

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**AUG 2020
1st Week**

AUGUST 1-7

PracticeMock

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NATIONAL

1. Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (**MoEF&CC**), Prakash Javadekar, has participated in the **6th BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Environment Ministers' Meeting under the presidency of Russia along. **India** will assume the Presidency of BRICS in 2021.
2. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, **Piyush Goyal**, inaugurated the National Digital Conference on "**Easing Doing Business for Atmanirbhar Bharat**" organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to improve the business environment of India.
3. **NITI** (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (**AIM**), has launched **AIM iCREST** – an Incubator Capabilities enhancement program for a Robust Ecosystem focused on creating high performing Start-ups in collaboration with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhvani Foundation**, which will provide global expertise.
4. **Narendra Singh Tomar**, Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, released a booklet on '**Best Practices in Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)**' prepared by Department of Land Resources (**DoLR**), Ministry of Rural Development.
5. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), **Hardeep Singh Puri** released the Affordable Rental Housing Complexes Pack. He also launched the mobile application of Credai – Awaas App and an E-Commerce Portal, "HousingforAll.com" of NAREDCO.
6. **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** Union Minister for Human Resource Development (HRD) launched the compilation '**India Report – Digital Education June 2020**' prepared by the Digital Education Division of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in consultation with Education Departments of States and UTs.
7. **Harsh Vardhan**, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare announced the completion of 1st **Pan-India 1000 Genome Sequencing of SARS-CoV-2**. He reviewed the COVID-19 activities of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).
8. Union Minister for Ministry of Science and Technology **Harsh Vardhan** has launched **Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan**, a national level programme for popularizing pure science among school students of Class 6th to 11th. It is an initiative of Vijnana Bharathi (**VIBHA**) in collaboration with Vigyan Prasar, Government of India and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
9. Ministry of Defence publicized a draft '**Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP) 2020**' for public. The policy aims to achieve a manufacturing turnover of \$25 bn or Rs 1,75,000 crore, including exports of \$5 bn or Rs 35,000 Crore in aerospace and defence goods and services by 2025. The **Department of Defence Production** will be the nodal department for coordination on various components of the DPEPP 2020.

10. A Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between **IIT Kanpur, Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR & PG)** to develop **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) Techniques** to conduct exploratory and predictive analysis of Public Grievances received on the web based Centralized Public Grievances Redress & Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) pertaining to the MoD.
11. For the first time in India, Railway is **using New Track Construction (NTC)** machine for the entire track laying of the Dedicated Freight Corridors. The projects will be implemented by Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (**DFCCIL**) by 2022.
12. The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (**eVIN**), which is used for efficient vaccine logistics management has reached 32 States and Union Territories (UTs). National Health Mission (**NHM**) by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is the implementing agency of eVIN.
13. India's 1st snow leopard conservation centre is to be set up in **Lanka, near Bhaironghati** bridge in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand.
14. Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Railways and Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare flagged off the **India's 1st Kisan Rail**, a Special Parcel Train **from Maharashtra's Devlali to Bihar's Danapur Railway** station through video link.
15. National Highways Authority of India (**NHAI**) signed an agreement **with IIT Delhi** to set up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in data driven decision making and Advance Data Management System for Highways (ADMS Highways).
16. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (**UNESCO**) recognizes Venkatraipur and Noliasahi, villages of Odisha as 'Tsunami Ready' for their overall preparedness to face the tsunami.
17. Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport has received a mass fever screening system to enhance the screening process of passengers which has been provided by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in coordination with **Asian Development Bank** funded by the United Nations Children's Fund (**UNICEF**).
18. The Supreme Court (SC) has made it mandatory for all municipal corporations and state pollution control boards to use the '**COVID19BWM** App' to track biomedical waste on a daily basis.

STATES

19. Madhya Pradesh has launched a public awareness campaign “**Ek Mask-Anek Zindagi**” from August. The state planned to establish Mask Banks, where people can donate masks which in turn will be distributed free to poor people.
20. The **Maharashtra** has approved the Maharashtra Agribusiness Network (**MagNet**) project worth about Rs 1,000 crore (USD 142.9 million). The project aims to help farmers across all districts in the state for the next 6 years. 70% of the project cost will be funded by Asian Development Bank (**ADB**).
21. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, **Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy** launched a one-month long virtual cybercrime awareness programme ‘**E-Raksha Bandhan**’ in **Amaravati**.
22. The Government of **Rajasthan** approved the **5% reservations** to the More Backward Classes (**MBC**) in the state judicial service.
23. Andhra Pradesh has signed a MoU with three International **FMCG** (Fast-moving consumer goods) companies- Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL), **ITC** and Procter and Gamble (P&G) to provide marketing and technological support for the economic empowerment of the women and to make them self-reliant.
24. The Education department of Daman Administration launched the **E-Gyan Mitra** mobile application to support students for their online education.
25. **Haryana** government has launched two schemes “**Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana**” to provide free sanitary napkins to girls and women of below poverty line (BPL) families, and initiated “**Mukhya Mantri Doodh Uphar Yojana**” to provide fortified flavoured skimmed milk powder to women and children.
26. Chhattisgarh has launched a social security scheme namely “**Shaheed Mahendra Karma Tendupatta Sangrahak Samajik Suraksha Yojana**” for tendu leaves collectors in the state covering over 12 lakh families, mostly tribals and forest dwellers
27. Punjab has launched the ‘**Pride of Punjab**’ programme. The programme is a partnership programme between the Department of Youth Services and Sports and YuWaah – a joint initiative of UNICEF, other UN agencies, civil society organisations and the private sector.
28. **Maharashtra** became the first state in India to collaborate with Google India for state-wide distribution of G suite for Education and Google Classroom.

INTERNATIONAL

29. The United Kingdom (**UK**) and **India** tied up for five new medicinal research projects to tackle the anti-microbial resistance to support the combat against antibiotic resistant bacteria and genes during his 'virtual visit' to India.
30. Government of India has contributed USD 15.46 million to the India-UN (United Nations) Development Partnership Fund as a support to fellow developing nations for their 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related projects.
31. António Guterres Secretary-General of United Nations (UN) launched the report titled "**Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond**" states that around **23.8 million additional children and youths may drop out or not have access to school in 2021** due to the economic impacts of COVID-19.
32. Sri Lanka ruling party led by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has won the general elections.
33. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (**FAO**) unveiled a new Platform, "**Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste**" to support the global reduction of food loss and waste.

REPORTS & SCHEMES

34. Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (Mo**MSME**) approved a programme under "**Gramodyog Vikas Yojana**" for the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of **Agarbatti** and to develop village industry.
35. **Nitin Gadkari**, Union Minister for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (**MSME**), approved the Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission proposed by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to increase the production of Agarbatti (incense sticks) and to generate employment.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

36. Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI**) in association with **TransUnion CIBIL Limited** has launched a comprehensive financial education and one-stop knowledge platform for micro, small and medium enterprises "**MSMESaksham**", which will guide MSMEs seeking quick access to finance and will also support them in managing their credit obligations.
37. **Reliance** Power and Japanese energy major **JERA** have inked a pact with a group of banks for full financing for their new gas-fired thermal power generation project in Bangladesh.

38. **Bharti** Airtel announced the multi-year strategic collaboration with Amazon Web Services (**AWS**) to provide a comprehensive set of cloud solutions to the large enterprises and Small and Medium Enterprises (**SME**) customers in India.
39. As per the Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) published report, if the economic impact of Covid-19 persists throughout the year then global remittances may fall by \$108.6 billion in 2020
40. As per **FutureBrand Index 2020**, Reliance Industries Limited (**RIL**), Oil and Gas Company ranked as the **Second Biggest Brand** for its recognition associated with its growth, innovative products and customer service after Apple which topped the index.

FINANCE AND BANKING

41. The RBI has kept the repo rate unchanged at **4%**, reverse repo rate at 3.35%, and marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 4.25%. Resolution Framework for COVID-19-related Stress: RBI sets up panel under KV Kamath for onetime restructuring of loans RBI announces additional special liquidity facility of Rs 5000 cr each for NHB & NABARD. RBI introduced ASISO facility to help banks manage liquidity in COVID-19 scenario. RBI to set up '**Innovation Hub**' to promote financial inclusion, efficient banking.
42. **Kotak** Mahindra Bank has launched a special two-month campaign, '**Kona Kona Umeed**' with offers and discounts across its suite of products to make banking and shopping more rewarding for the customers.
43. **MobiKwik** launched '**mpay.me**', a Unified Payment Interface (UPI) payment link service that allows users to send and receive money from any UPI payment app. Through mpay.me, users and merchants can set up a personalized link using their mobile number.
44. National Bank of Bahrain (**NBB**) and **Infosys Finacle** has announced that the NBB has decided to adopt the Finacle Cash Management Suite to digitally transform its transaction banking business.
45. **Airtel Payments Bank** has entered into a partnership with **Bharti AXA General Insurance** to offer the latter's affordable and newly launched shop insurance product namely "Smart Plan Shop Package Policy" for financial protection of the bank's retailers and merchants.
46. Export-Import (**EXIM**) Bank on behalf of Indian Government, extended a Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 250 million (about Rs. 1,870 Crores) to **Mozambique** to improve the power supply quality of the country.
47. The Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) has signed a **USD 200 million** financing deal with the Reliance Bangladesh LNG and Power Limited (RBLPL) to build and operate a 718 megawatt combined-cycle gas fired power plant in Bangladesh.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

48. SKOCH Gold Award was presented to MoTribal Affairs for its project of Scholarship Division – “Empowerment of Tribals through IT enabled Scholarship Schemes” & eSamadhan.

PERSON IN NEWS

49. **Ram Nath Kovind**, President of India has appointed Girish Chandra (GC) **Murmu** as 14th Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

50. Union Public Service Commission (**UPSC**) appointed Professor **Pradeep Kumar Joshi** as its new Chairman.

51. Ivory Coast’s **Hamed Bakayoko** Appointed as new Prime Minister.

52. **Paytm Money** has appointed **Varun Sridhar** as the New Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

53. **PNB** Housing Finance, promoted by Punjab National Bank (PNB) announced **Hardyal** Prasad as its new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

54. Guyana has appointed **Mohamed Irfaan Ali** as the President of the country.

55. The Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) has approved **Sashidhar Jagdishan** as the next Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HDFC Bank under Section 35B of the Banking Regulation Act 1949.

56. President of India has appointed **Manoj Sinha** as Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

57. Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved another extension of **Ajay Tyagi’s** term as Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for **18 months**.

OBITUARIES

58. **Folk** musician and Padma Shri awardee **Sonam Tshering Lepcha** has died in Kalimpong, West Bengal.

59. Former **Taiwan** president, **Lee Teng-hui** dubbed as “Mr. Democracy” passed away in Taipei City, Taiwan.

60. Malayalam **Actor Anil Murali** passed away.

61. Sahitya Akademi Awardee **Sa. Kandasamy** passed away in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

62. The former Samajwadi party leader and Rajya Sabha MP (Member of Parliament) **Amar Singh** had passed away.

63. Padma Bhushan Awardee & Former Arunachal Pradesh Governor **Ram D Pradhan** passes away.

64. Former Maharashtra CM, **Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar** passed away in Pune.

65. Father of Modern Indian theatre & Padma Awardee **Ebrahim Alkazi** Passed Away.

66. Padma Shri awardee and exponent of Mewati gharana **Mukund Lath passes away** in Jaipur.

IMPORTANT DAYS

67. World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated annually in the first week of August (from 1st of August to 7th of August) around 120 countries in the World. The global campaigning was first organized by the **WABA** (World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. The theme for the year 2020 is, “**Support Breast feeding for a healthier planet**”

68. The **World Sanskrit Day** is celebrated **on 3rd August 2020**.

69. August **6th of every year is observed as Hiroshima Day** to mark the world’s first atomic bombing on Hiroshima, Japan during World War II which instantly killed more than 70,000 people.

70. **National Handloom day** is celebrated on **August 7**, to create awareness about the Handloom Industry amongst the public at large and its contribution to socioeconomic development. The Union Government had declared 7th August as the first National Handloom Day in July 2015. The day chosen in order to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement, launched on August 7, 1905.

SPORTS

71. Formula One Champion **Mercedes Lewis Hamilton of** Britain has won British Grand Prix (GP) 2020 held at the Silverstone Circuit in Silverstone, United Kingdom (UK). By this win, he created record by winning the British Grand Prix title 7th time.

72. **13th** edition of Indian Premier League (**IPL**) to be rescheduled in the United Arab Emirates (**UAE**) from September 19 to November 10, 2020.