

Week 2 Current Affairs Update

8th - 14th August 2020

EVENTS

NATIONAL

SPORTS

INDIA TO HOST ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2021



DATE: 8th August 2020

The International Cricket Council on August 7, 2020 announced that the postponed ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2020 will now be held in Australia in 2022.

Key highlights:

- The T20 World Cup 2021, which was scheduled in India, will take place as planned.
- The format of the T20 World Cup 2021 will remain same as the 2020 World Cup edition, which was supposed to be held in Australia in October-November 2020.
- All the teams who qualified for the 2020 event will now participate in the 2021 edition in India.
- A new qualification process will be initiated for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 in Australia.

TRANSPORT

DELHI ELECTRIC VEHICLE POLICY LAUNCHED



DATE: 9th August 2020

Key highlights:

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on August 7 launched the 'Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy' under which the state government will waive road tax and registration fee and will provide an incentive of up to Rs. 1.5 lakh for new cars in the capital.
- The policy has two objectives. First, to boost Delhi's economy after the coronavirus pandemic. Second, to significantly reduce the pollution level and contribute to sustainable development.
- The policy would help generate jobs in large numbers – driving, selling, financing, charging points, etc.
- The Delhi government will introduce financial incentives for people buying e-vehicles. For two-wheelers, auto-rickshaws, e-rickshaws and freight vehicles, there will be incentives up to Rs 30,000 and for cars, it will up to Rs 150,000. "These incentives are over and above already existing incentives for e-vehicles under the central government.
- The Delhi government will also provide a scrapping incentive, the first in the country, for replacing the fuel-based vehicle with e-vehicle.
- Interest on loans for the purchase of e-vehicles for commercial activities will be waived and e-vehicles will be exempted from registration fees and road tax.

AGRICULTURE

PM RELEASES FINANCING FACILITY UNDER KISAN SAMRIDHI YOJANA



DATE: 10th August 2020

On 9th August, PM Narendra Modi launched a financing facility of Rs. 1 lakh crores under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund for agri-startups, entrepreneurs, farmer groups, agri-tech players for the post-harvest management and nurturing farm assets. Under the Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, Prime Minister transferred Rs. 17,000 crores into the bank accounts of 8.5 crores farmers. The amount went straight to farmers without any middlemen and commission.

Key highlights:

- The central government released the sixth instalment of Rs. 17,100 crores to more than 8.55 crores farmer-beneficiaries under the scheme.
- Under the scheme, around Rs. 1 lakh crores will be sanctioned under the financing facility in partnership with the multiple lending institutions as loans to farmer groups, primary agri-credit societies, agri-entrepreneurs, farmer producer organisations (FPOs), agri-tech players and startups.
- 11 of the 12 public sector banks have already signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MoU) with the Agriculture Ministry.
- Loans will be laid out in four years starting with the sanction of Rs. 10,000 crores in the current year and Rs. 30,000 crores each in the next financial years.
- The facility of repayment will vary, subject to a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years.
- In the case of farmer producer organisations, credit guarantee can be benefited from the facility created under the FPO promotion scheme, which is of the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation, and Farmers Welfare.

ICAR'S DATA RECOVERY CENTRE 'KRISHIMEGH' LAUNCHED



Date: 12th August 2020

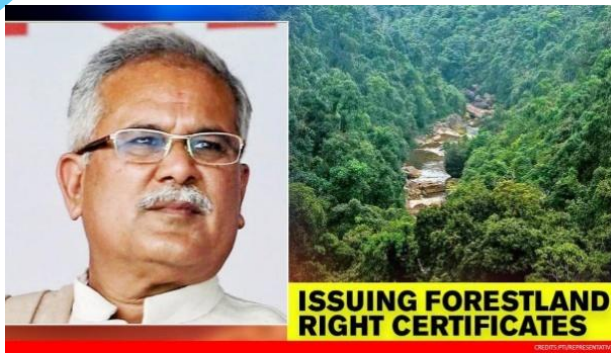
The Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the data recovery centre of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), named KrishiMegh.

Key highlights:

- It aims at protecting the data of the government's premier research body.
- The data recovery centre-Krishi Megh has been set up at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), in Hyderabad.
- Currently, ICAR's main data centre is at the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), in National Capital Delhi.
- Krishi Megh, the data recovery centre of ICAR has been set up under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP), which is funded by both the World Bank and the Indian government.

SOCIAL

CHHATTISGARH TO PROVIDE FORESTLAND RIGHT CERTIFICATES



DATE: 10th August 2020

Chhattisgarh government has decided to provide urban forestland under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. On the occasion of International Day of World's Indigenous People, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel commenced the distribution of forestland right certificates by giving away the certificates to four beneficiaries of via video conferencing.

Key Highlights:

- With the handing over of the rights, Chhattisgarh became the first state in the country to provide such an entitlement.
- The process has begun with Jagdalpur Municipal Corporation (JMC) in Bastar providing the certificates to tribal residents.
- For providing rights of urban forestlands, the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 and the guidelines of the Central government issued in 2015 were followed by the state government.
- There are about 4,500 tribals and other traditional forest-dwellers, who have applied for the rights over urban forestlands.

ALL 9 TRIBAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS MUSEUMS TO BE READY BY END OF 2022



Ministry of Tribal
Affairs

Date: 13th August 2020

The Tribal Affairs Ministry on August 11 announced that all the 9 museums that are dedicated to the tribal freedom fighters will be ready by the end of the year 2022.

Key highlights:

- As per the statement released by the ministry, two of the nine museums sanctioned for the tribal freedom fighters are already nearing completion and the rest of them are at the different stages of progress.
- The announcement regarding setting up the tribal freedom fighters museum was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day Speech in 2016. The largest of these museums have been built in Rajpipla in Gujarat at a cost of Rs. 102.55 crores.
- As per the directions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, all the museums will have strong usage of technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), 3D/7D holographic projections, etc.

TRANSPARENT TAXATION-HONORING THE HONEST PLATFORM



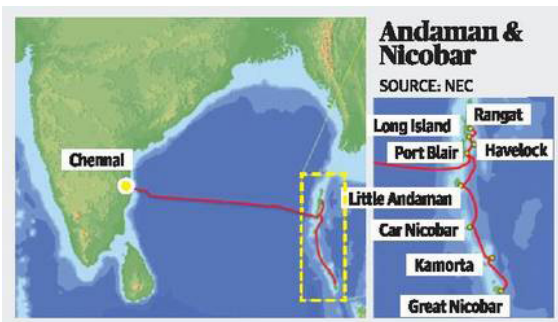
Date: 13th August 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched ‘Transparent Taxation-Honoring the Honest’ platform on August 13, 2020.

Key highlights:

- The platform includes three major reforms - faceless assessment, faceless appeal and taxpayers’ charter. While the faceless assessment and taxpayers’ charter reforms have been brought into effect from today itself, faceless appeal service will be available from September 25.
- The platform aiming to carry forward the journey of direct tax reforms was launched through a video conference. The Prime Minister highlighted that since the past six months, it has been their focus to honour the honest.
- The event saw participation from various chambers of commerce, trade associations, chartered accountants’ associations and “eminent” taxpayers. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was also present on the occasion along with Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur.

PM INAUGURATES SUBMARINE OPTICAL FIBRE CABLE CONNECTING CHENNAI, PORT BLAIR



Date: 11th August

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 2,313-km long Chennai-Port Blair submarine optical fibre internet connectivity project, built at a cost of Rs 1,224 crore. The project, funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), was started late in 2018, and aimed to connect seven island in the Andaman group, apart from the capital Port Blair, with high speed broadband.

Key highlights:

- Internet connectivity service has already been started in major chunk of the seven Andaman & Nicobar Island. Mobile and fast internet connectivity, for which India is world famous, will now also be available to these islands.
- The seven islands, apart from capital Port Blair, which will be connected are Swaraj Dweep (formerly Havlock Island), Long island, Rangat, Little Andaman, Kamorta, Car Nicobar and Greater Nicobar.
- To further improve the connectivity of the islands to the mainland, other projects such as increasing the capacity of Port Blair airport, apart from process of making new airports at Car Nicobar, Campbell Bay and Diglipur was also underway.

ECONOMY

ONLINE DASHBOARD OF NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE LAUNCHED

The advertisement features the logos of the Department of Economic Affairs, Invest India, and the India Investment Grid. It highlights the launch of the National Infrastructure Pipeline dashboard, which is available exclusively on the India Investment Grid. Key statistics shown are 6,800+ projects and a total project cost of USD 1,755.8 Bn. A woman's portrait is featured on the right side of the ad. A call to action at the bottom says 'Visit the link in the caption to learn more'. The AffairsCloud logo is in the bottom right corner.

Date: 11th August 2020

Union Finance Minister on August 10 launched an online dashboard of National Infrastructure Pipeline. The Dashboard will showcase over 6,800 projects online.

Key highlights:

- The Online dashboard of NIP is to be hosted on the India Investment Grid (IIG), which is a dynamic and interactive online platform that showcases real-time and updated investment opportunities in India.
- As per the Ministry of Finance, the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) project database will help in providing real-time updates for domestic and foreign investors in the infrastructure projects.

SCIENCE & TECH

GOOGLE PEOPLE CARDS LAUNCHED IN INDIA



Date: 13th August 2020

Google has launched its new “People Cards” feature in India that let users create their virtual visiting card and build their public profile for search engine.

Key highlights:

- The Google People Cards feature has been in a testing phase for a few years in India and has finally been launched now.
- Users just need to have a Google Account and provide their mobile number to create their people card on Google Search.
- Here we have shared the complete details of the People Cards including what it means for people in India, how to use it to create Virtual Visiting Card and others.
- For now, the people cards feature is available only in India for mobile users. People can create their public profiles using their mobile devices. The feature is available in English language only.

AWARDS & HONOURS

ITBP AWARDS 294 TROOPS FOR BRAVERY DURING INDIA-CHINA STANDOFF



Date: 14th August 2020

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has awarded 294 of its troops with the Director General (DG) commendation for displaying bravery during the recent skirmishes with Chinese troops in Ladakh.

Key highlights:

- This was announced by the border force on August 14, 2020.
- The ITBP added saying that recommendations have also been sent to the government for awarding gallantry medals to 21 troops posted in the area.
- The ITBP in its first official account of the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops revealed how its troops not only effectively used the shield to protect themselves but also responded fiercely to advancing Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops and brought the situation under control.

DEFENCE

INDIAN NAVY TO PROCURE 10 SHIP-BASED DRONES



Date: 14th August 2020

Indian Navy has pushed forward a proposal to urgently acquire 10 ship-borne drones that will help the force keep a close eye on the activities of the adversaries.

Key highlights:

- The procurement order is aimed at boosting the surveillance capabilities of the Indian Navy against enemy warships operating in the Indian Ocean Region.

- The proposal has been fast-tracked by the Indian Navy before the Defence Ministry. The proposal comprises plans to procure 10 naval ship-based Unmanned Aerial Systems for over Rs 1,240 crores.
- The Indian Navy is also working on a project to acquire ‘Sea Guardian Drones’ from the United States to expand its surveillance capabilities.
- The Navy is also getting its existing drones upgraded as a part of an upgrade programme that was recently implemented after talks with the Union Defence Ministry.

INTERNATIONAL

HEALTHCARE

CHINA LAUNCHES PHASE 3 TRIAL OF COVID-19 VACCINE



Date: 11th August 2020

Sinovac Biotech Ltd. of China has launched a phase 3 human trial of COVID-19 vaccine candidate on August 11, 2020, which will involve as many as 1,620 patients in Indonesia.

Key highlights:

- Sinovac has been developing the vaccine with Indonesian state-owned peer Bio-Farma.
- Sinovac also released the details on August 10 from phase 2 study in which it mentioned that the COVID-19 vaccine candidate has appeared to be safe and has induced detectable antibody-based immune responses in the patients.
- The candidate, known as CoronaVac, is among a few potential vaccines that have entered late-stage trials for a large-scale study to gather proof of efficacy for regulatory approval.
- CoronaVac is already undergoing a late-stage trial in Brazil and Sinovac expects to also test it in Bangladesh.

- Sinovac's Indonesia trial comes as Southeast Asia's most populous country grapples with spiking infection numbers, with over 127,000 cases recorded as of Tuesday. The trial has so far recruited 1,215 people and will last six months.

RUSSIA ANNOUNCES FIRST CORONAVIRUS VACCINE



Date: 12th August 2020

Russia has launched the world's first COVID-19 vaccine, making it the first country to successfully register the vaccine.

Key highlights:

- The news of Russia registering its first vaccine against the virus was announced earlier on August 8 by Oleg Gridnev, Deputy Health Minister.
- The vaccine to be launched by Russia has been developed jointly by the Russian Defence Ministry and the Gamaleya Research Institute.
- Russia will also begin producing the vaccine soon and has plans for a massive, country-wide vaccine drive.

ISRAEL SHARES AI-BASED TECHNOLOGY, EQUIPMENT WITH AIIMS



Date: 12th August 2020

Israel government has provided state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence-based technologies as well as high-end equipment to AIIMS to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The help of technology is a part of India-Israel cooperation to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key highlights:

- Dr. Ron Malka, Israeli Ambassador to India formally handed over the technology solutions and high-end equipment to Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director of AIIMS.

- The event took place in the presence of Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Sanjay Bhattacharya.
- There is also an app that can be installed on any mobile of COVID-19 staff, it will make the work of hospital staff inside the departments much more effective and easier.
- Innovative products that are designed to give contact-free access to patient's vitals like the respiratory rate and heart rate.
- It will also improve the patient's safety with continuous and contact-free monitoring.

SPORTS

FIFA WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS IN ASIA RESCHEDULED TO 2021



Date: 12th August 2020

FIFA World Cup 2022 qualifiers in Asia have been rescheduled to 2021.

Key highlights:

- FIFA and the Asian Confederation (AFC) jointly decided to reschedule the upcoming qualifying matches for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- The qualification matches were originally scheduled to take place during the international match windows in October and November 2020. The decision has been taken to protect the health and safety of all participants.

SOCIAL

INDIA EXTENDS ASSISTANCE OF USD 1 MILLION TO ANTIGUA, BARBUDA TO COMBAT COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Date: 13th August 2020

The Indian government has extended an assistance of USD 1 million to Antigua and Barbuda to combat the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The provided assistance is aimed at improving health capacities and infrastructure in the Caribbean country.

Key highlights:

- As per the Indian High Commission to Guyana, the assistance from India will be used for improving health infrastructure and for the procurement of life-saving medical supplies and equipment such as ventilators.
- The same kind of assistance, i.e. USD 1 million, has also been offered to each Caribbean (CARICOM) country. CARICOM is a group of twenty developing countries in the Caribbean region.
- Under the provided assistance, full cover goggles, ventilators, face shields, disposable impervious gowns, disposable masks, and examination gloves have been facilitated and the medical supplies have arrived at St. John's.

INDIA TO PROVIDE USD 500 MILLION ASSISTANCE TO MALDIVES



Date: 13th August 2020

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on August 13, 2020 announced that the Indian government will fund the implementation of major connectivity project in the Maldives with USD 400 million line of credit and USD 100 million grant.

Key highlights:

- As per the officials, the 6.7 km Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives, which will connect Male with three neighbouring islands- Gulhifahu, Villingili, and Thilafushi.
- President of Maldives, Ibrahim Mohammad had sought India's assistance for GMCP during his meeting with S Jaishankar in September 2019. This step was also seen as a key election promise of the ruling MDP (Maldivian Democratic Party) in the Maldives.
- External Affairs Minister also announced a start of regular cargo ferry service between India and Maldives for boosting trade and commerce between the two countries.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

US RELAXES H-1B VISA BAN



Date: 13th August 2020

US President Donald Trump's administration has relaxed the ban on H-1B visa, allowing H-1B visas holders to enter the United States to return to the same jobs they had prior to the proclamation of the visa ban.

Key highlights:

- The US Department of State advisory announced that the dependents of the H-1B visas holders including spouses and children will also be allowed to travel along with primary visa holders.
- The advisor read that the travel by applicants seeking to resume ongoing employment in the United States in the same position with the same employer and visa classification will be allowed.
- The Trump administration has also allowed travel by technical specialists, senior-level managers, and other workers holding H-1B visas, as their travel is necessary to facilitate the immediate and continued economic recovery of the United States.



Nurturing Ambitions

PEOPLE

NATIONAL

OBITUARY

RAHAT INDORI



Date: 11th August 2020

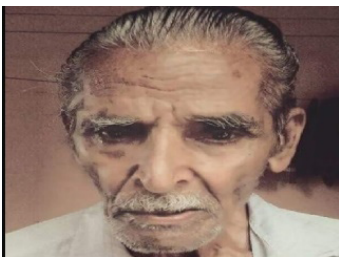
Renowned Urdu Poet and Lyricist Rahat Indori passed away on August 11, 2020. He was 70. He had tested positive for COVID-19.

Key points:

- “The popular poet suffered two heart attacks and could not be saved. He was admitted to hospital after testing positive for Covid-19. He had 60% pneumonia.
- The late poet had tweeted regarding his COVID report earlier today. He had been tested for the virus on August 10 after showing initial symptoms of the infection. He wrote that he has been admitted to Aurobindo hospital.

OBITUARY

PK MUTHUSAMI



Date: 12th August 2020

PK Muthusami, a noted Tamil Film lyricist passed away at his residence on August 11, 2020. He resided in R Pudupatti Village in Namakkal, near Trichy.

Key points:

- A yesteryear film lyricist who was known for his many unique compositions was to complete his 100th birthday this year.

POLITY

MAHINDA RAJAPAKSA



Date: 9th August

Why in news: Sworn-in as Prime Minister of Sri Lanka for the fourth time.

Key points:

- Former President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa took an oath as a Prime Minister of the country for the fourth time on August 9, 2020.
- He took a hold of Prime Ministerial position after his party secured a landslide victory in the parliamentary elections.
- Mahinda Rajapaksa was administered the oath by his younger brother and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa at a ceremony held at the sacred RajamahaViharaya which is a Buddhist temple in Kelaniya, a north Colombo suburb.
- Mr. Rajapaksa has been credited with ending the decade long LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) war in 2009 under his presidency. In 2015, he had lost the presidential elections and later had made a strong political comeback.

POLITY

HASSAN DIAB



Date: 11th August 2020

Why in news: Resigns amid public outrage over Beirut blast.

Key points:

- On August 10, 2020, Lebanon's Prime Minister Hassan Diab announced the resignation of his government amid public outrage over the devastating explosion in Beirut, which caused massive destruction and led to the loss of many lives.
- Diab in a brief televised speech said that he is stepping down so that he can stand with the people and fight the battle for change alongside them. He stated that the huge explosion that devastated Beirut and triggered public outrage was the result of endemic corruption.
- The Prime Minister's resignation follows a weekend of anti-government protests over the massive explosion that rocked Lebanon's capital city Beirut on August 4, causing widespread destruction. The blast killed more than 160 people and injured about 6000.



disha

Nurturing Ambitions

The logo for 'disha' features the word 'disha' in a large, lowercase, light blue sans-serif font. Below it, the tagline 'Nurturing Ambitions' is written in a smaller, lighter blue sans-serif font. The background of the logo area includes a large, light blue arrow pointing upwards and to the right, and a decorative geometric pattern of overlapping triangles in various shades of blue at the bottom of the page.

POLITY

SAUDI ARABIA CUTS OFF LOAN, OIL SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN



DATE: 12th August 2020

Saudi Arabia has ended its loan and oil supply to Pakistan, ending the decades-long friendship between the two countries. Pakistan has also been asked to pay back USD 1 billion to Saudi Arabia, which was given as a part of a \$6.2 billion package announced by Saudi Arabia in November 2018. Overall, the package included loans worth \$3 billion and oil credit facility amounting to \$3.2 billion. The deals were signed during the visit of Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Muhammed Bin Salman to Pakistan in February 2019.

Background

- Saudi Arabia's move was in response to the blunt warning issued by Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi to the Saudi Arabia-led Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for not taking an anti-India stance on the Kashmir issue.
- Qureshi had reportedly asked OIC to convene a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers. He later warned saying that if the meeting is not convened then he will be compelled to ask Pakistani PM Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to support them on the Kashmir matter.
- The Pakistani Foreign Minister said that Pakistan withdrew from the Kuala Lumpur summit on Saudi Arabia's request and now it expected the nation to show leadership on this issue.

SOCIAL

DIAL DEVELOPS 'AIR SUVIDHA' PORTAL



DATE: 9th August 2020

DIAL, a GMR Group-led consortium, that operated Indira Gandhi International Airport has developed AIR SUVIDHA, a first-of-its-kind portal allowing international arriving passengers to fill a mandatory self-declaration form and eligible passengers to apply for exemption from compulsory institutional quarantine for coronavirus.

Key Highlight:

- Passengers can assess AIR SUVIDHA at website of Delhi Airport 'www.newdelhiairport.in'
- There are total of five categories of passengers who can get exemption from the mandatory seven-day institutional quarantine viz.
 - (i) Pregnant women
 - (ii) Those who have suffered death in the family
 - (iii) Those suffering from a serious illness
 - (iv) Parents accompanying children below 10 years of age
 - (v) Those who have COVID-negative certificate from a test done 96 hours prior to the journey.
- Passengers who are allowed the exemption would have to undergo 14-day home quarantine.
- All other international passengers arriving in India have to follow the usual process of undergoing mandatory seven days institutional quarantine, at their own cost, followed by seven days of home quarantine.

AGRICULTURE

‘BEEG’ FOR FARMERS



DATE: 11th August 2020

Indian Institutes of Technology(IIT) Kanpur in collaboration with Agnys Waste Management Private Limited (start-up at IIT Kanpur) developed indigenous seed balls named ‘BEEG’ (Biocompost Enriched Eco Friendly Globule).

Key Highlight:

- The initiative provides employment opportunities to unemployed workers and gardeners (due to the COVID-19 lockdown).
- BEEG is enriched with the right indigenous ingredients(like compost & clay) and seeds to germinate early.
- It is the best way to utilise Monsoon and plant as many trees as possible without risking lives by social gathering during the pandemic.
- BEEG should be thrown at the target areas and they will germinate when they come into contact with water(rainy seasons are a perfect choice).
- It eliminates the need to dig pits for planting saplings. The development of the SEED balls will bring a revolutionary change in the agriculture process.



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