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CONTENTS

17	Economy	Leather sector has the potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years	15
18	International Relation/Social Issue	PM receives 'Global Goal Keeper Award' for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan	16
19	History and Culture	Leadership Matters: "Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in the Contemporary World" ECOSOC Chamber	17
20	Economy	CPGRAMS reforms in Department of Posts	17
21	Environment	Poshan Maah event	18
22	Polity & Governance	Voluntary Code of Ethics for Social Media Platforms	19
23	Security	BRAHMOS Supersonic Cruise Missile	19

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1 MINISTRY OF COAL ENTERS INTO ALLOTMENT AGREEMENT WITH WBPDCL

CONTEXT:

- The Central Government entered into an Allotment Agreement with the West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDCL) regarding the Deocha Pachami Dewanganj-Harinsingha coal block.

ABOUT

- In accordance with the provisions of Coal Block Allocation Rules, 2017, made under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957, the WBPDCL has been allocated the Deocha Pachami Dewanganj-Harinsingha coal block located in the State of West Bengal containing an area of 12.28 sq. km. with estimated reserves of 2102 Million Tonnes for generation of power.
- The project is slated to generate both direct and indirect employment in West Bengal considerably and also contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.
- The project envisages addressing the immediate as well as the forthcoming coal and powering requirements of the region.

2 ECGC INTRODUCES NIRVIK TO ENHANCE LOAN AVAILABILITY FOR EXPORTERS

CONTEXT

- Ministry of Commerce & Industry through Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) has introduced a new Export Credit Insurance Scheme (ECIS) called NIRVIK to enhance loan availability and ease the lending process.

ABOUT

- The scheme was announced by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to boost exports on 14th September 2019 in New Delhi.
- Under the scheme the gems, jewellery and diamond (GJD) sector borrowers with limit of more than Rs. 80 crore will have a higher premium rate as compared to non-GJD sector borrowers of this category due to the higher loss ratio.
- The ECGC cover provides additional comfort to banks as the credit rating of the borrower is enhanced to AA rated account.
- Enhanced cover will ensure that Foreign and Rupee export credit interest rates will be below 4%and 8% respectively for exporters.
- Under ECIS, insurance cover percentage has also been enhanced to 90% from the present average of 60% for both Principal and Interest.

3 MEASURES TO ENHANCE IPR ECOSYSTEM THROUGH LOWER FEES

CONTEXT:

- India is taking measures in strengthening its intellectual property ecosystem.

ABOUT

- Recognizing the importance of nurturing innovation and creativity in a knowledge economy, India is taking great strides in strengthening its intellectual property ecosystem.
- National IPR Policy adopted by the Government in 2016 has paved the way to further strengthen the IPR regime in the country
- Domestic filing for patents has increased from 22% in 2013-14 to 34% in 2018-19. Awareness programmes for IP are being conducted at schools, colleges, universities, R&D institutes and industry clusters.
- Multi-pronged strategies have been used to address the issue of pendency in IP applications, including manifold augmentation of manpower and streamlining of procedures. These strategies have paid rich dividends, and there has been a sharp jump in the disposal of IP applications:

4 STEEL IMPORT MONITORING SYSTEM

CONTEXT:

- Commerce and Industry Ministry Launches Steel Import Monitoring System

ABOUT

- The system has been developed in consultation with Ministry of Steel on the pattern of US Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis (SIMA) system.
- The SIMS will provide advance information about steel imports to Government and stake holders including, steel industry (producers), steel consumers (importers) to have effective policy interventions.
- In this system, the importers of specified steel products will register in advance on the web portal of SIMS providing necessary information. The registration will be online and automatic and no human intervention is required. The importer can apply for registration not earlier than 60th day and not later than 15th day before the expected date of arrival of import consignment. The automatic Registration Number thus granted shall remain valid for a period of 75 days. The information about the steel imports provided by the importers on the SIMS will be monitored by the Steel Ministry.
- Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) has been notified with effect from 1st November, 2019.The system shall require importers to submit advance information in an online system for import of 284 steel tariff lines at 8-digit HS code in order to obtain an automatic Registration Number by paying prescribed registration fee. Importer shall have to enter the Registration Number and expiry date of Registration in the Bill of Entry to enable Customs for clearance of consignment.

5 DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR ISSUANCE OF ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN

CONTEXT:

- Commerce and Industry Ministry Launches Common Digital Platform for Issuance of Electronic Certificates of Origin

ABOUT

- This platform will be a single access point for all exporters, for all FTAs/PTAs and for all agencies concerned.
- Certificate of Origin will be issued electronically which can be in paperless format if agreed to by the partner countries.

- Authorities of partner countries will be able to verify the authenticity of certificates from the website. Further, it provides administrative access to Department of Commerce for reporting and monitoring purposes. The benefits of this platform will be:

New Platform	Existing Process
The issuance process is electronic, paperless and transparent	Current process requires the exporter to visit the agency thrice for each certificate
Real-time tracking of FTA utilization at product level, country level etc.	Real-time tracking is not possible as data is fragmented across various agencies
Electronic Certificate of Origin issued	Physical Certificates of Origin issued
Possible to electronically exchange CoO with the partner countries	Electronic exchange of CoOs not possible
Reduces transaction cost and time for the exporters	Current processes take more time and cost

- Exporters may register on this platform and apply for CoOs to any of the designated agencies. EIC and its agencies are already on-boarded. Other agencies are in the process of registering on the platform. The on-boarding process is only for the purposes for payment integration so that the application fees may flow to the respective agencies.
- The platform will be made live for FTAs in a phased manner as per the concurrence of the concerned partner countries. Various territorial divisions have already informed their partner countries. We are scheduled to start with the India-Chile PTA.
- Further, once the partner countries agree to an electronic data exchange, the CoOs will be electronically sent to the Customs of the partner countries. After this, there will not be any need for physical CoO copy, saving transaction cost and time for the Indian exporters.
- India has 15 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)/ Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) with various partner countries under which Indian exporters avail reduced import tariffs in the destination country. In order to avail this benefit, the exporters must provide a preferential CoO. About 7 lakh certificates are issued annually by designated agencies. These verticals certify that exported goods are made in India. These certificates are issued by designated agencies in India after vetting of the rules of origin criteria as per the respective FTA/PTA. Some designated agencies for CoO issuance are EIC, Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Textile Committee and Tobacco Board.
- At present preferential Certificate of Origin is issued from the various notified agencies around the country through manual processes. A new common digital platform for issuance of electronic preferential CoOs has been conceptualized to address various challenges in the current process. The platform has been designed and developed by DGFT and Regional & Multilateral Trade Relations (RMTR) Division, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

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6 MAIDEN IN-RSN-RTN TRILATERAL EXERCISE COMMENCES

CONTEXT

- A maiden trilateral exercise, involving Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), Royal Thailand Navy (RTN) and Indian Navy (IN) took place in Sept. 2019

ABOUT

- The five-day-long exercise is aimed at bolstering the maritime inter-relationships amongst Singapore, Thailand and India, and to contribute significantly to enhancing the overall maritime security in the region. This would also strengthen the mutual confidence amongst three navies in terms of interoperability and development of a common understanding of procedures.

- Under the ambit of this exercise, RSN Tenacious, a Formidable-class guided missile stealth frigate and His Majesty's Thailand Ship (HTMS) Kraburi, a Guided Missile Frigate would be exercising with Indian Naval Ships Ranvir, a Guided Missile Destroyer, Kora, a missile corvette and Sukanya, an Offshore Patrol Vessel along with P8I Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance aircraft. During the harbour phase scheduled at Port Blair, professional exchanges, sports fixtures and cross deck familiarisation visits would be organised.

- The sea phase scheduled from 18 Sep to 20 Sep 19, a host of surface and air operations involving Gunnery, Force Protection Measures and Communication drills would be conducted providing experience gaining and learning from each other's best practices.

- Besides fostering co-operation, the maiden IN-RSN-RTN Trilateral exercise would provide an opportunity to participating navies to come together in a spirit of collaboration to nurture stronger ties.

7   MAITREE-2019

CONTEXT

- **India-Thailand joint military exercise Maitree 2019 Commences in Meghalaya**

ABOUT

- Exercise MAITREE is the annual bilateral joint exercise between Indian Army (IA) and Royal Thailand Army (RTA).

- The aim of exercise is joint training of troops in counter terrorism operations in both jungle terrain and urban scenario.

- Exercise MAITREE-2019 has been the face of long standing bilateral ties between India and Thailand since 2006.

- The 14 days exercise will be conducted under the framework of United Nations mandate. Both contingents will share their valuable experiences in the conduct of counter terrorism operations in form of lectures, drills, demonstrations and skill-at-arms with an aim to refine tactics, techniques and procedures.

8   INDIA'S COOLING ACTION PLAN

CONTEXT

- India became one of the first countries in the world to launch a comprehensive Cooling Action plan in 2019.

ABOUT

- The India's Cooling Action plan has a long term vision to address the cooling requirement across sectors such as residential and commercial buildings, cold-chain, refrigeration, transport and

industries. It lists out actions which can help reduce the cooling demand, which will also help in reducing both direct and indirect emissions.

- The importance of development of National Cooling Action Plans has been recognized by United Nations.

- It is an important policy initiative which has the potential to provide socio-economic and environmental benefits related to reduced refrigerant use, climate change mitigation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many countries are now involved in development of cooling action plans keeping in view the significant environmental benefits and the fulfillment of Sustainable Development Goals.

- The India Cooling Action seeks to (i) reduce cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25% by 2037-38, (ii) reduce refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by 2037-38, (iii) Reduce cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by 2037-38, (iv) recognize "cooling and related areas" as a thrust area of research under national S&T Programme, (v) training and certification of 100,000 servicing sector technicians by 2022-23, synergizing with Skill India Mission.

- ICAP recommends synergies with ongoing government programmes and schemes such as Housing for All, the Smart Cities Mission, Doubling Farmers Income and Skill India Mission, in order to maximize socio-economic co-benefits. It was informed that the Ministry has constituted the Steering Committee and Thematic Working Groups for providing the modalities for operationalization of the recommendations. They have already commenced their work.

- As part of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) phase out programme, India has proactively taken the challenge of complete phase out of HCFC 141 b, which is a chemical used by foam manufacturing enterprises by 1.1.2020. Towards meeting this compliance target, the Ozone Cell of the Ministry is providing technical and financial assistance to foam manufacturing enterprises along with UNDP.

- MoEFCC is implementing a project jointly for upskilling and certification of 100,000 Refrigeration and Air-conditioning service technicians with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) under Skill India Mission - Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). Training and certification of Refrigeration and Air-conditioning (RAC) service technicians will allow securing environmental benefits and livelihood enhancement for technicians. This sector is largely unorganized. Already 20000 service technicians have been upskilled and certified in the first phase. In addition 14, 000 technicians have also been trained under HPMP in collaboration with GIZ. The Minister also released Proceedings of Stakeholder consultation on Strengthening of certification System for RAC servicing technicians and a Special issue of newsletter "newsTRAC" –for technicians in Refrigeration and Air-conditioning (RAC) Sector on Social Security, Access to Finance and Occupational Safety of Servicing Technicians.

9 | ISRO AND DRDO INK MOUS FOR HUMAN SPACE MISSION

CONTEXT

- ISRO and DRDO Ink MoUs to provide technologies for human centric systems for Human Space Mission

ABOUT

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has joined hands with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for development of human centric systems for the Human Space Mission to demonstrate its human space flight capabilities.

- The MoUs were signed by Directors of Aerial Delivery Research & Development Establishment (ADRDE), Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL), Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL), Defence Laboratory (DL) Jodhpur, Centre for Fire, Explosive & Environment Safety (CFEES), Defence Institute of Physiology & Allied Sciences (DIPAS) and Institute of Nuclear

Medicine & Allied Sciences (INMAS) in the presence of Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO, Dr G Satheesh Reddy and Scientist & Director General (Life Sciences), Dr A K Singh.

- The technological capabilities existing in DRDO laboratories for defence applications will be customised to meet the requirements of the human space mission of ISRO. Some of the critical technologies to be provided by DRDO to ISRO include space food, space crew health monitoring and emergency survival kit, radiation measurement and protection, parachutes for safe recovery of crew module and others.

- DRDO is committed to provide all necessary support to ISRO for the human space flight and customisation of the required technologies has already been initiated to meet the stringent timelines. ISRO aims to demonstrate human spaceflight capability before the 75th anniversary of India's independence in 2022.

10 AIR-TO-AIR MISSILE ASTRA SUCCESSFULLY FLIGHT TESTED FROM SU-30 MKI

CONTEXT

- Air-to-Air missile Astra successfully flight tested from Su-30 MKI

ABOUT

- Air-to-Air missile, ASTRA, has been successfully flight tested on 16 September 2019 off the coast of Odisha.

- The missile was launched from Su-30 MKI as a part of User trials.

- The live aerial target was engaged accurately demonstrating the capability of first indigenous air-to-air missile.

- The mission profile was executed in a text book manner. Various Radars, Electro-Optical Tracking System (EOTS) and Sensors tracked the missile and confirmed its engagement with target.

11 CLIMATE SUMMIT FOR ENHANCED ACTION: A FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE FROM INDIA

CONTEXT

- Ministry of Finance brought out a Discussion Paper titled, "Climate Summit for Enhanced Action: A Financial Perspective from India".

ABOUT

- Climate change is one of the most compelling global challenges. The urgency for global climate action cannot be over-emphasized.

- India, as a responsible nation, has endeavoured to do its best of its abilities and national circumstances, for adaptation and mitigation actions, keeping in mind the imperatives of sustainable development and poverty eradication. But in order to respond to the worldwide call for stepping up climate actions, it will have to be matched with adequate provision of climate finance from developed countries to developing countries as mandated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and equity.

- Climate finance is a key pillar in enabling climate actions. The recent estimates for taking climate actions are laying out a case for trillions of Dollars and not billions, in new and additional financing. But the momentum of these flows- the present scope, scale and speed of climate finance, is insufficient and inadequate. Enhanced ambition and enhanced support should be at equal footing. So, a serious discourse on climate finance is undeniable to take climate actions effectively.

- Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India has brought out a Discussion Paper titled "Climate Summit for Enhanced Action: A Financial Perspective from India" which examines various issues on climate finance comprehensively

    - Finance in Climate Treaties,

    - Climate Finance Delivery-A Reality Check,

    - the 3 Essential 'S's of Climate Finance- Scope, Scale and Speed,

    - India's Climate Actions despite Economic Imperatives,

    - Emergence of New "Priorities",

    - "Ambitions" and "Externalities"– New Asks and Indian Response to Climate Emergency: Some Considerations.

- The Discussion Paper makes an analysis of the post Paris Agreement developments and indicates that more actions need to be taken to meet objectives of the Agreement, which in turn depends on the momentum of international climate finance, in terms of new and additional climate finance, technological and capacity building support. In essence, the 3 essential "S" s of climate finance has not been clearly translated into reality.

- India's Nationally Determined Contribution is on a "best effort" basis, keeping in mind the developmental imperatives of the country. So, finance holds a key for all its actions. At this juncture, the provision of technology and finance is uncertain; India can only aspire to implement the already promised climate actions and do equally well or better in comparison to economies with similar levels of development.]

12 | SCORPENE SUBMARINE "KHANDERI"

CONTEXT

- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited delivers second Scorpene submarine "KHANDERI" to Indian Navy

ABOUT

- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) called 'Ship Builder to the Nation', is one of India's leading Defence public sector undertaking shipyards under the Ministry of Defence continuing their service to the nation with ''Make in India" programme.

- They delivered the second Scorpene submarine 'KHANDERI' to the Indian Navy
- The submarine would soon be commissioned into the Indian Navy. It is a milestone event for MDL.
- The submarine 'KHANDERI' is named after the wide snouted Saw fish, a deadly sea predator of the great Indian Ocean.
- The first Submarine Khanderi was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 06th December 1968 and decommissioned on 18th October 1989 after more than 20 years of yeoman service to the nation. In true nautical tradition, she will now be 'reincarnated' by MDL to guard the vast maritime area of our nation.
- Building of the Scorpene was indeed a challenge for MDL, as the complexity of the simplest of tasks increased exponentially due to all work having to be done in the most congested of spaces. This complexity was further aggravated by the stringent tolerances required to be achieved. However, all of these challenges were accepted head-on and successfully overcome by MDL, without any compromise in quality whatsoever.
- The technology utilised in the Scorpene has ensured superior features of the submarine.
- The Scorpene class of submarines can undertake multifarious tasks typically undertaken by any modern submarine which include anti-surface as well as anti-submarine warfare.
- With the delivery of Khanderi, India further cements its position as a submarine building nation and MDL has lived up to its reputation as one of the India's leading shipyards with a capacity to meet requirements of the Indian Navy.
- The constructions of third Scorpene at MDL, KARANJ, was started in 2018, and is currently undergoing the rigorous phase of sea trials. The fourth Scorpene, VELA was recently launched in May 2019, and is being prepared for sea trials, whilst the remaining two submarines, VAGIR and VAGSHEER, are in various stages of outfitting. The Scorpene project would not have been achieved up to the current progress without the unconditional support and active encouragement of the Department of Defence Production (MoD).
- It is also pertinent to mention that the two SSK submarines built by MDL in 1992 and 1994 are still serving Indian Navy, after more than 25 years. This is testimony to our skill and capability of MDL.
- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited also achieved expertise in submarine refits by successfully executing the medium refit-cum-upgradation of all the four SSK class submarines of the Indian Navy. It is presently carrying out the medium refit and Life Certification of INS Shishumar, the first SSK submarine.
- MDL has always been in the forefront of the nation's progressive indigenous warship building programme. In fact, with the construction of the Leander and Godavari class frigates, Khukri class Corvettes, Missile Boats, Delhi and Kolkata class Destroyers, Shivalik class Stealth Frigates, the SSK submarines and the first Scorpene submarine under its belt, the history of modern day MDL almost maps the history of indigenous warship building in India.
- MDL's contribution to national security and nation building continues with the P-15B Visakhapatnam class Destroyers and the P-17A class Stealth Frigates.
- Recognising the challenges of the future well in time, MDL has completed an extensive mordernisation programme, at the end of which, today it is building eight Warships, SIX Submarines, in its yard, which have four drydocks, three slipways, two Wet Basins and more than sixty thousand square metres of work shop area.
- Leveraging the experience, the transfer-of-technology of the Scorpene project, and with its enhanced and upgraded infrastructure, MDL is ready for undertaking construction of future submarines projects.

13 NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR TECHNOLOGY (NEAT) SCHEME

CONTEXT

- Ministry of HRD announces National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) Scheme for better learning outcomes in Higher Education

ABOUT

- Ministry of Human Resource Development has announced a new PPP Scheme, National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) for using technology for better learning outcomes in Higher Education.

- The objective is to use Artificial Intelligence to make learning more personalised and customised as per the requirements of the learner.

- This requires development of technologies in Adaptive Learning to address the diversity of learners. There are a number of start-up companies developing this and MHRD would like to recognise such efforts and bring them under a common platform so that learners can access it easily. Educating the youth is a National effort and MHRD proposes to create a National Alliance with such technology developing EdTech Companies through a PPP model.

- MHRD would act as a facilitator to ensure that the solutions are freely available to a large number of economically backward students. MHRD would create and maintain a National NEAT platform that would provide one-stop access to these technological solutions. EdTech companies would be responsible for developing solutions and manage registration of learners through the NEAT portal. They would be free to charge fees as per their policy. As their contribution towards the National cause, they would have to offer free coupons to the extent of 25% of the total registrations for their solution through NEAT portal. MHRD would distribute the free coupons for learning to the most socially/economically backward students.

- AICTE would be the implementing agency for NEAT programme. The scheme shall be administered under the guidance of an Apex Committee constituted by MHRD. Independent Expert Committees would be constituted for evaluating and selecting the EdTech solutions. MoUs will be signed with the shortlisted EdTech companies. Awareness programs would be taken up by MHRD to create awareness of the NEAT solutions to teachers and students.

14 EMERGENCY RESPONSE SUPPORT SYSTEM (ERSS- DIAL 112), 'E-BEAT BOOK' SYSTEM AND 'E-SAATHI' APP

CONTEXT

- Shri Amit Shah launches Emergency Response Support System (ERSS- Dial 112), 'E-Beat Book' System and 'E-Saathi' App

ABOUT

- Union Home Minister launched three citizen centric services in Chandigarh.

- The services include the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS - Dial 112), 'E-Beat Book' System and the 'E-Saathi App'.

- The beat officer system has been the cornerstone of the Indian Policing system for ages and through such Citizen Centric Services, a SMART Police force can be built in the country.

- ERSS is one of the key projects of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs under Nirbhaya Fund. It has been designed to play a pivotal role in mitigation or preventing escalation of crime, especially

against women and children. ERSS provides a single emergency number (112), computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress. Citizens can send their emergency information through call, sms, email and through the 112 India mobile app.

- The 'Dial 112' emergency response service is an initiative to strengthen proactive community policing that would end confusion amongst distress callers, who at times end up dialling 100 in fire or medical emergency cases. Till now, there were more than 20 numbers that were running for the help of public for various emergency situations, which were creating confusion to the distress callers. But after starting this service, public will not face these problems. In future, the Emergency Number for Road Accidents (1073),Women Helpline (1091, 181), Child Help Line (1098), including other Helpline services would be added under the 112 unified emergency response number.

- The 'E-Beat Book' is a web and mobile based application which will ease the collection, updation and analysis of the information related to crime and criminals in a real time. Chandigarh has been divided in 54 divisions. In each division, there is one 'Atal Sehbhagita Kendra'that is under the supervision of a Beat Officer, having an Android Phone to the use the app. The E-Beat Book would be linked with Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS), which would help in a real time updation of crime/criminal data. The citizen can directly approach the 'Atal Sehbhagita Kendra' for redressal of their grievances and can render their suggestions too.

- The 'E-Saathi' App would help the general public, including senior citizens, to remain in touch with the police and also give suggestions to facilitate participative community policing ('Your Police at Your Doorstep' initiative). The beat officer would be able to provide services like passport verification, tenant verification, servant verification, character certification etc. at a click of a button through the app, without the people needing to visit the police station. With this initiative, on one hand, where the beat officer would become more efficient in his/her working, this would make police-people communication a two-way process, on the other.

- These valuable public services would effectively reduce the response time of police to address the distress calls of the public and strengthen the police-public interface endeavour of community policing.

15 SWACHH SURVEKSHAN – 2020

CONTEXT

- All Areas Entrusted With Functions of Urban Planning Included in Swachh Survekshan – 2020

ABOUT

- All areas, which are notified Planning/ Special Area Development Authority/ Urban Development Authority or any such Authority under State/Central legislations, which is entrusted with the functions of urban planning, regulations and development function akin to Statutory Urban local Bodies for all purposes including sanitation have been included in Swachh Survekshan - 2020.

- Example for such bodies could be Industrial Estate Townships like Noida, Greater Noida, Jamshedpur or Bokaro Steel City, Port Area Development Authority, SADA for specific purpose etc. Only such Urban Development Authority will be included in the category where there is no statutory urban local body e.g. Amravati Development Authority. A separate category of such cities has been created for evaluation under Swachh Survekshan-2020.

- The parameters for evaluation of these townships which do not have statutory urban local body will remain the same as applicable to ULBs or Cantonment Boards with some modifications. A separate National Workshop for these Urban Townships will be organized in the second week of October to explain the methodology of Swachh Survekshan - 2020 for this category.

- The Government has directed all concerned authorities of such Townships to sensitize them about their coverage in Swachh Survekshan – 2020 and to appoint a Nodal Officer for each such Township for this purpose.

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is implementing Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Urban with the goal to make the country clean and open defecation free. To monitor the progress of this mission, Swachh Survekshan - an annual cleanliness survey was initiated in 2016 for evaluating 73 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and it has now been scaled up to all 4,378 ULBs and all Cantonment Boards ofIndia. The Swachh Survekshan has proved to be an effective monitoring and governance tool in ascertaining the progress made by the cities towards cleanliness and citizen engagement.

16 KARGIL TO KOHIMA (K2K) ULTRA MARATHON - "GLORY RUN" CONTEXT

CONTEXT

- Kargil to Kohima (K2K) Ultra-Marathon- "Glory Run" was flagged off from Kargil War Memorial, Drass in J&K.

ABOUT

- To commemorate 20th year of Kargil Victory and to live up to the true tradition and motto of IAF i.e. "Touch the Sky with Glory", a unique expedition Kargil to Kohima (K2K) Ultra-Marathon- "Glory Run" is being undertaken by IAF from Kargil War Memorial, Drass (J&K) to Kohima War Cemetery, Kohima (Nagaland).
- Kohima and Kargil are the two forward most outposts of India in the East and in the North where two of the fiercest battles were fought in 1944 and 1999 respectively.
- In this unique tryst, a team of 25 Air Warriors will cover a distance of more than 4500 Km in 45 days by running an average of 100 Km per day.
- The aim of the expedition is to promote awareness for Pedestrian Safety and recently launched Fit India Movement by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and also to pay tribute to the brave hearts who have made the supreme sacrifice for our motherland.
- The expedition is led by Squadron Leader Suresh Razdan who is a Su-30 aircraft pilot. The.
- IAF has been promoting adventure activities for its personnel and has achieved feats at national and international level. With the nucleus of expertise in various adventure disciplines, IAF has been attempting unique tryst to showcase and instill qualities of camaraderie, team spirit and courage which are the very foundation of a fighting force.

17 LEATHER SECTOR HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CREATE 2 MILLION JOBS IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS

CONTEXT

- Minister, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship said that Leather sector has the potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years

ABOUT

- Minister, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship distributes certificates to RPL trainees under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- More than 2 million candidates across the country have received RPL certification under the PMKVY (20162020)
- Launch of Mochi Swabhimaan Initiative – a nationwide effort in which LSSC will support the cobbler community who provide leather-based services, with CSR funds ensuring they work in a dignified manner.

- Leather Sector is an Export driven sector and has the potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years. The Government of India had recently announced in the Budget of 2019 that export duty be rationalized on raw and semi-finished leather increasing opportunities in the sector.

- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship works closely with the LSSC under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) which encourages skill development to boost employability and productivity of youth by incentivizing skill training.

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), under PMKVY, certifies skills acquired informally and drives youth to venture into aspirational job roles. For the industry, formalizing the skills of employees will give a clear picture about the available skill sets, skill gaps and the need for upgradation to achieve desirable quality and productivity benchmarks. The outstanding candidates, certified under RPL, were given Best in Class Employer Scheme and HRD Scheme certificates during the ceremony.

- As of last week, more than 2 million candidates across the country have received RPL under the PMKVY (2016-20).

- Globally, India is the second largest producer of leather garments and footwear and with this phenomenal market potential, the sector seems promising in the years to come.

- When we look back at our past, India has always had a rich heritage of leather crafts like footwear and accessories. These were prepared by highly skilled craftsmen from various clusters like Agra, Kanpur, Ambur and other regions. Today, these skills need to be preserved and people should be encouraged to make them a means of sustainable livelihood.

- The Government of India has allowed 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector and rationalized export duty on raw and semi-finished leather. The sector employees over 2.5 million people and has potential to create 2 million jobs in the next 5 years.

- India accounts for about 13% of the world's leather production. The leather and leather products industry contribute less than 1% to India's GDP and Footwear industry contributes about 2% to India's GDP. Indian leather industry has huge potential for exports. It can reach USD 9.0 billion by 2020, from the present level of USD 5.85 billion. India has trade agreements with Japan, Korea, ASEAN, Chile etc., and is negotiating Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with European Union, Australia etc.

- The Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC) is an NSDC approved non-profit organization dedicated to meet the demand for skilled workforce in the leather industry in India. The council, in partnership with CLE, caters to the training and employment needs of various sub-sectors in the leather industry. Set up in 2012, LSSC works with a host of members from the industry, government organizations, the academia, the training partners and the assessment partners.

18 PM RECEIVES 'GLOBAL GOAL KEEPER AWARD' FOR SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN

CONTEXT

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi received the 'Global Goalkeeper' Award by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, on 24 September 2019.

ABOUT

- The award ceremony took place on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session in New York.

- Prime Minister dedicated the award to those Indians who transformed the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan into a mass movement and made it a part of their daily lives.

- India is making remarkable progress in fulfilling Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a Swachh Bharat.

- More than 11 crore toilets were constructed. This mission has benefitted the poor and women of

the country the most. In addition to improving sanitation and health, building of 11 crore toilets has also boosted economic activity in villages.

- On improving global sanitation coverage, India is ready to share its expertise and experiences with other nations, so that there can be collective effort towards increasing sanitation coverage.

19 LEADERSHIP MATTERS: "RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD" ECOSOC CHAMBER

CONTEXT

- To commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi – a global icon of peace and non-violence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted a high-level event on the sidelines of the 74th UNGA in the ECOSOC Chamber of the UN Headquarters.

ABOUT

- The event was graced by H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary General of the UN, H.E. Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, H.E. Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica and H.E. Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

- Gandhi Solar Park at the UN Headquarters (contributed by Government of India to the UN), the Gandhi Peace Garden at State University of New York College at Old Westbury were inaugurated. The special commemorative edition of the Gandhi@150 Postage Stamps brought out by the UN Postal Administration was unveiled.

- Contributions of Mahatma Gandhi to the cause of greater human freedom in the 20th century; emphasis on the welfare of all (Sarvodaya); championing of the downtrodden (Antyodaya); and prescient concern for environmental sustainability were highlighted.

- Mahatma Gandhi's faith in collective will, shared destiny, moral purpose, people's movements and personal responsibility are extremely germane to contemporary times.

- The violent conflict, terrorism, economic inequalities, socio-economic deprivation, pandemics and the looming existential threat of climate change are impacting people, states and societies. Leadership is crucial to addressing any and every one of these issues and the values promoted by Gandhi serve as moral compass for enlightened leadership.

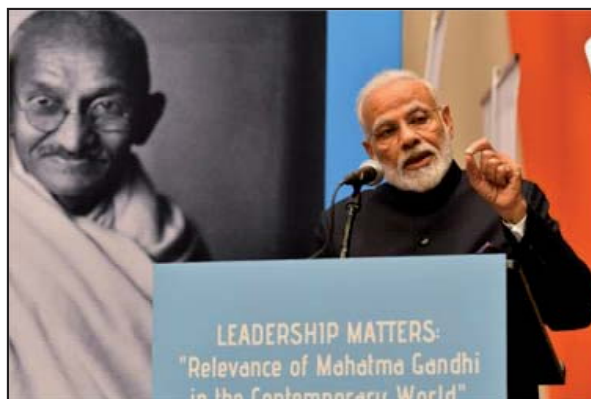## 20 CPGRAMS REFORMS IN DEPARTMENT OF POSTS

CONTEXT

- The MoS (DoP&T) Dr. Jitendra Singh launched CPGRAMS reforms in Department of Posts.

ABOUT

- Reforms will lead to reduction in grievance disposal time and improved quality of grievance redressal

- "Pragati" (Pro Active Governance and Timely Implementation), another grievance redressal method, reviews meetings, where the Prime Minister himself reviews the status of public grievances.

- The telephonic calls are made by the senior officers of the Department to the complainants to take their feedback about their satisfaction level. The decision of the Government to post young IAS officers as Assistant Secretaries in the Central Ministries/departments for a period of 3 months

has proved to be beneficial for the young recruits to understand the functioning the Government in the very beginning of their careers.

- The decision of the Government to amend Rule 54 of the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, the Minister said that this decision shows the human angle of the Government and reflects its sensitivity towards the citizens.

- Making public service delivery system transparent has been the priority of the Government. The public grievances mechanism is important for the departments with large public interface. keeping in mind the mammoth operations of the Department of Posts, some complaints are inevitable. Till now top-down approach towards grievance redressal was followed and now with the new version of CPGRAMS, the complainant has been empowered. This will also save the processing time by about 7-10 days.

- The CPGRAMS reforms marks a major step of Government for systemic improvement in the CPGRAMS. The CPGRAMS 7.0 version is proposed to be replicated in the rest of the Central ministries in the coming months.

- In new version 7.0, there are 540 subordinate units, against 67 units under 6.0 version. Under new version, there will be almost no manual intervention with mapping of 1.5 lakh post offices.

21 | POSHAN MAAH EVENT

CONTEXT

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) organized Poshan Maah event in New Delhi.

ABOUT

- The Ministry of WCD, as part of the POSHAN maah, reached out to all employees and visitors to create awareness regarding simple solutions to Anaemia and Diarrhoea.

- Ministry of WCD inaugurated the Test, Treat and Talk (T 3) Anaemia and Defeat Diarrhoea (D 2) camp in New Delhi.

- The Anaemia, Test, Treat and Talk will give the haemoglobin status and also offer counselling services on the prevention and control of Anaemia. The use of ORS and zinc tablets for Diarrhoea control and counselling services on the prevention and control of Diarrhoea are being offered at the camp.

- The month of September is celebrated and observed as Rashtriya POSHAN maah. The activities in the POSHAN maah are focussed on Social Behavioural Change and Counselling (SBCC). The broad themes are: antenatal care, optimal breastfeeding (early and exclusive), complementary feeding, anaemia, growth monitoring, girls' education, diet, right age of marriage, hygiene, and sanitation, eating healthy and food fortification.

- The Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition or POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission, is Government of India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

22 | VOLUNTARY CODE OF ETHICS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

CONTEXT

- Election Commission directed Voluntary Code of Ethics for Social Media Platforms during simultaneous elections in Maharashtra and Haryana.

ABOUT

- Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) on behalf of its members has agreed to observe the "Voluntary Code of Ethics" during all future elections including the ongoing General Elections to the Haryana & Maharashtra legislative assemblies and various bye elections being held simultaneously.

- IAMAI and social media platforms Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Google, Sharechat and TikTok had presented and observed this "Voluntary Code of Ethics" during the General Election to 17thLok Sabha 2019.

- IAMAI has assured the Commission that the platforms will cooperate in ensuring the conduct of free and fair elections.

- As a result of Commission's vigorous persuasion, all the major social media platforms and IAMAI came together and mutually devised this "Voluntary Code of Ethics" for the General Elections 2019. This came into immediate effect from the day it was presented to the Commission on 20th March, 2019. During the election period, social media platforms took action on 909 violative cases, reported by the ECI.

- The highlighted features of "Voluntary Code of Ethics" are as follows:

  - Social Media platforms will voluntarily undertake information, education and communication campaigns to build awareness including electoral laws and other related instructions.

  - Social Media platforms have created a high priority dedicated grievance redressal channel for taking expeditions action on the cases reported by the ECI.

  - Social Media Platforms and ECI have developed a notification mechanism by this ECI can notify the relevant platforms of potential violations of Section 126 of the R.P. Act, 1951 and other electoral laws.

  - Platforms will ensure that all political advertisements on their platforms are pre-certified from the Media Certification and Monitoring Committees as per the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court.

  - Participating platforms are committed to facilitate transparency in paid political advertisements, including utilising their pre-existing labels/disclosure technology for such advertisements.

23 | BRAHMOS SUPERSONIC CRUISE MISSILE

CONTEXT

- BRAHMOS Supersonic Cruise Missile, with major indigenous systems, successfully test-fired

ABOUT

- BRAHMOS supersonic cruise missile featuring Indian propulsion system, airframe, power supply and other major indigenous components, was successfully test fired from ITR, Chandipur in Odisha.

- The missile was successfully test-fired for its full range of 290-km during the launch jointly conducted by DRDO and BrahMos Aerospace.

- With this successful mission, the indigenous content in the formidable weapon has reached a high

value, thus bolstering India's defence indigenisation and the flagship 'Make in India' programme.

- The successful flight test is a landmark achievement in enhancing India's "Make in India" capabilities.

- Jointly developed by India and Russia, the versatile BRAHMOS has been operationalised in the Indian Armed Forces with all the three services.

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