

1 COVID-19: Fifth Recession of India

Since Independence in 1947, India has faced four recessions.

According to

Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the recessions occurred in 1958, 1966, 1973 and 1980.

1958: Balance of Payment Crisis due to weak monsoon India then imported 60 lakh tonnes of food grains

1966: Drought 1973: Energy Crisis 1980: Oil Shock COVID-19 crisis

Highlights

Recession is defined as the fall in economic activities of the country along with decline in sales, income and employment. India has so far seen four such negative GDP growth. In 1958, the GDP growth was -1.2%, in 1966 it was -3.6%, in 1973 it was -0.32% and in 1980 the GDP growth was -5.2%.

2. June 14: World Blood Donor Day

Every year, World Blood Donor Day is celebrated on June 14. The day is celebrated to thank voluntary blood donors and also raise awareness about the need for regular blood donations. This year the World Blood Donor Day is celebrated under the theme

Theme: Safe Blood Saves Lives

The World Blood Donor Day event was established in 2004. It is one of the eight official campaigns

that are marked by the World Health Organization. The campaigns are as follows

World Tuberculosis Day World Health Day World Malaria Day World No Tobacco Day

World AIDS Day World Hepatitis Day World Immunization Week

Significance : Transfusion of blood is important to help save million of lives every year. It supports surgical procedures and also plays an essential life-saving role in perinatal and maternal care.

Why on June 14?

World Blood Donor Day is celebrated on June 14 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Karl

Landsteiner. Karl won Nobel prize for discovering ABO blood group

3 Challenger Deep

The Astronaut and Oceanographer Kathy Sullivan recently reached the deepest point in the ocean, Challenger Deep. With this she has become the first woman to reach the deepest point in the earth.

In 1984, Kathy made her space walk debut and became the first woman to walk in space. Now by reaching Challenger Deep she has created a new record of first person in the world to walk in space and also reach the deepest point on the earth. She is also the first woman to reach the deepest point in the ocean.

Challenger Deep

Challenger Deep is the deepest point in the Earth's sea bed. It is at a depth of 10,902 metres. It is named after the British Royal Navy survey Ship HMS Challenger that recorded its depth for the first time.

Lieutenant Don Walsh and Swiss scientist Jacques Piccard were the first to dive into Challenger Deep in 1960. In 2012, the Titanic director James Cameron was the first to complete his solo submarine dive to the spot. Challenger Deep is located in the Western Pacific Ocean in the southern end of Mariana Trench. It is in the ocean territory of Federated States of Micronesia.

Micronesia

Micronesia is a sub region of Oceania. It is made of 1000s of small islands. It has a tropical marine climate. There are 4 main archipelagos in the sub region. They are Caroline Islands, Mariana Islands, Gilbert Islands and Marshall Islands. The Mariana Trench is located in the Mariana Islands

4 Veteran Poet Gulzar Dehlvi passed away after recovering from COVID-19

The Veteran Urdu poet Anand Mohan Zutshi ‘Gulzar’ Dehlvi passed away after recovering from COVID-19 in less than a week. He was 93.

Mr Gulzar tested positive for COVID-19 early June, 2020. He returned home after recovering from the infection. However, due to his age, the infection left him weak and he died of cardiac arrest.

About Gulzar

Gulzar was the editor of “Science ki Duniya”, the only science magazine published in Urdu by the

Government of India. It was launched in 1975. He has also set up Urdu schools in India. Gulzar

was associated with freedom movements since 1930s. He is a Padmashree awardee.

He was a follower of “Ganga-Jamani Tehzeeb”, a term used to define syncretic Hindu-Muslim

culture. He was also a part of number of mushairas namely Jashn-e-Rekhta and Jigar Fest.

Mushairas is a social gathering where Urdu poetry is read and it also conducted as contests.

Syncretism is the union or fusion of different religions and cultures.

5 What is iFLOWS?

iFLOWS is a flood warning system that alerts flood prone areas. The warning is provided 6 to 72 hours in advance. It was launched in Mumbai . iFLOWS was launched by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddav Thackeray and Dr Harsh Vardhan, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare. iFLOWS is Integrated Flood Warning System. The system provides all information related to flood prone areas. The details include height the flood water could attain, vulnerability and risk elements exposed to floods and location-wise problematic areas across the wards.

Working : The amount of rainfall is the primary source of the system. However, Mumbai being a coastal city, the system also includes details of tidal waves, storm tides for its flood assessments. The iFLOWS system also has provisions to capture urban drainage of the Mumbai city.

Modules of iFLOWS : The iFLOWS comprises of seven modules namely Flood, Inundation, Data Assimilation, Vulnerability, risks module, decision support system and Dissemination module.

Why in Mumbai?

Mumbai being the financial capital of India is experiencing floods frequently these days. The 2017 floods had almost made the city standstill. The 2005 floods paralyzed Mumbai. In 2005, the city received rainfall of 94 cm, that was a 100 year high in a time span of just 24 hours.

Benefits

The system based on location, the rain recorded, topography and forecast generates flood warnings for a specific geographical area of the city. The details are then sent to the authorities. The alert includes tide levels, rainfall information, storm surges and low-lying areas that are Expected.

6 Shahakar Mitra Scheme launched

On June 12, 2020, the Union Agriculture Minister shri Narendra Singh Tomar launched Shahakar Mitra scheme. The scheme has been launched to assist the cooperative institutions to access innovative ideas of young professionals. In return the young interns will gain confidence to become self-reliant in the field.

Highlights

The Scheme is an internship programme for the youths in the country. It is an initiative of the National Cooperative Development Cooperation (NCDC).

The scheme promotes “Vocal for Local” that was launched under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

The scheme will help the young professionals gain practical experience and also learn from

cooperatives and NCDC. The cooperative on the other hand will learn about the latest technologies and practices that help boost agriculture and its allied sector. The interns will also be provided with financial support for a period of 4 months.

Eligible Applicants

The professional graduates in Agriculture, IT and allied areas are eligible for the internship. Also, persons that have completed MBA degrees in finance, agriculture, forestry, business, project management, international trade, rural development are also eligible to apply.

An online application portal has been launched to help the interested candidates apply to the scheme.

7 Dr Rattan Lal: Indian born American Scientist wins World Food Prize

On June 11, the Indian American soil scientist Dr Rattan Lal has won the World Food Prize for mainstreaming and developing soil centric approach in order to increase food production.

Highlights

Dr Lal's strategy of restoring soil health has been adopted by three United Nations Climate Change Conferences.

Techniques of Dr Lal

Dr Lal has transformed and explored techniques such as no-tillage, over cropping, mulching and agro forestry. These techniques improved long term sustainability of agro ecosystems and minimized risks of floods, drought and effects of climate change. Through his research works, Dr

Lal had proved that atmospheric carbon can be sequestered in soils. The scientist has also invented several conservation practices that are used by farmers today effectively. This includes building nutrients in the soil, eliminating tilling to leave the soil and the carbon it contains undisturbed and agroforestry (an approach of raising livestock and growing trees along with crops).

World Food Prize

Dr Lal will receive 250,000 USD of prize money. He is being honoured for his contributions throughout his career that spans for more than 5 decades. Around 4 continents are promoting his innovative soil saving techniques. The World Food Prize is equivalent to Nobel Prize in the field of Agriculture.

8 FIFA Ranking: India retains 108th rank

On June 12, 2020, the FIFA ranking was released. Indian team retained its 108th position as the international football for the year 2020 has been suspended since March.

Highlights

Belgium remained at the top spot and was ahead of France and Brazil. England and Uruguay continued to remain at fourth and fifth position. Croatia and Portugal were at sixth and seventh position respectively. They were followed by Spain, Argentina and Colombia.

FIFA

FIFA is Federation Internationale de Football Association. It is an international governing body of association football. It was founded in 1904 and is headquartered in Zurich. Around 211 member countries are associated with FIFA.

Rankings

The current version of FIFA ranking was used in 2018. The rankings are formed based on points awarded to the teams. The points are awarded based on the results of matches played by a country.

9 Nature Index

The Nature Research, a division of the popular Springer Nature recently released Nature Index. India secured 12th rank in the index.

Highlights

The countries that secured top 5 places in the index includes USA, China, Germany, UK and Japan. The top Indian Institutes that were rated high by the index include CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) and IISc Bangalore. Also, three institutions found their places among top 30 Indian Institutions according to Nature Index 2020 ratings. They are Indian Association for Cultivation of Science (IACS), Kolkata at the 7th position Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) at 14th position N Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata at 30th

About Nature Index

The Nature Index is created based on the author affiliation database collected from research articles that are published in around 82 high-quality science journals. These indices are of high importance for the current scenario of COVID-19. This is because, they help to track the researches. The Nature Index is updated monthly and also releases annual tables of country.

10 International Religious Freedom Report

The US Government recently released the International Religious Freedom Report, 2019. India has raised its concerns over the report. This was because the report alleged India with discrimination and attacks against religious minorities in the country.

What were the concerns raised in the report?

The religious freedom conditions in India is experiencing downturn. The national Government of the country has used its majority in the parliament and has instituted national level policies that violating religious freedom.

The report had also raised concerns over scrapping of special status of Jammu and Kashmir It also criticized the Citizenship Amendment Act saying the act is a fast track to provide citizenship to non-Muslims from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The report also condemned cow slaughter laws, anti-conversion laws and mob-lynching.

FCRA According to the report, India has prohibited several internationally funded NGOs. They were prohibited from operating in India since 2010. This was implemented through the amendment of the FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act), 1976. Through the amendment, the GoI can shut

any of the internationally funded NGO based on national interest.

11 June 12: World Day against Child Labour

Every year, the World Day against Child Labour is celebrated on June 12. It was launched by the International Labour Organization, a United Nations body. The World Day against Child Labour was launched in 2002.

Highlights

The Children in the age group of 5 to 17 years engaged in work deprives them of normal childhood, proper health care, adequate education, leisure time and basic freedom. The very purpose of marking World Day against Child Labour is this. The day also aims to bring the problem of child labour to the attention of the people all over the world. The child labour is often associated with prostitution and drug trafficking.

2020 This year the ILO is conducting the World Day against Child Labour as virtual campaign and is organized by Global March against Child Labour and International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture. This year, the day is celebrated under the theme

Theme: 'Covid-19: Protect Children from Child Labour, now more than ever!'

Background

Nine out of ten children involved in labour works are in Asia, Africa and Pacific. The percentage of Child labour is the highest in low-income countries. According to the International Labour Organization, Africa has the largest child labours in the world. It accounts to one-fifth of child labour in the world.

COVID-19 crisis

The Child helpline International says that one-third of the global population have been affected due to COVID-19 crisis and 1.5 billion children have been impacted.

12 Bharatmala Pariyojana

The scheme was launched for road construction in India. It gives special importance to projects connecting far-flung areas and rural areas. The scheme will build 4-lane highways, move 80% freight traffic, interconnect logistics parks. It will also connect 7 north east Multi-Nodal Waterway ports.

13 Forex Reserves of India are rising

The Forex Reserves of India are increasing and are to hit 500 billion USD soon. In May 2020, the Indian Forex Reserves touched an all time high of 493 billion USD.

What is Foreign Exchange Reserve? The Foreign Exchange Reserves are the reserve assets that are held by the central bank in foreign currencies. It is used to back the liabilities faced by a currency due to the influence of monetary policy.

Why are the Forex Reserves rising? The Forex Reserves of India are increasing mainly due to fall in crude oil prices. Also, the rise is because of the increase in investment in Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI).

Significance

The Forex Reserves are held by the GoI to maintain liquidity in the country. It also helps to absorb shocks where access to borrowing is curtailed. The Forex Reserves are an important component of Balance of Payment and also an essential element to analyze the external position of the economy. Components of Foreign Reserves of India

The Foreign Exchange Reserve of India comprises of the following

SDR (Special Drawing Rights) in International Monetary Fund. The SDR is the reserve Currency with IMF Gold RTP: RTP is Reserve Tranche Position in International Monetary Fund. It is the reserve capital with International Monetary Fund.

14 June 9: Coral Triangle Day

Every year the Coral Triangle Day is observed on June 9. The Day is observed by the Coral Triangle Initiative Coral Triangle Initiative The Initiative is a multilateral partnership of six countries namely Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste. The Coral Triangle Initiative is also called the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF). It is a multilateral partnership of six countries that are working to sustain marine and coastal resources and address issued such as food security.

Coral Triangle

The Coral Triangle is the world epicentre of marine diversity that is spread across the above six countries. The region is important as it consists of 76% of coral species, 37% of coral reef fish and 53% of world coral reef. It is one of the three mega complexes on the Earth.

Mega Complexes of the Earth

Along with the Coral Triangle, the other two Mega Complexes of the earth includes Amazon rain forest and Congo Basin.

15 Operation Desert Chase

The Rajasthan Police recently arrested two civil defence employees in Jaipur based on Military Intelligence inputs. They were arrested upon the input that they were passing sensitive information to Pakistan spy agency ISI (Inter Service Intelligence). The information was passed under Operation Desert Chase.

Operation Desert Chase

The Operation is an anti-espionage operation that was started by the Military Intelligence in 2019. The men were arrested under Official Secrets Act, 1923. Official Secrets Act

The act condemns actions that involve helping an enemy state against India. The Home Ministry in 2017 has submitted a report on amending the act. The report intends to make the act more transparent and in line with RTI act (Right to Information Act, 2005).b The other countries that use Official Secrets Act includes Hong Kong, UK, Myanmar, Singapore and Malaysia. The act was in practice in New Zealand and Canada.ISI According to the Indian Government, the Inter-Service Intelligence of Pakistan involves planning and carrying out terrorist attacks against people of India.

Operation Tupac The Operation Tupac is a military intelligence run by ISI of Pakistan. The operation has three parts namely Disintegrate India .Exploit porous borders with Nepal and Bangladesh and set up bases to utilize spy networks to act as instrument of sabotage

16 June 9: World Accreditation Day

Every year, the World Accreditation Day is celebrated on June 9. The initiative of celebrating the day was launched by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). This year the day was celebrated under the theme

Theme: Accreditation, Improving Food Safety

India

In India, the day was celebrated by the Quality Council of India. Also, the National Accreditation Board for Testing and calibration Laboratories and the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies conducted webinars. According to FSSAI, the following are the current requirements in India regarding accreditation

Proficiency Testing Developing Rapid Test Kits .The number of accredited reference material producers should be increased .Integrated system for information exchange.Rapid Test kits for food analysis Accreditation Scheme to certify products. .India also needs to institutionalize virtual assessments.

Quality Council of India

The Quality Council of India was established in 1997. The main objective of QCI is to establish quality standards all over social and economic sectors in the country. It was set up as a public private partnership based on the Netherlands model. It was set up by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal trade (DPIIT). The key promoters of QCI are CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry).

17 Uttarakhand opens Biodiversity Park

The State of Uttarakhand has recently opened a biodiversity park in Haldwani as the rich botanical heritage of the state is facing threats from climate change and degrading habitat loss, degrading landscapes and development activities.

Highlights

The Park was established on World Environment Day. The hill state that is rich in biodiversity has been losing flora and fauna due to the following reasons
Climate Change Fragmentation of Habitat Landscape Degradation

Background

The main reason for the degradation of biodiversity in the state, especially in the hilly regions of the country is popularity that is gained by food products from hilly regions of the country. The foods have been labelled “Super Foods”. While, the hills are converted into plantation, very little efforts are put in to conserve the forests.

Impact on local food

The new plantations coming up in the hilly regions of India are giving importance only to commercially profitable food items. This has led to threats of local food varieties.

About the park

There park consists of 40 thematic sections. It includes fruits, plant edible species and also plants of medicinal and commercial importance. The park also includes plants that have religious, cultural and historical significance. The park also includes local food varieties. This mainly included wild berries such as Kaphal, Ghingharu, Hisalu and Kilmora. These berries naturally grow in the forests and consumed by the locals.

18 Annual Report of Environment Ministry

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has released the Annual Report 2019-20.

Highlights

The report says that around 11,467 hectares of forest lands have been diverted in 22 states in 2019. The diversion has been made under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The diversion was made for 932 non-forestry projects. Of all the diversions made, one-third was for Odisha based projects. They were around 14 in number and 4,514 hectares of land was diverted. Odisha was followed by Telangana where the diversion was made for 11 projects diverting 2,055 hectares of land. The maximum number of projects were in Haryana. However, the land diversion was comparatively less, 519 hectares.

Findings

The report also provided category wise details. The largest forest area land was diverted for mining projects and irrigation. The report observed that the ministry provided guidelines to help in relocation of villages. Whenever this was done, the legal-status of the land shall be changed to non-forest land under Forest Conservation Act.

Forest Villages

The report says that there was no conservation of forest villages in the year 2019. The forest villages were those that were set up by the Britishers to procure resources such as timber. Even today there are 2,500 forest villages in the country.

19 China's New Record: Reaches Deepest point on the earth

An Unmanned submersible, Haidou 1 of China dived deep down to 10,907 metres to the world's deepest point Mariana Trench.

Highlights

A team of scientists left for an expedition on April 23, 2020. The researchers tested acoustic detection, video transmission, high precision depth detection during the deep-sea diving operation. China has been stepping efforts to develop deep sea technology to explore mining of natural resources from the sea. In 2011, China signed a deal with the International Seabed Authority to explore polymetallic sulfide for a period of 15 years in Indian Ocean. China was allocated 10,000 square kilometres in the Indian Ocean under the deal

International Seabed Authority

The International Seabed Authority was formed in 1994 under United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS). The authority organizes, regulates and controls mineral related activities in the international seabed area. The Authority became an observer at the United Nations in 1996. The Headquarters of ISA is situated in Jamaica. It has 167 members.

India and ISA

India is also a member of ISA. In 1987, India was the first country to receive the status of "Pioneer Investor" at ISA. India was allocated 1.5 lakh square kilometres of Central Indian Ocean Basin for the exploration. According to the Ministry of Earth Science, it was found under the exploration that there are 4.7 million tonnes of Nickel, 0.55 million tonnes of cobalt, 4.29 million tonnes of copper and 92.59 million tonnes of Manganese.

22 ANANYA:

Disinfectant Spray developed by Defence Institute June 9, 2020 The Pune based Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) has developed Nano-Technology based disinfectant spray to fight against COVID19. The spray has been named ANANY

23 World Bank Report

The World Bank in its latest Global Economic Prospect downgraded its projection of growth of India by -9%. However, the World Bank believes that Indian growth is to bounce back in 2021.

Highlights

The World Bank says that the growth of India has slowed by 4.2% in 2019-20. The other international rating agencies such as Fitch ratings, Moody's Investor Service, S&P Global Ratings have all predicted India's growth rate as 4% to 5% in the year 2020-

24 . According to Crisil, this is India's fourth economic recession since independence.

Key Findings of the report

The Key findings of the report about India are as follows:

The report says that the Government of India has been purchasing government bonds to ease financial conditions.

The Indian Government has increased its spending to contain COVID-19. This has been done through Wage support Deferral in tax payments Cash transfer to lower-income households Loan and liquidity support to small businesses and financial institutions. The contraction of Indian Economy will find its impact in South Asian region South Asia . The report says that in the South Asian region, Pakistan and Afghanistan are to experience contractions in the year 2020. Bangladesh is expected to grow at 1.6% and Nepal is expected to grow at 1.8% India is the fifth worst hit nations in the world after USA, Brazil, Russia and UK

25 Different Colour bands for BS VI vehicles

On June 8, 2020, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways issued distinct colour band for the number plate sticker of BS VI vehicles.

Highlights

The order makes it mandatory for the BS VI vehicles to carry a green strip of 1 cm width on the top of the existing sticker. The sticker should carry details of registration of BS-VI vehicle and its fuel type. The petrol fuel vehicles should hold orange colour and diesel fuel vehicles should carry a blue colour.

BS VI Emission Norms

The volume of PM 2.5 in BS VI fuel ranges between 20 and 40 micro grams per cubic metres. On the other hand, it is 120 micrograms per cubic metres in BS IV fuel. The BS VI fuel is to bring down the Sulphur content by 5 times. The BS VI fuel vehicles will emit 80% less particulate matter for every kilo metre.

Benefits

The lower Sulphur of BS VI will help reduce toxic emissions such as CO, nitrogen Dioxide and Sulphur Dioxide. The change in density of oil will help reduce air pollution to great extent.

26 First virtual Trade Fair of India

The Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts hosted a four day virtual fair for around 200 Indian Exporters. The exporters were mainly from the industries of fashion jewelry and accessories

Highlights

The four-day fair that was conducted online focused on markets such as Europe and United States. The fair generated business opportunities of Rs 153 crores. Every seller was provided with a virtual stall. Working As an overseas buyer clicks on a stall, he will be directed to the photographs and videos of the product of the seller. If the buyer is interested, he will be provided with the links of immediate interaction through Zoom or Skype. If he places the order, he will be delivered through courier services.

Benefits

Usually the sellers had to spend around Rs 1.5 lakhs to Rs 2 lakhs to install a physical stall. This time, their expenses was just Rs 10,000 to showcase their products in a virtual stall. This helped several small exporters to participate in the virtual fair.

Future Plans

The Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts will now adopt the method for other goods and services. Also, it is to scale the virtual export fair to cover products in fashion, lifestyle, textiles, home, furniture. Around 3,000 to 50,000 buyers are expected to participate in such future fairs.

27 ARPIT: Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation by Indian Air Force

The Indian Air Force recently developed Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation (ARPIT). The pod is to be used to evacuate critical patients that are suffering from COVID-19.

Highlights

The Indian Air Force identified the need for an air evacuation system that will prevent the spread of infectious aerosols from the COVID-19 patients during air travel. This has now been fulfilled by ARPIT. The Indian Air Force has used indigenous materials to develop ARPIT. This has been done in the intention of boosting Make in India initiative. The IAF has spent Rs 60,000 to develop the system. The system is also light weight as it was made from aviation certified material.

About ARPIT

The ARPIT uses HEPA, High frequency Particulate Air H 13 filters to support invasive ventilation. The machine also holds monitoring instruments such as pulse oximeter, defibrillator and infusion pumps. It also has space for long arm gloves and power packs. The Indian Air Force is inducting 7 ARPITs as of now.

28 Gairsain declared Summer Capital of Uttarakhand

On June 8, 2020, the Uttarakhand Governor Baby Rani Maurya assented to

declare Gairsain as new summer capital. The Gairsain is also called Bhararisen.

Highlights

Gairsain is to have an e-vidhan Sabha. This was announced on World Environment Day. The Legislative Assembly of the state is located at Dehradun, the winter capital city. The activists in Uttarakhand wanted Gairsain to be the capital of Uttarakhand state after it was carved out of Uttar Pradesh in 1998. The activists suggested Gairsain as the capital as it was falling on the border of Kumaon and Garhwal regions. The town is located in the Chamoli district and is 250 km from Dehradun. It comes under the administrative limits of Garhwal division. The boundary of Kumaon starts at a distance of 15 km from Gairsain. Uttarakhand .The State of Uttarakhand was formed as the 27th state of India. The state was formed through the Uttar Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2000. The famous tourist attraction in the state includes Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Park. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The state also sources Ramganga river. The river begins its journey at the Dudhatoli Parvat.

29 SpaceX: First Private Space Company to send NASA astronauts to space

The SpaceX has become the first private rocket company to send astronauts to space. The company sent Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken to space initiating a new business model for NASA.

Highlights

According to the US Government, the mission will end the reliance of NASA on Russian space rockets.

Why is a private Space Company hired?

NASA had plans to hand over the transport of crew to the space since 2000s. This decision came up after the Columbia Space Shuttle broke up while returning to the earth in 2003. In order to make space programmes such as transfer of crew and food to the International Space Station affordable; the step has been taken.

SpaceX

SpaceX was the first private company in the world to return rockets back to the earth. Usually the rockets burn away after putting the satellites on their orbit or simply get thrown away to the space adding up space debris. SpaceX was actively involved in delivering cargo to the International Space Station.

The US-Russia Factor

NASA has been paying millions of dollars to Russia to launch its astronauts. This is the first launch of humans by the US in the decade.

Crew Dragon

The Spacecraft that is transporting the Astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) is called Crew Dragon. The Crew Dragon is capable of carrying seven passengers. The Crew Dragon will return the astronauts after their tasks

associated with the ISS is complete. The Crew Dragon is to parachute down into the Atlantic Ocean.

Starman Suits

The Suits worn by the astronauts are called the Starman suits. They are designed only to be worn inside Crew Dragon and are not meant for spacewalks.

30 June 1: World Milk Day

Every year World Milk Day is celebrated on June 1 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The day is celebrated to bring awareness and attention to the activities associated with the dairy sector.

Highlights

June 1 was chosen to be celebrated as World Milk Day by the FAO in 2001. The day was chosen as several other countries were celebrating milk day on that particular day. This year, the World Milk Day is celebrated under the theme

Theme: The 20th Anniversary of World Milk Day

Controversy: World Plant Milk Day In response to the celebrations of World Milk Day, observance of World Plant Milk Day was begun. The day is marked on August 22. It is being marked since 2017 objecting environmental impact, animal abuse and health effects associated with dairy industry.

India :India is the largest producer of milk. According to 2011 survey, around 70% of milk samples were conformed to standards set by the FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India).

National Milk Day

India celebrates National Milk Day on November 26. The day is observed on November 26 as it is the birth anniversary of Verghese Kurien. He is known as Father of Milk Revolution in India. It was his idea to launch Operation Flood in India.

Operation Flood

Operation Flood was launched in 1970. The operation aimed at doubling milk availability per

person in the country. The operation also helped to generation employment in the rural sector.

Through the success of the operation, India became the largest milk producer

31 June 3: World Bicycle Day

Every year, World Bicycle Day is celebrated on June 3. The day is celebrated by the United Nations to lay emphasis about the benefits of cycling.

Highlights

The World Bicycle Day is being celebrated since 2018. The day was declared by the United Nations. The main aim to observe the day is to celebrate uniqueness, versatility and longevity of bicycle. The day is being celebrated as an after effect of Leszek Sibilski's crusade. Sibilski led campaigns to promote UN resolution for World Bicycle Day.

Significance

Bicycles help save 238 million gallons of fuel every year. Around 100 million bicycles are manufactured every year. Also, bicycles are the most affordable transport in the world. They are 20 times cheaper than that of a car

World Health Organization

According to WHO, safe infrastructure and cycling is a step towards greater health equity. The World Bicycle Day promotes the use of bicycles for its environmental and health benefits.

32 G7 summit postponed; To be expanded as G10 or G11

The US President Donald Trump recently announced that the USA is postponing the G7 summit to September 2020. Also, President Trump intends to expand the G7 group to G10 or G11. On June 2, 2020, US President Trump invited Indian PM Modi to the G7 summit through telephonic conversation. The Leaders discussed India-China recent Stand Off at the Line of Actual control

Highlights

The G-7 is a group of seven countries namely France, Canada, Germany, Japan, US and UK. The grouping does not have a fixed headquarters or a formal constitution. The decision that are taken in the summit are non-binding. President Trump intends to expand the G7 group by including three other nations namely Australia, Russia, India and South Korea.

About G7

G7 is an inter governmental organization that was formed in 1975. It was formed by the top economies of the world as an informal forum to discuss world issues. Canada joined G7 in 1976 and EU (European Union) began attending G7 meets in 1977. Russia joined G7 in 1997. Initially G7 was called G8. In 2014, Russia was expelled as it annexed Crimea region of Ukraine to its territory.

G7 VS G20

G20 is a larger group and includes all the G7 members. India is a member of G20. G20 was formed in 1999 as a response to bring more countries to address global economic concerns. G20 makes up 80% of the global economy.

33 Make in India: Ministry of Defence places indents to boost

On June 2, 2020, the Ministry of Defence placed indents on OFB (Ordnance Factory Board). This has been done to boost Make in India initiative.

Highlights

The indents have been placed for the supply of 156 BMP Infantry Combat Vehicles to be used for mechanized forces of Indian Army. The ICVs are to be manufactured by the Ordnance Factory located in Medak in Telangana at a cost of Rs 1,094 crores. The manufacture of the ICVs are to be completed by 2023. With the manufacture of these ICVs the existing deficiency of the Mechanised Infantry Battalions are to be mitigated and will help in further enhancement of the army.

Make in India

Make in India initiative was launched by PM Modi in 2014. The main aim of the scheme is as follows. To increase indigenously produced goods .To attract foreign investments for new industrialization .To develop already existing industries in India by surpassing China. To create 100 million additional jobs by 2022 . To promote export-led growth To increase share of manufacturing sector in India's GDP from 16% to 25% by 2022.

34 Cabinet Approval: Kolkata Port Trust renamed to Shyama Prasad Mukerjee Port Trust

On June 3, 2020, the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi approved renaming of Kolkata Port Trust to Shyama Prasad Mukerjee port trust. The announcement of renaming of the port was given by PM Modi on January 11, 2020.

Highlights

The announcement was made by PM Modi while he attended the 150th anniversary celebrations of Kolkata Port Trust. The GoI has lately introduced several measure in the name of the legend Other measures In October 2019, the Chenani-Nashri Tunnel was renamed after Shyama Prasad Mukerjee. The tunnel is the longest of Jammu and Kashmir and is located on NH-44. It is bi-directional and reduces the distance between Srinagar and Jammu by 30 km. The travel time is reduced by 2 hours.

Dr Shyama Prasad Mukerjee

Mr Mukerjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1951. The party was the predecessor of BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party). He died in Jammu and Kashmir Police custody for entering the state without permit. He battled for Kashmir immensely contributing to National Integration. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee Rurban Mission The mission was launched on February 21, 2016 to commemorate fourth anniversary of the legend. The mission aims to stimulate local economic development. It focuses to develop 300 rurban clusters.

35 SWADES Initiative: Skill Mapping programme for Indians returning from Abroad

The Government of India is to conduct SWADES initiative to map the skills of Indians returning from abroad. SWADES is Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support.

Highlights

The SWADES initiative has been begun under Vande Bharat Mission. The initiative aims to generate database of Indians returning from abroad based on their skill sets and experience. The database will then be used to fulfil need of foreign companies and Indian companies. The maximum number of Indians returning are mainly from UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar. These persons returning were primarily employed in automotive, oil and gas, tourism, aviation, IT, hospitality and IT.

SWADES initiative

The initiative is to be conducted by Ministries of Civil Aviation, External Affairs, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The returning citizens will need to fill up forms under the programme. The form consists of details of job title, work sector, years of experience, etc. A toll free facility has also been set up to support citizens for their queries in filling the forms.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the closing of companies all over the world. This made 1000s unemployed. Thus, they are returning to India.

Vande Bharat Mission

The Mission aims at bringing Indians from all over the world. Under the mission, the non-scheduled commercial flights will carry people from Singapore, USA and London.

36 June 5: World Environment Day

Every year the World Environment Day is celebrated on June 5. This year the day is being celebrated under the theme

Theme: Celebrate Biodiversity

Highlights

This year, in 2020, the day is to be hosted in Colombia in partnership with Germany. The day was hosted by India in 2018. It was then India emphasized on prevention of Plastic pollution. In 2019, the day was hosted by China under the theme “Air Pollution”.

Background

The day was first designed by the United Nations in 1972 during the United Nations Conference on Human Environment. However, it was first celebrated in 1974.

Significance of the theme

Biodiversity is important for the survival of all the living organisms. The theme is significant as human beings are part of the ecosystem and cannot live in isolation. The interdependence of humans and webs of life can very well be learnt from the recent locust attacks, COVID-19 pandemic and bush fires

37 DRDO develops SUMERU PACS

The Defence Research Development Organization has developed the SUMERU PACS, that helps to reduce sweating of Personal Protective Equipment wearers.

Highlights

The DRDO scientists found that the PPE wearers felt very uncomfortable after wearing them for more than 30 minutes. They start sweating and this worsens the situation. In order, to solve this problem, personal air circulation system was developed by DRDO. The system is to be used inside the PPE as a small backpack of 500 grams. This has been named SUMERU PACS. They keep the wearer away from sweats.

About the system

The system draws outside air and the moist air goes out through a front face opening. This cools the neck and head area. The system is highly helpful for doctors and medical staffs who are forced to wear PPEs more than six hours in hospitals.

38 GAVI Alliance: India pledges 15 million USD

On June 4, 2020, PM Modi participated at the Global Vaccine Summit that was led by the United Kingdom. At the summit, the prime minister announced that India will pledge 15 million USD to GAVI Alliance.

Highlights

The world leaders have come together to find a vaccine to the COVID-19 with GAVI as an integrating platform. The Global Vaccine Summit organized by UK discussed on collecting funds for GAVI. Over 50 countries participated in the programme.

India at GAVI

India has now become a big supporter of the alliance. This saved GAVI 400 million USD in the past five years. Earlier India was only a beneficiary. Since 2014, India had become a donor. Till date India has donated 12 million USD to the Alliance.

PM Modi at the Summit

PM Modi highlighted the following at the summit

India shared its medicines to more than 120 countries. India understands the importance of immunization. India has so far added six vaccines to its

National Immunization Programme.

India has digitized the vaccine supply chain The cold supply chain of the vaccines in India is being monitored by electronic intelligence Network

39 Green Field Expressway Project

The Government of India recently agreed to convert the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway into a green field project. The highway will connect five historic towns in the state of Punjab. They include Goindwal Sahib, Sultanpur Lodhi, Khadoor Sahib and Tarn Taran.

What is the issue?

On the complaints of the locals over the project failing to connect religious towns, the Chief Minister of Punjab raised issue with the centre. The original proposal was to widen the existing roads as brown field projects.

Brown Field Projects

Brown field projects are those projects that are modified or upgraded.

Green Field Projects

The Green Field projects are those projects where a new production or service is being facilitated.

Current Scenario

India is currently working towards becoming a 5 trillion USD economy. In order to achieve this, the GoI has launched a series of infrastructure projects under the National Infrastructure Pipeline. The NIP is to include both brown field and green field projects at an estimated cost of Rs 1 billion each.

40 “#iCommit” Initiative launched by Power Ministry

On June 5, 2020, the Ministry of Power launched the ‘#iCommit’ initiative on the occasion of World Environment Day.

Highlights

The initiative was launched to encourage stakeholders to continue providing efficient renewable power and resilient energy system in the future. The initiative is driven by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).

Role of EESL in the initiative

Under the initiative, EESL is to unite diverse set of players such as corporates, think tanks, multilateral and bilateral organizations, governments, etc.

Core of the Campaign

The campaign mainly aims to bring innovative changes in the current power system of the country. This includes decentralised solar power and electric vehicles and several other innovative measures as well. The initiative is to promote current undertakings of the GoI such as

National Electric Mobility Mission

FAME 1 FAME 2 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyothi Yojana

Saubhagya scheme Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY)

**Smart Metering Programme Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam
Uttan Maha Abhiyan (PM-KUSUM) UJALA Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LED for All**

AJAY Atal Jyoti Yojana

41 June 6: Russian Language Day

Every year, on June 6, the United Nations celebrated Russian Language Day. This

was established by the UNESCO in 2010.

Why June 6?

The Russian Language Day is celebrated on the birth day of Aleksandr Pushkin. He was a Russian Poet and is considered as the father of modern Russian literature. Aleksandr Pushkin The poet published his first poem when he was 15

years old. He was born to Russian nobility in Moscow. The most famous poem of Pushkin was Ode to Liberty that led to his exile.

UN Language Days

The United Nations Language Days were launched in February 2010 to celebrate cultural diversity and multilingualism. The UN Language days promote six of the official languages of the organization. The official languages of the United Nations are English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Russian and French. They are celebrated on

Arabic-December 18

English-April 23

Chinese-April 20

French-March 20

Russia-June 6

42 To Change India's Name to Bharat

The Supreme Court of India recently ordered to change a plea that requested to change India's name into Bharat into a representation. The apex court also ordered to forward it to the Union Government, especially the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Highlights

The petition that was submitted to the court seeks to amend Article 1 of the Constitution. The petition demands to struck off 'India' from the Article.

Article 1

Article 1 says "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States". India is already called Bharat according to the Constitution.

Why was the petition filed?

According to the petitioner, the name India is of foreign origin. It can be traced back to Greece language "Indica". On the other hand, the name Bharat is closely associated with freedom struggle and the cry "Bharat Mata ki Jai". Hence, changing the name will make sure citizens will get over the colonial past. Supreme Court

The Supreme Court had earlier dismissed similar petition in 2016. According to the Apex Court judgement, the name India is derived from the Indus river. Also, the court pronounced that every citizen had his right to choose between calling his country India or Bharat.

43 Facts Box: Spandan Campaign of Chhattisgarh

The Chhattisgarh Government recently launched Spandan Campaign. The campaign aimed to contain fratricide and suicide involving police personnel.

Highlights

Under the campaign, the superintendents of police associated with the Chhattisgarh Government will start a parade in their districts every Friday. After the event, the grievances of the personnel are to be addressed. Also, the campaign has made medical treatment and counselling of depressed officers mandatory. The campaign will also make arrangements for yoga classes for the police personnel at all the district head quarters. Cooperation of local yoga teachers have been sought to conduct these classes. Also, the police officers have been instructed to the redress grievances of police personnel in regular intervals. The superintendents have been instructed to visit police stations regularly and make arrangements for recreational activities.

Significance

Around 50 police personnel in the state including paramilitary forces committed suicide in the state of Chhattisgarh in the last two years. Of these 18 were reported from seven districts that are affected by Maoists. Also, in December 2019, around 6 ITBP personnel were killed at an incident of fratricide (killing of one's brother or sister).

44 June 7: World Food Safety Day

Every year, on June 7, the World Food Safety Day is celebrated. This World Food Safety Day being celebrated on June 7, 2020 is the second World Food Safety Day.

Highlights

Addis Ababa Conference UN Decade of Action on Nutrition

Highlights

The World Food Safety Day was launched by the United Nations in 2019. The day is celebrated to reinforce the call made by the Geneva Conference and Addis Ababa Conference in 2019 on “The Future of Food Safety”. This year the day is celebrated under the theme

Theme: Food Safety, Everyone’s Business

This year, under the theme, the United Nations is to promote global food safety awareness. Campaigns are to be conducted to call upon decision makers, UN Organizations, general public and civil societies to take action.

Addis Ababa Conference

The Addis Ababa Conference was the first International Conference on Food Safety. The Conference discussed priorities to reach Sustainable Development Goals and also support UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

UN Decade of Action on Nutrition

The UN Decade of Action on Nutrition is a commitment of United Nations for the years 2016-25. The decade will receive increased nutrition actions from the world organization.

45: June 8: World Oceans Day

Every year, World Oceans Day is celebrated by the United Nations on June 8. The Day is celebrated to remind people all over the world about the importance of oceans in everyday life. This year, the World Oceans Day is celebrated under the theme

Theme: Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean

The World Oceans Day has been celebrated by many countries since 1992. The countries were celebrating the Day after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that was held in Rio de Janeiro. However, the United Nations decided to celebrate the day in 2009.

Significance

The World Oceans Day is celebrated to make sure mankind is well aware of the importance of Ocean Literacy and Ocean Science and Policy Ocean Science and Policy . According to the United Nations, in order to conserve and use the oceans sustainably, the following should be imbibed in the policies being framed .The policies should have up-to-date scientific knowledge. The policies should recognize the needs of the communities that are interacting with the oceans The policies should be seen by the citizens as legitimate and trust worthy. Sustainable Development Goals .The Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals says, “Conserve and Sustainable use the oceans, marine resources and the seas”. Therefore, it is highly important to observe World Oceans .Day to succeed the goal and create awareness about the importance of oceans.

46 Environment Performance Index: India ranks 168

The Yale University recently released the biennial Environment Performance Index. India scored 168th rank out of 180 countries. In 2018, India scored 27.6 out of 100 and secured 177th rank.

About the report

Around 32 indicators were considered to create the ranking. Also, the index provided 10-year observation on environmental performance at national and international level.

Key Findings of the report

According to the report, India needs to double its sustainability efforts. Also, India needs to focus widely on sustainability issues with utmost priority towards air and water quality, climate change and biodiversity.

All the South Asian countries were ahead of India except Afghanistan. Also, India's rank in terms of Sustainable Development Goals was also low. In Climate Change, India ranked 106 in terms of climate change and second in South Asian region. The performance of a country in climate change was assessed on green house gas emission per capita, Green house gas intensity growth rate, growth rate in carbon dioxide, adjusted emission growth rates, growth rate of 4 greenhouse gases and one pollutant.

47 India first in world to make internet-controlled Robot

An engineer from Thane has developed an internet-controlled robot. The bot is first of its kind. The robot addresses the needs of the hospitals treating COVID19 patients. About Coro-bot The robot has been named Coro-bot. It can independently dispense food, beverages, water, medicines. The robot also gives good advises to patients without the aid of nurses, staffs or other care givers. The Coro-bot has been deployed for first time at the Holy Cross hospital in Kalyan. Internet of Things The robot has a special option of controlling it through an application from any part of the world. This makes the bot unique. The robot becomes the first in world to use Internet of Things technology in medical field.

Features of Coro-bot

The Coro-bot has three nozzles. The first nozzle is used to provide disinfectant bath for the robot himself. The second nozzle is used to spray sanitizers on both sides of the path and the third nozzle is used to disinfect the ground with UV light as the robot moves. The robot also has dispensers for tea, coffee and water.

48 Mission Sagar: INS Kesari reaches Seychelles

The Indian Naval Ship Kesari reached Port Victoria in Seychelles to provide COVID-19 related medicines under Mission Sagar.

Highlights

The Mission Sagar was launched by the Indian Navy to provide COVID-19 related essential medicines. The Government of India under the mission is providing assistance to foreign countries in dealing with COVID-19.

Mission Sagar

India had launched Mission Sagar in May 2020 to provide food items to countries in the Southern Indian Ocean. As a part of the initiative, essentials were to be supplied to Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles. The Mission also supplied HCQ tablets, medical assistance and special ayurvedic medicines. Under the mission India provided 600 tonnes of food items to Maldives, Ayurvedic medicines and COVID-19 related medicines to Mauritius, COVID-19 related essential medicines including HCQ to Madagascar, dengue fever tablets and medical assistance team to Comoros and COVID-19 related medicines to Seychelles. The Mission was inspired by PM Modi's vision of SAGAR. SAGAR: SAGAR is Security and Growth for All in the Region.