



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

JULY 2020
3rd Week

JULY 16-23

PracticeMock

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NATIONAL

1. Union Environment Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar informed that the Zonal Master Plan of **Bhagirathi** Eco-Sensitive Zone has been approved.
2. Defence Ministry signed a contract with the Bharat Earth Movers Limited (**BEML**) to procure 1,512 mine plough devices at a cost of Rs 557 crores.
3. India successfully conducted the flight trial of Dhruvastra anti-guided missile at the Interim Test Range of Odisha. The trials of the helicopter launched Nag Missile (HELINA) were successful. The missile has now been renamed as "**Dhruvastra**".
4. Union Environment and Information Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar hailed "**KURMA**" application to track and report Indian turtles.
5. Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has suggested to freeze changes in Defence Procurement Policy for 4 to 5 years. The Defence Procurement Policy has gone through six revisions between 2015 and 2017. This underlines lack of long-term stability in regulations.
6. PM **SVANidhi** app was launched by the Minister of Urban Affairs. The application aims to provide user-friendly digital interface for lending institutions and their functionaries to source and process loan applications of street vendors.
7. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports have partnered with **UNICEF** to strengthen the youth volunteers in the country to achieve **Atma Nirbhar Bharat** Abhiyan. That is, India is to become self-reliant through such measures. The Gol has signed a statement with **YuWaah** of UNICEF. It is a multi-stake holder platform formed by UNICEF.
8. India and US held a strategic virtual energy partnership meet to review the progress of major accomplishments and also to prioritize new areas of cooperation. The main outcome of the ministerial meet is the participation of India in the multilateral platform ACT.
9. PM Modi congratulated **Kakrapur Atomic Plant** of **Gujarat** to reach its criticality. Criticality is reaching normal operating condition. The Kakrapur Atomic Plant produces power from indigenously built reactors and is a major step of Gol in promoting Make in India campaign. The reactor generates 700 MW of power.
10. A Space start up called the **Digantara** has developed India's first in-orbit space debris monitoring and tracking system. The system works on **LIDAR** (Light Detection and Ranging) technology.

11. **IIT-Madras** supported startup Modulus Housing has developed **portable hospital** unit. The unit can be dragged anywhere and can be installed within 2 hours. The portable hospital has been named "**MediCAB**". The portable hospital is being launched in **Wayanad** district of **Kerala** where the units are being deployed to treat COVID-19 patients.



12. CSIR-CMERI unveiled COVID-19 protection System (COPS) for workplaces. The **COPS** include contactless solar based intelligent mask automated dispensing unit cum thermal scanner (**IntelliMAST**), 360-degree car flusher and touchless faucet.

STATES

13. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched "Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Yojana". The scheme is to help the eligible beneficiaries get ration delivered at home.
14. Minister of food Processing Industry Harsimrat Kaur Badal e-inaugurated the first Mega Food Park in **Mizoram**. The Zoram Food Park (non-governmental) inaugurated in Mizoram.
15. **Odisha** Government announced that **transgenders** are to be included under **Madhu Babu Pension** Yojana. Madhu Babu Pension Yojana is a social security scheme that was launched in the state of Odisha.
16. **Karnataka** has announced the formation of Karnataka Digital Economy Mission. The Mission is being launched under the provision of Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.
17. **Andhra Pradesh** recently announced the **Renewable Energy Export Policy, 2020**. The policy permits sale of power to other states of India. The policy is to be implemented by NREDCAP (New and Renewable Energy Development Corporation of AP Limited).
18. According to the State Government of Kerala, community transmission has occurred in two coastal hamlets near capital Thiruvananthapuram.
19. Tamil Nadu State Government signed eight new Memorandum of Understanding of Rs 10,399 crores. The MoUs will bring investments in the areas of solar cells, agrotech, iron foundry and module manufacturing.

INTERNATIONAL

20. **South Korea** recently launched its first ever **military satellite** to defend itself against nuclear armed North Korea. The satellite has been named "**ANASIS II**"

21. The 75th United Nations General Assembly is to be conducted virtually in 2020 for the first time in its history. The 2020 session is to begin on September 15.
22. India began its trial trans-shipment of goods from India to the North East through the **Chittagong** port of **Bangladesh**.
23. India and Maldives signed agreement to establish "Emergency Medical Services" in Male.
24. The Japanese Government recently approved *Dexamethasone* as a second treatment of COVID-19.
25. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman participated in third **G20 Finance Ministers** and Central Bank Governors meet. The meet was presided by **Saudi Arabia**.
26. **India and Russia** held a virtual meeting on "**India-Russia Relations in the context of post-pandemic global order**". The meet was organized by Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC).
27. India and **Israel** signed agreements to expand their collaboration in dealing with **cyber threats**. The agreement was signed between Director General of Israel's National Cyber Directorate (INCD) and India's Ambassador to Israel Sanjeev Singla. The agreement also involved Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) that operates under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and INCD.

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28. India and **Bhutan** opened a new trade route between **Jaigon** in West Bengal and **Pasakha** in Bhutan.
29. Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced that India is to resume operation of international commercial flights with France and US.
30. **Tunisian** PM **Elyes Fakhfakh** resigned. He presented his resignation to the President of Tunisia Kais
31. **China** launched its first successful Mars probe from the Wenchang spacecraft launch site. The Mars probe has been named **Tianwen 1**.
32. **United Arab Emirates** launched the first ever mission to Mars. The spacecraft **Hope** is to arrive **Mars** in February 2021.

REPORTS & SCHEMES

33. Home Minister Amit Shah has launched "**Vriksharopan Abhiyan**". The scheme will focus on creating green spaces by planting tree saplings in mined out areas.

34. Ministry of Human Resources and Development will launch "**Manodarpan**" initiative under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. The initiative is being launched to provide psychosocial support to the students for their mental wellbeing.
35. The Indian Council of Medical Research is to conduct study to evaluate effectiveness of **BCG** vaccine to prevent morbidity and mortality of COVID-19 elderly individuals. The study is to be conducted on people aged between 60 and 95 years in 19 hotspots in the country.
36. Government of India announced that five portals are being developed by different organizations to promote innovation in India. This will help boost Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. The portals being developed are for specific sectors and are as follows
- BHEL for power sector
 - CMFTI for manufacturing sector
 - HMT for machine tools
 - ICAT and ARAI for automotive sector
37. The United Nations Environment Programme and the International Energy Agency released a report on "**Cooling Emissions and Policy Synthesis**". The report cited benefits of cooling efficiency and Kigali Amendment report. The report says that by 2050, the world will need at least 14 billion cooling appliances. Currently, there are 3.6 billion appliances in use globally. This will significantly contribute to increase in temperature.
38. International Trade Union Confederation released its ranking of 144 countries on degree of respect for workers' rights. India was among the least performing 10 countries in the list.
39. The ITUC report says that around 85% of the countries violated the right to strike and 80% violated right to collectively bargain. The ranking of the countries has been made based on the value of Global Rights Index. The index is prepared based on 97 metrics. This includes workers' rights, right to strike, freedom from violent conditions.
40. The United Nations recently released **the Multidimensional Poverty Index, 2020**. According to the index, India recorded the largest reduction in number of people living in poverty between the period 2015-19. The data were obtained from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Around **273 million** people have moved out of multidimensional poverty **over 10 years**. The report was released by the United Nations Development Programme and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). According to the report, both India and Nicaragua have halved their MPI value among children of age 10 and 10.5 years respectively.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

41. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (**CBDT**) and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (**MoMSME**) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to share data.
42. FIU to get PAN data from Income Tax Department to check suspicious large transactions.
43. The **Financial Intelligence Unit** under Income Tax Department is authorized to obtain cash transaction reports from private and public sector banks. The FIU receives reports every month to analyse suspicious cases.
44. Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy **Shri R K Singh** inaugurated first public Electric Vehicle charging plaza at Chelmsford club in New Delhi. Along with the charging plaza, the minister also inaugurated **RAISE**. RAISE is Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency (RAISE). It is a joint initiative of EESL and USAID.
45. India Business Council is to host India Ideas Summit 2020. PM Modi is to address the summit. The Summit will convene government leaders and business men for discussion about US-India partnership and trends in shaping trade and investment, globalization and future works. This year summit is to focus on the following theme **Focus: Building a Better Future**

FINANCE AND BANKING

46. National Payment Corporation of India (**NPCI**) launched **UPI Auto Pay** feature for recurring payments. The feature launched is dedicated to recurring payments. It can be used for multiple financial purposes such as booking bus pass, utility payment, paying DTH, train ticket among others. The organizations such as Policy Bazaar, Axis Bank, Timesprime, Razor Pay and Pay U India are to provide Auto Pay option to customers using recurring payments.
47. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (**CBDT**) has informed that a new Utility Tool has been launched that will facilitate the Banks and **Post Offices** across the country with the accurate **TDS** rate (Tax Deduction at Source) applicable on cash withdrawals. The utility tool can be accessed by the Banks and Post Offices by visiting the web portal- '**incometaxindiaefiling.gov.in**'. The Utility Tool is available under the name 'Verification of Applicability u/s 194N' on the portal.
48. Central Board of Direct Taxes (**CBDT**) and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (**CBIC**) signed Memorandum of Understanding to exchange data with each other. The agreement will help to facilitate exchange of information between the boards on regular basis. The agreement signed replaces the former agreement signed between Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) and CBDT

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

49. The Climate Activist Greta Thunberg was awarded the **Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity**. She was awarded with prize money of 1 million Euros.

PERSON IN NEWS

50. The Deputy Commissioner of Mumbai Customs **Sahil Seth** was appointed as the honorary adviser of steering committee for BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (**CCI**)
51. **Sonu Sood** launched "**Pravasi Rojgar App**". The application provides all necessary information to find jobs and offer specific job training programmes.

OBITUARIES

52. Madhya Pradesh Governor **Lalji Tandon** passed away.
53. Former IAS officer and the first woman election commissioner of Maharashtra **Smt Neela Satyanarayan** passed away.

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IMPORTANT DAYS

54. World Youth Skills Day is celebrated on **July 15**. The day is celebrated to recognize the importance of equipping young people with skills of employment, entrepreneurship and decent work.
Theme: Skills for a resilient youth
55. Every year **Nelson Mandela International Day** is marked all over the world on **July 18**. The day was officially declared by the United Nations in 2009 and the first UN Mandela day was observed in **2010**.
56. Every year, on **July 23**, **National Broadcasting Day** is celebrated all over India. The day is celebrated to commemorate the first ever radio broadcast aired in India.

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