chaudhari and his team.

The vaccine has great demand in India and will be of immense help in the national control programme on brucellosis. The vaccine has DIVA capability meaning that it can differentiate between naturally infected and vaccinated animals.

Brucellosis is one of the most important zoonotic diseases worldwide and also endemic in India causing huge economic losses to the dairy industry due to infertility, abortion, the birth of weak offsprings and reduced productivity.

### **117. KRITAGYA**

A hackathon named “KRITAGYA” has been planned by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).

This has been done to promote potential technology solutions for enhancing farm mechanization with special emphasis on women-friendly equipments.

Students, faculties and innovators/entrepreneurs from any university / technical institution across the country can apply and participate in the event in the form of a group.

Dr.Trilochan Mohapatra, Director General, ICAR told that in one group maximum 4 participants can compete, with not more than one faculty and / or more than one innovator or entrepreneur.

The students who are participating can collaborate with local start-ups, students from technology institutes. Through this, students can win Rs. 5 lakhs, Rs 3 lakhs and Rs. 1 lakh as first, second and third prize. The registration for the event has already been started from 15th September 2020.

### **118. MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BODY FOR NET NEUTRALITY**

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended the creation of a multi-stakeholder body (MSB) to ensure that Internet access providers adhere to the provisions of net neutrality.

The MSB should be set up as a non-profit entity.

It will provide advice and support to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in the monitoring and enforcement of net neutrality principles.

It will help to investigate complaints regarding the violation of net neutrality.

To help DoT in the maintenance of a repository of reasonable traffic management practices.

Stakeholders include telecom service providers, Internet service providers, content providers, researchers, academic and technical community, civil society organisations, and the government.

### **119. ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION (PREVENTION AND CONTROL AUTHORITY (EPCA)**

The Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) raised concerns about the early burning of crop residue in Punjab and Haryana.

According to a SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research) under the Central government estimate which uses the INSAT-3, 3D and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) satellite, the fire counts have increased from zero to 42 in a few days.

In 2019, about 9.8 million tonnes of the total estimated crop residue of 20 million tonnes were burnt in Punjab.

And in Haryana, of the total 7 million tonnes, 1.24 million tonnes of stubble was burnt.

### **120. GOVERNMENT SECURITIES**

In this financial year, from 7 April to 22 September, 27 States and 2 Union Territories have cumulatively raised ₹3.26 lakh crore via State government securities or State development loans (SDLs).

This is a 45% increase from the borrowings in the corresponding period of 2019-20.

The top 5 borrowing States are Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Rajasthan that are accounting for 54% of total borrowings by States so far.

A government security (G-Sec) is a tradeable instrument issued by the central government or state governments.

### **121. BILATERAL SUMMIT BETWEEN INDIA AND SRILANKA**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and his Srilankan counterpart Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa will hold a Virtual Bilateral Summit on 26 September 2020.

The Bilateral Summit will provide an opportunity to the countries for comprehensively reviewing the broad framework of the bilateral relationship soon after the Parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka.

### **122. MoU BETWEEN AYUSH MINISTRY AND INDUSTRY BODIES**

The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH inked an MoU through virtual meeting with the major AYUSH and Herbal industry bodies covering a set of measures to promote medicinal plant cultivation.

The industry bodies which signed the MoU are namely; ADMA (Ayurvedic Drug Manufacturer's Association), Mumbai; AMAM (Association for Manufacturers of Ayurvedic Medicines), New Delhi; AMMOI (Ayurvedic Medicines Manufacturers Organisation of India), Thrissur; AHNMI (Association for Herbal and Nutraceutical Manufacturers of India), Mumbai; FICCI (Federation of Indian Industries), New Delhi and CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), New Delhi.

### **123. CENTRALISED FARM MACHINERY PERFORMANCE TESTING PORTAL**

The Government of India has launched the "Centralised Farm Machinery Performance Testing Portal" in the public domain, which has been developed by the Department of Agriculture. It is a step to improve services of farm machinery testing institutions and bringing out transparency in the entire process of testing and evaluation of machines.

This portal will provide a platform for manufacturers, in applying, communicating and monitoring the progress of testing of their machines in a seamless manner as it is easily accessible from any location and from any device connected to the Internet.

It also offers the possibility of integrated management in a unified manner within the organisation and thus will help in improving the efficiency of the testing institutes thereby reducing testing time for various agricultural machines and equipment.



## 124. RAISE 2020 - MEGA VIRTUAL SUMMIT ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and NITI Aayog will organise a Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI), RAISE 2020- 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020,' from October 5-9, 2020.

Its main aim to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors.

RAISE 2020 is a first of its kind, a global meeting of minds on Artificial Intelligence to drive India's vision and roadmap for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment through responsible AI.

## 125. NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME (NSS) AWARDS

The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind virtually conferred the [National Service Scheme \(NSS\) Awards](#) for the year 2018-19.

The National Service Scheme (NSS) Award for the year 2018-19 was awarded to 42 awardees in 3 different categories which include; University/ +2 Council, NSS Units and their Programme Officers, and NSS Volunteers.

The National Service Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme. It was launched in the year 1969 with the objective of developing the personality and character of the student youth through voluntary community service.

The whole idea behind the NSS is inspired by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. Very appropriately, the motto of NSS is "NOT ME, BUT YOU" in Hindi it is as "स्वयंसेपहलेआप"

## 126. THE BRIGHTEST JETS IN THE UNIVERSE

The short term optical flux stability detected in some of the brightest jets within the universe that could provide clues to the processes close to black holes.

Blazars are one among the foremost luminous and energetic objects within the universe powered by material falling onto a supermassive black hole at the center of the host galaxy. Their luminosity is due to their jet composed of ionized matter travelling at nearly the speed of light towards an observer that is the Earth.

Six scientists spanning over three countries namely India, Serbia, and therefore the USA studied some of the brightest blazars called TeV (Tera-electron Volt) blazars.

Scientists found that they stand out as a semblance of stability of brightness among the blazar family within the short duration. Also, their brightness varies in the long duration; they maintain their brightness levels in short duration.

Blazars are among one of the most favourite astronomical transient objects, and their study could provide clues to the processes happening close to the black hole, not visible through direct imaging.

## **127. SAARC and CICA MEETINGS**

The Foreign Ministers' meetings of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) took place recently in a virtual manner.

India called the SAARC countries to collectively resolve to defeat the scourge of terrorism, including the forces that nurture, support and encourage an environment of terror and conflict.

This was a clear criticism of Pakistan who has been involved in cross border terrorism. And Pakistan also made a detailed statement on the resolution of "long-standing disputes", a veiled reference to Jammu and Kashmir and India's move to withdraw Article 370.

## **128. LOK ADALAT**

In Odisha's Kandhamal district, a daily wager has moved the Lok Adalat against Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he allegedly failed to get an Aadhaar card registered in his name despite 21 attempts.

He took this step for redressal of his grievance as he ran out of patience after applying and getting photographed multiple times at different places for the elusive card.

Lok Adalat is one among the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms. It's a forum where disputes or cases pending within the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled or compromised amicably.

They are formed to fulfil the promise given by the preamble of the Indian Constitution for securing Justice - social, economic and political of every citizen of the country.

## **129. TRANSFER OF PINAKA WEAPON SYSTEM**

On 25 September 2020, a crucial milestone was achieved when Authority Holding Sealed Particulars (AHSP) responsibility of Pinaka weapon system that was handed over by DRDO to DGQA.

AHSP transfer marks the successful establishment of production of Pinaka rockets, Launchers, Battery Command Posts, Loader Cum Replenishment and Replenishment Vehicles as well as the successful establishment of Quality Assurance processes.

Pinaka is a free flight artillery rocket system having a range of 37.5 km. Pinaka rockets are launched from a multi-barrel rocket launcher which has the capability to launch a salvo of 12 rockets in 44 seconds.

In Pune based DRDO lab, the weapon system is designed and developed by Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE) in association with HEMRL, VRDE and CAIR.

Pinaka rockets and its ground systems are currently under bulk production at Ordnance Factories, BEML, BEL, Tata Power and L&T Defence.

### 130. GRAPHENE

Scientists of JNCASR of DST develop a new low-cost method of upscaling most conductive material 'graphene' while preserving its single layered properties.

Graphene, the one-atom-thick sheet of carbon atoms, which may be a boon for energy storage, coatings, sensors as well as superconductivity. It is difficult to produce while retaining its single layered properties.

It is going to reduce the cost of producing this thinnest, strongest and most conductive material within the world.

Researchers from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India through their recent research work have upscaled graphene production while retaining its thin layered properties.

In the research by Nikita Gupta (Ph.D. student, JNCASR) and Prof. G.U. Kulkarni (corresponding author ) published in the 'Journal of Physical Chemistry Letters', the scientists have also defined a formula to quantify how much single layer like behaviour exists in such a system.

### 131. DOCUMENTS RELEASED BY RBI ON UCB'S CYBERSECURITY

Recently, the 'Technology Vision for Cyber Security for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) 2020-2023' was released by RBI.

It's been formalised based on inputs from various stakeholders and seeks to reinforce cybersecurity of urban co-operative banks (UCBs).

*Through a five-pillared strategic approach GUARD, RBI plans to achieve its objective.*

1. Governance Oversight.
2. Utile Technology Investment.
3. Appropriate Regulation and Supervision.
4. Robust Collaboration.
5. Developing necessary IT, cybersecurity skill sets.

#### 7. RAISE Summit 2020

RAISE Summit 2020 will be held in October.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and NITI Aayog will conduct it.

RAISE 2020- 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020.'

The global meeting of minds will exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas including healthcare, agriculture, education, smart mobility and other sectors.

### **132. DESTINATION NORTH EAST-2020**

Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the “Destination North East -2020” through video conferencing on 27 September, 2020.

It’s purpose is to introduce various cultures of the country to each other along with the tourist destinations of the North East.

Peace within the North East is extremely important for the economic development, promotion of tourism and employment in the region.

For Destination North East 2020, the theme is “The Emerging Delightful Destinations” which speaks of the tourism destinations emerging stronger and more attractive when the Sector picks up momentum.

It’ll run till 30 September. The four-day programme will feature Audio-Visual presentation of the tourist spots of the states and therefore the region, messages from state icons and achievers, introduction to prominent local entrepreneurs and virtual exhibition of handicraft/ traditional fashion/ & local products.

### **133. 193rd GUNNERS DAY**

28 September is observed as the Gunners Day annually.

On this day in 1827 Five (Bombay) Mountain Battery equipped with 2.5-inch Guns was raised. Presently it forms part of 57 Field Regiment.

The regiment boasts of one Victoria Cross, one Distinguished Service Order, 15 Military Crosses during the pre-independence era and one Ashok Chakra, seven Maha Vir Chakras, nine Kirti Chakras, 101 Vir Chakras, 63 Shaurya Chakras, six Bar to Sena Medal, 485 Sena Medals besides many other decorations.

The role of Bofors in Kargil conflict also established beyond doubt that Artillery firepower plays a defining role in achieving victory in the modern battlefield.

Gunners motto is, “Sarvatra Izzat-O-Iqbal – Everywhere with Honour and Glory”.

### **134. WORLD TOURISM DAY**

On the occasion of the World Tourism Day, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addressed a virtual meet on 27 September along with Minister of State (I/c) for Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

The theme of the day is “Tourism and rural development”. United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has designated 2020 as the Year of Tourism and Rural Development. This Year is an opportunity to promote the potential of tourism to create jobs and opportunities.

Minister Pradhan commended the Ministry of Tourism for its novel initiative 'DekhoApnaDesh' that promotes and encourages local heritage and tourist sites.

Minister Pradhan called for weaving sustainability with tourism and collaborating to switch prime tourist cities to 100% clean fuels, which can further help protect our monuments and ensure a cleaner environment for the tourists.

During the event SAATHI Application was launched by the chief guest Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.

SAATHI is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism with Quality Council of India to help the hospitality industry to continue to operate safely and thereby instil confidence among the staff, employees and therefore the guests about the safety of the hotel or unit. Shri Pradhan also launched a film 'Pathik'. It is an initiative on Incredible India Tourist Facilitators Certification Programme (IITFC) and an ICPB MICE Promotional film.

### 135. DOMESTIC SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT INSURERS

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India and The New India Assurance Co have been identified as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for 2020-21 by the insurance regulator, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

On a yearly basis, the IRDAI would identify D-SIIs and disclose the names of such insurers for public information.

### 136. NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

The [National Medical Commission \(NMC\)](#) has been established by the Union government along with four other autonomous boards while abolishing the MCI.

*The four autonomous boards are:*

- Undergraduate Medical Education Board.
- Postgraduate Medical Education Board.
- Medical Assessment and Rating Board.
- Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

These boards are constituted to assist the NMC in day-to-day functioning.

### 137. RETROSPECTIVE TAXATION BY INDIA

In a unanimous decision, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague has ruled that: India's retrospective demand of Rs 22,100 crore as capital gains and withholding tax imposed on Vodafone for a 2007 deal was "in breach of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment".

India should not pursue the tax demand any more against Vodafone Group.



### **138. PHASE-II OF FAME INDIA SCHEME**

Under Phase-II of FAME India Scheme, the Government of India has sanctioned 670 Electric buses within the states of Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat and Chandigarh and 241 Charging Stations in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Gujarat and Port Blair.

FAME India is a part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan and therefore the main thrust of the scheme is to encourage electric vehicles by providing subsidies.

The FAME India Scheme is aimed towards incentivising all vehicle segments.

*Two phases of the scheme:*

Phase I: started in 2015 and was completed on 31st March, 2019

Phase II: started from April, 2019, are going to be completed by 31st March, 2022.

### **139. THE INDIA-DENMARK VIRTUAL BILATERAL SUMMIT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark Ms. Mette Frederiksen have co-chaired a virtual summit between India and Denmark. Both the leaders held an in-depth exchange of views in a warm and friendly atmosphere on bilateral relations.

*The two Prime Ministers will join hand on the issues like:*

Global challenges and solutions on green energy transition and climate change.

Holding regular consultations and dialogue on climate change and renewable energy at various levels.

Working towards further expanding and strengthening the existing Government-to-Government cooperation on environment/water and circular economy.

Strengthening bilateral cooperation in sustainable urban development, including in smart cities through the Urban Living Lab in Goa.

Developing partnerships between Governments, institutions and businesses of the two countries with special focus on green and climate-friendly technologies.

Fostering deeper and closer cooperation between authorities, businesses and research institutions in the sectors of food processing and food safety, as well as animal husbandry and dairying.

Emphasising the potential and their common desire to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation in the health sector.

Both sides agreed to examine the possibilities for labour mobility, as well as to consider ease of travel between the two countries to facilitate greater people-to-people interaction and strengthen cooperation in the tourism sector.

## **140. SIX MEGA PROJECTS IN UTTARAKHAND UNDER THE NAMAMI GANGE MISSION**

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has been inaugurated six mega projects in Uttarakhand under the Namami Gange Mission.

*They are as:*

The projects include the construction of a 68 MLD STP, up-gradation of the existing 27 MLD at Jagjeetpur, in Haridwar and construction of an 18 MLD STP at Sarai, in Haridwar. The inauguration of 68 MLD Jagjeetpur project also marks the completion of the first sewerage project taken up on hybrid annuity mode of PPP.

There are 26 MLD STP at Lakkadghat in Rishikesh.

There are 7.5 MLD STP at Chandreshwar Nagar in Muni ki Reti town, the 7.5 MLD STP will be the first 4 storied Sewage Treatment Plant in the country where the limitation of land availability was converted into an opportunity.

The Prime Minister shall also inaugurate a 5 MLD STP at Chorpani, and two STPs with capacities of 1 MLD and 0.01 MLD at Badrinath.

The Prime Minister will also inaugurate “Ganga Avalokan”, the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga river. The museum is located at Chandi Ghat, Haridwar.

A book, ‘Rowing down the Ganges’, co-published by National Mission for Clean Ganga & Wildlife Institute of India will be launched at the event.

The logo of Jal Jeevan Mission and ‘Margdarshika for Gram Panchayats and Paani Samitis under Jal Jeevan Mission’ will also be unveiled by Prime Minister.

## **141. VACCINE WEB PORTAL**

Harsh Vardhan unveils ICMR’s History Timeline and launches Vaccine Web portal, National Clinical Registry of COVID-19 and Mobile Stroke Unit.

Harsh Vardhan unveiled the history timeline of ICMR depicting 108-year journey of India’s premier Research Council since the day of its inception in 1911 when it used to be known as Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA).

The timeline captures policy and program interventions by ICMR and its institutes to control diseases and its pioneering work in the fields of maternal and child health, HIV, cancer and nutrition, among others.

## 142. ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT

Recently, a territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region has re-erupted with heavy clashes.

*Reasons for Dispute are:*

**Territorial:** Nagorno-Karabakh region has 95% of the population as ethnically Armenian and is controlled by them but it is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan.

**Religious:** Armenia is a Christian majority, while Azerbaijan is a Muslim majority country.

**Domestic Politics:** The leaders of both nations have fueled the issue time and again for their vested political interests.

## 143. SHANTI SWARUP BHATNAGAR PRIZE

Dr Abhijit Mukherjee, Associate Professor, Deptt. of Geology & Geophysics, IIT Kharagpur Selected for 'Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar' Prize.

The award is named after the founder Director of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), the late Dr (Sir) Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar and is known as the 'Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (SSB) Prize for Science and Technology'.

The Prize is given each year for outstanding contributions to science and technology.

## 144. SANDALWOOD SPIKE DISEASE (SSD)

India's sandalwood trees are facing a serious threat with the return of the destructive Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD).

The infection has resurfaced in Karnataka and Kerala.

The present rapid spread of the infection is largely due to restrictions on green felling in forests, which has allowed vectors to spread the disease to healthy trees.

The disease is caused by phytoplasma bacterial parasites of plant tissues which are transmitted by insect vectors.

The disease was first reported in Kodagu in 1899.

## 145. A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU) BETWEEN NFL VIJAIPUR AND ITI RAGHOGARH

National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), a PSU under the Department of Fertilizers, has tied up with Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Raghogarh to train youth in Electrician, Fitter and Welder trades and also to enhance the chances of their employability in heavy and process industry.

The MoU facilitates the students who will be skilled under the Dual System of Training Scheme under which they will learn theoretical skills in the institute and 6 months on-the-job training in NFL Vijaipur plant.

## **146. PLEAS AGAINST DILUTION OF ARTICLE 370**

A five-judge Bench, headed by Justice N.V. Ramana, heard the petitions challenging the reading down of Article 370 to strip Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and the bifurcation of the State into two Union Territories namely; Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. On August 5, a Presidential Order read down the Article 370 of the Constitution of India. The Article accorded special rights and privileges to the people of Jammu & Kashmir since 1954 in accordance with the Instrument of Accession.

The special status was bestowed by an order of President Rajendra Prasad in 1954 on the advice of the Jawaharlal Nehru Cabinet on the State by incorporating Article 35A in the Constitution.

## **147. TRIBES FEAR OF EXCLUSION FROM 6TH SCHEDULE IN MEGHALAYA**

A sub-committee, set-up by the State government of Meghalaya, had decided to recommend to the Standing Committee of Parliament the removal of the word 'unrepresented tribes' from the amended Sixth Schedule.

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution deals the provisions as to the administration of tribal areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

The tribes include the Hajong, Koch, Rabha, Boro and Mann is minority tribes in Meghalaya. These tribes come under the unrepresented tribes and members of these tribes are also nominated to the autonomous district councils.

Meghalaya is divided into autonomous councils in the names of the three major matrilineal communities namely; Garo, Khasi and Jaintia.

## **148. RBI HAS INITIATED PCA AGAINST LAKSHMI VILAS BANK**

The Reserve Bank of India has brought Lakshmi Vilas Bank under Prompt Corrective Action (PCA). It has happened because of a high level of bad loans, lack of sufficient capital to manage risks, and a negative return on assets for two consecutive years.

The RBI move comes at a time when the Delhi Police Economic Offences Wing has registered a complaint against the board of LVB alleging cheating and misappropriation of funds.

RBI has also advised the bank on the restrictions put in place and the actions to be taken by the bank, which the bank has taken note of for necessary compliance, with progress to be reported on a monthly basis to RBI.

## **149. DEFENCE ACQUISITION PROCEDURE, 2020**

The new Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) of 2020 is a policy that will govern the procurement of defence equipment from the capital budget. It will supersede the Defence Procurement Procedure of 2016 from October 1. Features of the new policy are:

The policy reserves several procurement categories for indigenous firms.

This stipulates indigenisation of at least 50 per cent of the overall contract value of a foreign purchase bought with the intention of subsequently building it in India with technology transfer.

It promotes greater indigenous content in arms and equipment of the military procures, including equipment manufactured in India under licence.







# Govt. Job in your pocket

