

Weekly One Liners 11th May to 17th May 2020

Most Important Current Affairs

Prime Minister announces Economic Package of Rs 20 Lakh Crore

Prime Minister of India **Narendra Modi** addressed his countrymen and announced an **Economic Package of Rs 20 Lakh crore**, giving stress on **land, labour, liquidity and law**. PM stressed on the local products and urged his countrymen to be **"Vocal About Local"**. Prime Minister also mentioned 5-Pillars to make India self-reliant. These **5 pillars** are:

1. **Economy:** An economy that brings quantum jump along with incremental change.
2. **Infrastructure:** An infrastructure that becomes the symbol of modern India.
3. **System:** A system which will be based on technology.
4. **Demography:** A vibrant demography which would be the strength as well as the source of energy for self reliant India.
5. **Demand:** To improve demand and supply chain in India to enhance the Indian economy.

Economic Relief Package announced for "Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan"

Highlights of measures announced as 1st tranche of Economic Relief Package for "Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan":

1. For Standard MSMEs:

- Rs 3 lakh crore collateral-free automatic loan for Businesses including MSMEs. This scheme can be availed till 31st Oct, 2020.
- Loans facility would be available for those firms with Rs 25 crore outstanding loans and annual turnover of Rs 100 crores.
- This loan facility would be having a tenor of 4 years along with moratorium of 12 months.
- 100% credit guarantee would be provided to banks and NBFCs on principal as well as interest.
- There will be no guarantee fees as well as no fresh collateral required.
- These reforms are expected to benefit 45 lakh business units in order to resume their business activities and safeguard jobs.

2. For stressed MSMEs:

- GoI has announced a Subordinated Debt of Rs 20000 crores which is expected to benefit about 2 lakh MSMEs.
- The functioning of MSMEs which are NPA or are stressed would be eligible to avail this facility.

- GoI has announced to provide Rs 4000 crore as its contribution to Credit Guarantee Fund Trust For Micro And Small Enterprises (CGTSME).
- The CGTSME will provide partial credit guarantee support to Banks in order to benefit the stressed MSMEs.
- The promoters of the MSME will be given debt by banks, which would be infused by the promoter as equity in the unit.

3. For MSME having potential and which are viable:

- A fund of fund has been created to infuse equity of worth Rs 50,000 crore in the MSME.
- Fund of Fund with corpus of Rs 10,000 crores would be set up to provide equity funding to MSMEs with growth potential and viability.
- This FoF would be operated via a mother fund including some daughter funds.
- FoF is expected to benefit MSMEs by expanding size along with their capacity.
- It will also encourage MSMEs to get listed on main board of Stock Exchanges.


4. New definition of MSMEs:

The definition of MSME has been revised by increasing the investment limit of MSME, introducing an additional criteria of turnover as well as removing the distinction between manufacturing and service sector MSME. The new definition is as follow:

- For **Micro enterprise:** Investment of upto Rs 1 crore and turnover of upto Rs 5 crore.
- For **Small enterprise:** Investment of upto Rs 10 crore and turnover of upto Rs 50 crore.
- For **Medium enterprise:** Investment of upto Rs 20 crore and turnover of upto Rs 100 crore.

5. For government procurement, tenders upto Rs 200 crores will no longer be on global tender route.

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6. E-market linkage would be provided to the **MSMEs** in order to enable them to access the markets as they would not be able to participate in Trade Fairs and Exhibitions which are difficult to organised because of COVID-19. The CPSEs and GoI will clear all the receivables of MSMEs within next 45 days.

7. Employees Provident Fund:

Liquidity relief is being given for all EPF establishments. Under Pradhan Mantri Garib kalyan Package (PMGKP), payments of 12% of employer and 12% employee contribution was made into EPF accounts of eligible establishments.

- EPF contribution has been extended for the month of June, July & August and would be paid by the GoI, providing a liquidity support of Rs 2500 Crore and benefitting 72.22 lakhs of employees.
- To provide more take home salary to employees and also to give relief to employers, the statutory PF contribution of both employer and employee will be reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by EPFO for next 3 months. The CPSEs and State PSUs will continue to contribute 12% as employer contribution.
- It would be applicable for workers who are not eligible for 24% EPF support under PM Garib Kalyan Package and its extension.
- It will provide liquidity of Rs 6750 Crore to employers and employees over 3 months.

8. For Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFCs)/ Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)/ Micro finance Institutions (MFIs)

- Government will launch a Rs 30,000 crore Special Liquidity Scheme under which investment will be made in both primary and secondary market transactions in investment grade debt paper of NBFCs/HFCs/MFIs.
- It will supplement RBI/Government measures to increase liquidity.
- All the securities under this scheme would be fully guaranteed by GoI.

9. Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme 2.0 for NBFCs

Existing PCGS scheme would be extended to cover borrowings such as that of primary issuance of Bonds/ Commercial Papers (liability side of balance sheets) of such entities.

- In this, first 20% of loss will be borne by the Guarantor i.e. the Government of India.
- Under this scheme, AA paper and below, including unrated paper would also be eligible for investments (esp. relevant for many MFIs).
- This scheme is expected to result in liquidity of Rs 45,000 crores.

10. In order to help Power Distribution Companies (**DISCOMS**), **PFC/REC** will infuse liquidity of **Rs. 90,000 Crore** to DISCOMs against receivables.

- Loans would be given against state guarantees for exclusive purpose of discharging liabilities of Discoms to Gencos.
- Central Public Sector Generation Companies shall give rebate to Discoms which shall be passed on to the final consumers (industries).

11. For Contractors:

All Central Agencies such as **Railways, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways**, Central Public Works Dept, etc will provide extension of up to 6 months without costs to contractor. This extension will cover:

- construction/works and goods and services contracts.
- obligations like completion of work, intermediate milestones etc. as well as extension of Concession period in PPP contracts.

12. For Real Estate Sector

Some measures have been announced to de-stress real estate developers and ensure completion of projects so that home buyers are able to get delivery of their booked houses with new timelines. Accordingly, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs will advise States/UTs and their Regulatory Authorities to the following effect:

- Treat COVID-19 as an event of 'Force Majeure' under RERA.
- Extend the registration and completion date su-moto by 6 months for all registered projects expiring on or after 25th March, 2020 without individual applications.
- Regulatory Authorities may extend this for another period of upto 3 months, if needed
- Issue fresh 'Project Registration Certificates' automatically with revised timelines.
- Extend timelines for various statutory compliances under RERA concurrently.

13. Liquidity of **Rs 50000 crore** through Tax Deduction at Source (**TDS**)/Tax Collection at Source (**TCS**) rate reduction.

- To provide more funds at the disposal of the taxpayers, the rates of Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) for non-salaried specified payments made to residents and rates of Tax Collection at Source (TCS) for the specified receipts shall be reduced by 25% of the existing rates.
- Payment for contract, professional fees, interest, rent, dividend, commission, brokerage, etc. shall be eligible for this reduced rate of TDS.
- This reduction shall be applicable for the remaining part of the FY 2020-21 i.e. from 14th May, 2020 to 31st March, 2021.

14. Other Direct Tax Measures

- All pending refunds to charitable trusts and non-corporate businesses & professions including proprietorship, partnership, LLP and Co-operatives shall be issued immediately.
- Due date of all income-tax return for FY 2019-20 will be extended from 31st July, 2020 & 31st October, 2020 to 30th November, 2020 and Tax audit from 30th September, 2020 to 31st October, 2020.
- Date of assessments getting barred on 30th September, 2020 extended to 31st December, 2020 and those getting barred on 31st March, 2021 will be extended to 30th September, 2021.
- Period of Vivad se Vishwas Scheme for making payment without additional amount will be extended to 31st December, 2020.

Highlights of measures announced in 2nd tranche, as part of Economic Relief Package for “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”:

Migrant Workers:

1. Free Food Grain supply to migrants for 2 months

- Those migrants who are neither under National Food Security Act nor the holders of any State Card, will be provided 5 Kg of grains per person and 1 kg Chana per family per month for a period of two months. With this, about 8 crore migrants are expected to be benefitted from the above facility.
- This intervention will cost about Rs 3500 Crore which would be completely borne by the Government of India.
- State governments would be responsible for the implementation, identification of migrants as well as the food distribution

2. To benefit migrant workers, GoI is coming up with National Portability of Cards i.e. “One Nation One Ration card”

- This scheme will enable the migrant workers to access Public Distribution Ration from any Fair price Shop in the country.

- This scheme is expected to benefit around 67 crore beneficiaries i.e. 83% of the PDS population by August, 2020. This is expected to cover 100% i.e. all the state and UTs will complete full FPS automation by March 2021.

3. Affordable Rental Housing Complexes for Migrant Workers & Urban Poors

To provide houses to migrant workers & urban poors at affordable prices, the Government of India is going to launch a scheme under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)**. This would be done by:

- Converting government funded housing in the cities into Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHC) under PPP through concessionaire agreements.
- Incentivizing manufacturing units, industries, institutions, associations to develop ARHC on their private land and it would be operated by the same.
- Incentivizing state government agencies as well as central government organizations to develop ARHC on their private land and it would be operated by the same.

4. MUDRA-Shishu loans:

This will be launched to benefit the smallest of small credit takers from the bank. Under **MUDRA-Shishu** loan, one can take loan of only upto **Rs 50,000**. RBI has already granted a loan moratorium of 3 months to this loan scheme.

- After their return from moratorium period, GoI will provide interest subvention support of 2% to prompt payees for a period of 12 months.
- This will provide relief of **Rs 1500 crore** to MUDRA-Shishu loanees.

5. Street Vendors:

Considering the adverse impact on the livelihoods of the street vendors due to COVID-19, GoI will launch a special scheme within a month to facilitate easy access to credit to street vendors that would be about Rs 5000 crores and will support around 50 lakh street vendors.

- Initial working capital of upto Rs 10,000 will be provided to the street vendors.
- Those vendors who would be accepting digital payments would be incentivized through monetary rewards.
- Enhanced working capital credit would be made available to the vendors for showing good repayment behaviour.

6. Housing:

- GoI has decided to extend the tenure of Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for Middle Income Group (Annual Income: Rs 6-18 Lakhs) which was operationalized in May 2017 and was extended to 31st March 2020. It has been extended to 31st March 2021, hence benefitting 2.5 lakh middle income families.

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- This extension will lead to investment of Rs 70,000 crores in the housing sector and is expected to stimulate demand for steel, cement, transport and other construction material.

7. For Employment Generation:

- Plans of worth Rs 6000 Crores will be approved shortly to generate employment by pushing the use of CAMPA funds i.e. Compensatory Afforestation Management & Planning Authority, which was set up under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016.
- These funds would be used by state governments for employing tribal people for Afforestation and plantation works, including in urban areas; artificial regeneration & assisted natural regeneration, forest management, soil & moisture conservation works.
- Hence it will create job opportunities for tribals/adivasis in urban, semi-urban and rural areas.

8. For Farmers:

- Government of India is providing Rs 30,000 crores Additional Emergency Working Capital Funding for farmers through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for crop loan requirement of Rural Co-op Banks & Regional Rural Bank (RRBs).
- The additional refinance support of Rs. 30,000 crore would be over and above Rs 90,000 crore to be provided by NABARD through the normal refinance route in 2020.
- This additional amount of Rs. 30,000 crore would be released immediately to meet post harvest (Rabi) & current Kharif requirement in the month of May/June.
- This additional amount is expected to benefit around 3 crores small and marginal farmers.
- 33 State Co-operative banks, 351 District Co-operative banks and 43 RRBs have come forward to avail this on tap based lending.

9. To boost the farming activities, Rs 2 lakh crore Concessional credit boost will be offered to 2.5 crore farmers through **Kisan Credit Cards**.

- A Special drive would be undertaken to provide concessional credit to PM-KISAN beneficiaries through Kisan Credit Cards. This drive will also include Fishermen and Animal Husbandry farmers.
- This credit flow of about Rs 2 lakh crores will enable these farmers to gain access to institutional credit at concessional interest rate.

Highlights of measures announced in 3rd tranche, as part of Economic Relief Package for “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”:

1. Rs 1 lakh crore Agri Infrastructure Fund for farm gate infrastructure for farmers

- Due to lack of adequate cold chain and Post Harvest Management infrastructure in the vicinity of farm-gate, the Government of India is launching financing facility of Rs 1 lakh crore to fund Agriculture Infrastructure Projects at farm-gate and aggregation points such as Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producer Organisation, Agriculture Entrepreneurs, Start-ups, etc.
- It will help in providing stimulus to the development of farm-gate & aggregation points, affordable and financially viable Post Harvest Management infrastructure.
- This fund of Rs 1 lakh crore would be created immediately.

2. For Micro Food Enterprises

As the un-organised Micro Food Enterprises (MFEs) units requires technical upgradation to attain FSSAI food standards, building brands and marketing purposes.

- To achieve this, Government of India will launch a Rs 10,000 Crore scheme for formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises which is expected to benefit 2 lakh MFEs.
- This scheme will be based on a cluster based approach and will support the existing micro food enterprises, Farmer producer organisations, Self Help Groups as well as the cooperatives.
- The scheme will help in reaching untapped export markets in view of improved health consciousness, and will also lead to improved health and safety standards, integration with retail markets as well as improved incomes.

3. Logistics capacities and other provision of facilities under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMY)**

- Government of India has announced the support of Rs 20,000 crore for Fishermen through Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana which would be launched for integrated, sustainable, inclusive development of marine and inland fisheries.
- From Rs 20,000 crore, amount of Rs 11,000 crore would be used for activities in Marine, Inland Fisheries and aquaculture.
- The remaining amount of Rs 9,000 crore would be used for Infrastructure such as fishing harbours, cold chain, markets, etc.
- Cage culture, seaweed farming, Ornamental Fisheries as well as new fishing vessels, traceability, laboratory network, etc will be the key activities.

- During the ban period i.e. the period when the fishermen are not allowed to enter the sea and the fishing is prohibited, there would be a provision of Ban Period Support to fishermen in the form of Personal insurance as well as Boat insurance.
- This is expected to give employment to over 55 lakh persons and will double the exports to Rs 1,00,000 Crore, and lead to additional fish production of 70 lakh tonnes over a period of 5 years.

4. National Animal Disease Control Programme

- National Animal Disease Control Programme for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis launched with total outlay of Rs. 13,343 crores.
- It ensures 100% vaccination of cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig population (total 53 crore animals) for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and for brucellosis.
- Till date, 1.5 crore cows & buffaloes in the country have been tagged and vaccinated.

5. For building capacities in Animal Husbandry

- Government of India has planned to spend Rs 15,000 crores for the development of Animal Husbandry Infrastructure with special focus on dairy sector.
- GoI has decided to set up an Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund of Rs 15,000 crore. It also aims to support private investment in the Dairy processing, value addition and cattle feed infrastructure.
- Government will also offer incentives for establishing plants for export of niche products such as cheese, processed milk, milk powder, cream etc.

6. For promotion of Herbal Cultivation

- Government of India has decided to allocate Rs 4000 crore to cover 10,00,000 hectares area under the Herbal Cultivation in next two years.
- National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) has already supported 2.25 lac hectare area under the cultivation of medicinal plants.
- This will lead to generate about Rs 5000 crores of income generation for farmers.

- NMPB will bring 800 hectare area by developing a corridor of medicinal plants along the banks of river Ganga.
- A network of regional mandis would be set up for the Medicinal plants.

7. Beekeeping Initiatives

- Government of India has announced Rs 500 crores scheme to increase the income of 2 lakh beekeepers and will help in providing quality honey to the consumers.
- It has been launched to increase yield & quality of crops through pollination, and will also provide honey and other beehive products like wax.
- Government will implement a scheme for the development of infrastructure related to Integrated Beekeeping Development Centres, Collection, Marketing and Storage Centres, Post Harvest & Value Addition Facilities etc.
- It will lead to implementation of standards, development of traceability systems; and development of quality nucleus stock as well as bee breeders.
- It will also lead to capacity building with special focus on women.

8. From TOP to TOTAL

- Government of India has decided to extend the Operation Greens from Tomatoes, Onion & Potatoes (TOP) to All Fruit and Vegetables (TOTAL). Amount of Rs 500 crore has been allocated to this scheme.
- This scheme will be on pilot basis for next 6 months and will be expanded and extended accordingly.
- The scheme will provide 50% subsidy on transportation from surplus to deficient markets. It will also provide 50% subsidy on storage including cold storages.
- It is expected to result in better price realization to farmers, reduced wastages as well as affordability of products for consumers.

Governance & Administrative Reforms

9. Amendment in Essential Commodities Act

- Essential Commodities Act was enacted in 1955. Government of India has decided to amend the Essential Commodities Act to enable better price realisation for farmers. This will be done by attracting investments and making agriculture sector competitive.
- Agriculture food stuffs including cereals, edible oils, oil seeds, pulses, onions and potato to be deregulated.

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- Stock limit will be imposed under very exceptional circumstances such as national calamities, famine with surge in prices, while no such stock limit shall apply to processors or value chain participant, subject to their installed capacity or to any exporter subject to the export demand.

10. Agriculture Marketing Reforms

- Government of India has decided to formulate a central law to provide adequate choices to farmer to sell produce at attractive price, a barrier free Inter-State Trade, and a framework for e-trading of agriculture produce.

11. Agriculture Produce Price and Quality Assurance

- Government of India has decided to create a facilitative legal framework to enable farmers for engaging with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters etc. in a fair and transparent manner.
- The integral part of the legal framework will include risk mitigation for farmers, assured returns and quality standardisation.

UNICEF Publishes “LOST AT HOME” Report

“LOST AT HOME” report is published by the **United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)**. The report says that almost **33 million new displacements** were recorded in **2019** in which around **25 million** were due to **natural disasters** and **8.5 million** as a consequence of **conflict and violence**.

According to the report, there were 12 million new displacements involving children, including around 3.8 million of them caused by conflict and violence, and 8.2 million due to disasters linked mostly to weather-related events. According to the report, natural disasters resulted in more new displacements than conflict and violence. Almost 10 million new displacements in 2019 were recorded in East Asia and the Pacific (39 %) — and almost the same number in South Asia (9.5 million). The report looks at the risks internally displaced children face in which child labour, child marriage, trafficking among them — and the actions urgently needed to protect them.

INDIAN SCENARIO:

- India, the Philippines, Bangladesh and China all suffered from natural disasters leading to displacement in the millions, which accounted for 69% of global disaster-induced displacements.
- These were overwhelmingly caused by extreme conditions created by dangerous storms and floods.
- In India, the total number of new internal displacements in 2019 stood at 5,037,000: 5,018,000 due to natural disasters and 19,000 because of conflict and violence.

GLOBAL DISPLACEMENT:

- India is closely followed by the Philippines, Bangladesh and China.
- The Philippines alone accounted for 4.27 million new internal displacements due to natural disasters, conflict and violence, Bangladesh 4.08 million and China 4.03 million.
- The largest number of internally displaced children due to conflict is found in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and sub-Saharan Africa.
- Internally displaced persons are concentrated in two regions: The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and West and Central Africa.
- The Middle East and North Africa region recorded over 12 million internally displaced people as a result of conflict and violence at the end of 2019. Almost all of them lived in just three countries: Syria, Yemen, and Iraq and around 5 million were children.
- This includes 2.4 million children. Together with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2.9 million) and Yemen (1.7 million), these three countries account for one in three (36 %) of all children internally displaced due to conflict and violence, it said.

WHO Releases “State Of The World’s Nursing Report 2020”

The “**State Of The World’s Nursing Report-2020**” has been released by the **World Health Organization**. The report outlines the role and contributions of nurses with respect to the WHO “triple billion” targets.

This is the **first State of the world’s nursing report** and it presents much to celebrate about the nursing workforce. The report has been **developed** by the **World Health Organization** in partnership with the **International Council of Nurses** and the **global Nursing Now campaign** along with the support of governments and wider partners.

Key findings of the report:

- According to the report, nursing is the largest occupational group in the health sector which accounts for around 59% of the health professionals.
- It states that the global nursing workforce is 27.9 million, of which 19.3 million are professional nurses.
- The global shortage of nurses, estimated to be 5.9 million nurses in 2018.
- It also identified the ageing health workforce patterns in some regions which is threatening the stability of the nursing stock.
- To address the shortage of nurses by 2030 in all countries, the report suggested an increase of total number of nurse graduates by 8% per year on average including an improved capacity to employ and retain these graduates.
- It also identifies that the nursing remains a highly gendered profession with associated biases in the workplace.

DW Freedom of Speech Award 2020 announced

17 journalists from 14 countries have been named for **Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award 2020** for showing “outstanding commitment to human rights and freedom of expression in the media”.

Here is the complete list of Winner:

S.No.	Winner	Country
1	Siddharth Varadarajan	India
2	Ana Lalic	Serbia
3	BlazZgaga	Slovenia
4	SergejSazuk	Belarus
5	Elena Milashina	Russia
6	Darvinson Rojas	Venezuela
7	Mohammad Mosaed	Iran
8	Beatific Gumbwanda	Zimbabwe
9	David MusisiKaryankolo	Uganda
10	NurcanBaysal	Turkey
11	İsmetCigit	Turkey
12	Fares Sayegh	Jordan
13	Sovann Rithy	Cambodia
14	Maria Victoria Beltran	The Philippines
15	Chen Qiushi	China
16	Li Zehua	China
17	Fang Bin	China

Startup India-Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge awards

Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Giriraj Singh has presented the award to the winners of “**Startup India-Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge**”. Here is the list of winners:

S.No.	Category	Winner
1	Value Added Products	Krushak Mitra Agro Services Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai
2	Eliminating Milk Adulteration	White Gold Technologies LLP, Mumbai
3	Product Traceability	EmerTech Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai
4	E-commerce Solutions	MoooFarm, Gurugram, Haryana
5	Breed Improvement & Animal Nutrition	Adis Technologies, Belagavi, Karnataka

UN releases report “World Economic Situation and Prospects”

- According to the report, the **growth rate of India** has been projected to grow at **1.2%** in fiscal year **2020**. While the report has also indicated a slight recovery in the **growth rate of India** for fiscal year **2021** and stated that it would clock a **5.5%** growth rate in **2021**.
- As the COVID-19 pandemic has paralysed the world, the **UN** has projected that the global economy will contract sharply by **3.2%** in fiscal year **2020**, with only a gradual recovery of lost output projected for fiscal year **2021**.

National Affairs

- Government of India has started “**Mission Sagar**” to provide assistance to **Eastern Indian Ocean Region Nations** amid the coronavirus crisis. The mission is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region). Under the mission, Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Kesari** has been deployed.
- **Supreme Court of India**'s bench of 5-judge, headed by **Justice Arun Mishra** has **ruled** that the **provisions** of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (**SARFAESI**) **Act, 2002**, will now be **applicable** to **state** and **multi-state cooperative banks**.
- “**CHAMPIONS** (Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength)” portal has been launched by the **Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** (MSME). It aims to make the smaller units big.
- **Emergency Assistance Program** Loan of **USD 1 billion** has been approved by the **New Development Bank** (NDB) to India to support India in its attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19.

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- **Indian Railways** has made the **Aarogya Setu app** mandatory for the **passengers** to travel by **train**.
- An **assistance of \$3.6 million** to India has been committed by the **US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** to enhance India's response to the COVID-19 epidemic.
- In wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **World Bank** has announced **\$1 billion social protection package** for **India**.
- The **COBAS 6800** is the **first fully automated**, high-end machine for performing **RT-PCR tests** for COVID-19, procured by the Government of India for testing **COVID-19** cases and has been installed at the **National Centre for Disease Control in Delhi**.
- "**GOAL (Going Online As Leaders)**" programme has been launched recently to offer mentorship to **tribal youth** via **digital mode** and intends to act as a catalyst to explore hidden talents of the tribal youth. It is a joint initiative of **Facebook India** with **Ministry of Tribal affairs**.
- The Government of India flagship social security scheme '**Atal Pension Yojana**' (APY) has successfully completed five years of implementation.

International Affairs

- **Slovenia** has become the **1st coronavirus-free** country in **Europe**.
- The **Italian Institute of Technology (IIT)** has developed '**iFeel-You**' bracelet for **social distancing**, and will help users respect social distancing rules.
- **World Health Organization (WHO)** and **United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA)** have jointly released **commemorative Postage Stamp** on the **40th anniversary** of the eradication of **smallpox**.

States in the News

- **West Bengal** Government has launched '**Matir Smristi**' scheme to utilise 50,000 acres of barren land in 6 districts to generate income activities in horticulture and pisciculture involving the locals.
- **Uttarakhand Government** has launched "**HOPE (Helping Out People Everywhere)**" portal to help unemployed youth to get jobs opportunities.
- The **Jammu and Kashmir** administration and **Haryana** Government have **framed** a plan to implement the **Jal Jeevan mission** to provide tap connections to every rural household by **2022**.
- The **Sohrai Khovar** painting of **Jharkhand** and **Telia Rumal** of **Telangana** have received the **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag from the Geographical Indications Registry.

- A programme named "**Pranavayu**" has been launched by the **Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, Karnataka** to create awareness on the need to self examine the respiratory health for **Bengalureans**.
- **Madhya Pradesh** government has launched country's **1st ever 'FIR Aapke Dwar Yojana'** in **Bhopal**. **FIRs** in complaints of general nature will be lodged on the spot.
- A **loan agreement** for a **US\$145 million** project has been signed by the **Government of India**, the Government of **West Bengal** and the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank** to improve irrigation services and flood management in the **Damodar Valley Command Area in West Bengal**.
- "**Atmanirbhar Gujarat Sahay Yojana**" as been launched by the **Gujarat Government** to provide an interest subsidy, a moratorium as well as a collateral free **loan of up to Rs 1 lakh**. Loan would be available at **2% annual interest** while the remaining **6% interest** would be borne by the **state government**. A moratorium period of **6 months** would be provided to the beneficiary.

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- **Federal Bank Limited** tie-up with **MoneyGram Payment System** to offer a cost-effective **direct-to-bank account credit** option for customers in **India**.

Banking/Economy/Business News

- **SBI General Insurance** has launched the standard health insurance policy "**Aarogya Sanjeevani Health Insurance Policy**" which provides **hospitalisation** cover anywhere in India with sums insured ranging from **Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 5 lakhs**.
- **INR-USD Futures** and **Options contracts** have been launched on International Exchanges viz. **BSE's India INX** and **National Stock Exchange, NSE's NSE-IFSC**, at **GIFT International Financial Services Centre, Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.
- A car manufacturing corporation, **Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.** has rolled out an end to end, online vehicle ownership solution titled '**Own-Online**' to offer its customers a transparent, seamless and contactless experience from selection to the delivery of the vehicle.

Appointments/Resignations

- The Director General of the **World Trade Organization**, **Roberto Azevedo** has decided to **step down** from his post on 31st August 2020 .
- Indian boxer **Akhil Kumar** has been re-inducted into the Disciplinary Panel of National Anti-Doping Agency (**NADA**).

- IAS officer **V. Vidyavathi** has been appointed as the new Director-General of **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.
- **Manoj Ahuja** has been appointed the new **chairman** of the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**. He will replace Anita Karwal as the chairman of the CBSE.
- **Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi** has taken the charge as **Secretary** of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**. He has succeeded **Anand Kumar**, who has been appointed as the **Secretary of Ministry of Culture**.

Schemes & Committees

- **Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF)** has been set up by the **Government of India** under the aegis of the **Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Promotion Development Authority (Apeda)**, to **provide stimulus to the rice exports**.

Summits and Conferences

- 2nd edition of **Extraordinary G20 Virtual Trade and Investment Ministerial Meet** was held under the **presidency** of **Saudi Arabia**. The meeting was chaired by the Saudi Minister of Commerce, Majid Al Qasabi, in the presence of the Minister of Investment, Khalid Al-Faleh.
- A virtual conference of **Foreign Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation** member countries was held to deliberate on cooperation to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The conference was held under the **presidency** of **Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov**.
- The **32nd Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting** was held through Video Conference with a **theme: Delivering a co-ordinated Commonwealth COVID-19 response**.
- Video conference was held by the Minister of Tribal Affairs, **Shri Arjun Munda** on **"Tribal livelihoods and safety"**.
- **Technology Development Board (TDB)** and **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** have jointly organised a Digital Conference **"RE-START (Reboot the Economy through Science, Technology and Research Translations)"**.
- **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)** has organised the **Indo-Bangladesh "Virtual Conference"**.

Awards & Rewards

- Lieutenant Commander **Akshay Kumar** has been awarded the **Vice Admiral G.M. Hiranandani Memorial Rolling Trophy** for the year **2020**.
- The **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru** has won the **SKYTRAX Award 2020** for being the **Best Regional Airport** in India and Central Asia. **Changi Airport, Singapore** was voted the **World's Best Airport**; **Tokyo Haneda Airport** was voted the **World's Cleanest Airport**; **Paris Orly Airport** was voted the **World's Most Improved Airport**; **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, Mumbai** was voted as **Best Airport Staff in India & Central Asia**.
- Indian tennis player **Sania Mirza** becomes **1st Indian** to win **Fed Cup Heart Award 2020 for Asia/Oceania zone**. Other winners are: **Anastasija Sevastova** of Latvia (wins Qualifiers award), **Estonian Anett Kontaveit** (Europe/Africa I zone) and Mexico's **Fernanda Contreras Gomez** (Americas I zone).

Sports News

- French cyclist **Remy Di Gregorio** has been **banned** for **4 years** by the International Cycling Union for using a form of banned blood-boosting hormone **EPO (Erythropoietin)**.
- **China** has won the **1st edition** of **FIDE Chess.com Online Nations Cup** beating USA in the finals.
- **FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2020** has been **postponed** to 2021 due to coronavirus pandemic.
- Para-athlete **Deepa Malik** has announced her **retirement** from Paralympics games in order to serve as the office-bearer in the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).
- International Hockey Federation (FIH) has extended the term of **Narinder Batra** as **President** of FIH until May 2021.

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Ranks & reports

- **India** has been ranked at **74th** position on the **Global 'Energy Transition Index'** by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**. **Sweden** has **topped** the index while Switzerland and Finland were on 2nd and 3rd rank respectively.

Defence News

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh has commissioned **Indian Coast Guard Ship "Sachet"** and **2 interceptor boats (IBs) C-450 and C-451** in Goa.

Books & Authors

- The first **biopic** on Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's life, titled **'Finding Freedom: Harry and Meghan and the Making of A Modern Royal Family'** has been written by royal reporters **Omid Scobie** and **Carolyn Durand**.

Important Days

- **Mother's day** is celebrated on every **second Sunday** of **May** month and this year, it was celebrated on **10th May 2020**.
- **India** celebrates **National Technology Day** on **11 May** every year to mark the successful testing of **Shakti-I nuclear missile** at the Indian Army's Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan.
- **International Nurse Day** is observed globally on **12 May** every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. **Theme** for year 2020 is **"Nursing the World to Health"**.
- **International Family Day** observed globally on **15th May** every year.
- The **International Day of Light** is celebrated every year on **16th May**.
- **Armed Forces Day** is observed on the **third Saturday in May** every year to pay tribute to the men and women who served the United States Armed Forces. In 2020, it was celebrated on the **16th of May**.
- **Endangered Species Day** is observed on the **third Friday of May** every year. In 2020, it was celebrated on **15th May**.

Science and Technology

- Indian Council for Medical Research (**ICMR**) has tied-up with **Bharat Biotech** to develop indigenous COVID-19 vaccine.
- **DRDO's** Research Centre Imarat lab, Hyderabad has developed an automated contactless UVC sanitisation cabinet named **Defence Research Ultraviolet Sanitiser (DRUVS)** to sanitise mobile phones, iPods, laptops, currency notes, cheque leafs etc.

- **India's first** indigenous antibody testing kit **"ELISA"** has been successfully developed by the National Institute of Virology, Pune. It consists of a blood test which detects antibodies in the blood to find out if an individual was infected with COVID-19 infection or not. Hence, the test has been named as **"COVID KAVACH ELISA"**.
- A Non Invasive BiPAP Ventilator **"SwasthVayu"** has been developed by **CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories**, Bangalore to treat COVID-19 patients.
- The **Sundaram Ventago** is a low-cost, **automated respiratory assist device** which has been developed jointly by the **TVS group**, **Sundaram Medical Foundation** and **IIT-Madras**.
- An interactive dashboard **"MIR AHD Covid-19 Dashboard"** has been developed by the researchers at **IIT Gandhinagar**, to provide key information to stakeholders and the public in order to make research-backed decisions during the time of crisis.

Obituaries

- Film actor, model, voiceover artist and an entrepreneur, **Sai Gundewar** passed away.
- The Grammy-winning soul singer, **Betty Wright** passed away. She received her first Grammy Award for Song, "Where is the Love?", at the age of 23.
- US comedian **Jerry Stiller** passed away. He was renowned for his recurring role as George Costanza's father on TV's Seinfeld for which he was also nominated for Emmy Awards in 1997.
- TV actor **Shafique Ansari** passed away. He was best-known for his appearance in TV series 'Crime Patrol'.
- Former India national table tennis champion **Manmeet Singh Walia** passed away.
- Former Lok Sabha MP and senior Janta Dal(S) leader **Raja Rangappa Naik** passed away. He had represented the Raichur Lok Sabha constituency in the Indian state of Karnataka.
- Founding father of Rock 'n' roll, **Little Richard** passed away. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as part of its first group of inductees in 1986.
- Eminent historian **Hari Shankar Vasudevan** passed away. He was internationally acclaimed for his work on Russian and European history and Indo-Russian relations.
- Bangladesh's Noted literary personality, educationist and national **Professor Anisuzzaman** passed away. He was conferred the Padma Bhushan award by the government of India in 2014.
- Veteran Bengali author **Debesh Roy** passed away. He was awarded with the **Sahitya Akademi award** for his novel 'Teesta Parer Brittanto'.

Miscellaneous News

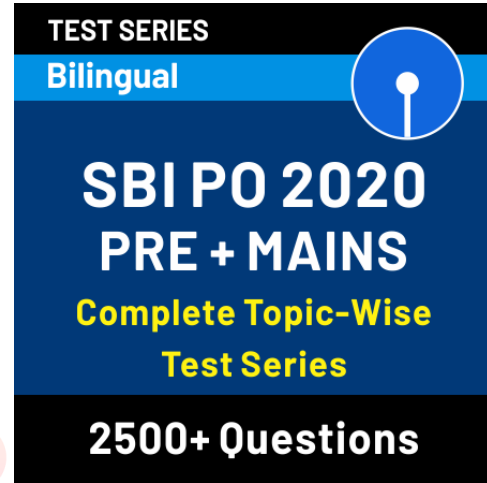
- **Central Armed Police Forces** will sell only **indigenous products** in their **canteens** from **01st June 2020**.
- A musical creation titled **“United we Fight”** has been unveiled by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).
- In order to boost immunity during pandemic, **Spirulina groundnut Chikki** has been developed by the Mysuru-based Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI).
- Union HRD Minister has launched Central University of **Odisha Helpline “Bharosa”** with an objective of relieving the student community from the distress caused during the troubled time of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Israel** has named a street in **Tel Aviv** as **‘Tagore Street’** after the celebrated Indian poet **Rabindranath Tagore** as a tribute on his 159th birthday on 08 May.
- **Delhi Police** has launched **“Thermal Corona Combat Headgear”** in collaboration with **Indian Robotics Solution** to protect the frontline corona warriors from the COVID-19.
- **Delhi Police** has launched **“Thermal Corona Combat Drone (TCCD)** in collaboration with **Indian Robotics Solution**.
- Under the corona studies series published by National Book Trust India, **7 titles** based on **“Psycho-Social impact of pandemic & lockdown and how to Cope With”** have been e-launched as print and e-edition.

Static Takeaways

- National Centre for Disease Control Founded: 1909.
- National Centre for Disease Control Headquarters: New Delhi.
- National Centre for Disease Control Director: Sujeet Kumar.
- President of World Bank: David Malpass; Headquarter: Washington DC.
- Union Minister of Railways: Piyush Goyal.
- Minister of State of Railways: Angadi Suresh Channabasappa.
- President of New Development Bank: K V Kamath.
- New Development Bank was established by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa to mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS.
- Union Home Affairs Minister: Amit Shah.
- Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises: Nitin Jairam Gadkari.

- Ministers of State (I/C) of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises: Pratap Chandra Sarangi.
- The present Chief Justice of India is Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde.
- Chief of Naval Staff: Admiral Karambir Singh.
- Headquarters of WHO: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Director-general of WHO: Tedros Adhanom.
- President of Italy: Sergio Mattarella Trending.
- Capital of Italy: Rome.
- The currency of Italy: Italian lira.
- Capital of Slovenia: Ljubljana.
- The currency of Slovenia: Euro.
- Prime Minister of Slovenia: Janez Janza.
- Chairman of State Bank of India: Rajnish Kumar.
- Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 July 1955.
- Minister of State (I/C) for New and Renewable Energy: Raj Kumar Singh.
- CBSE was established on 3 November 1962; Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Archaeological Survey of India Founded: 1861; Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Motto of National Anti-Doping Agency: Play fair; Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Director-General of National Anti-Doping Agency: Navin Agarwal.
- World Trade Organization Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland; Founded: 1 January 1995.
- Union Minister of State of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying: Sanjeev Kumar Balyan.
- International Tennis Federation Headquarters: London, United Kingdom.
- President of International Tennis Federation: David Haggerty.
- Prime Minister of Bangladesh: Sheikh Hasina; Capital: Dhaka; Currency: Taka.
- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation.
- The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation which brings together the leaders of both developed and developing countries from every continent.
- The members of the G20 group are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union (EU).
- FIH Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland.
- Paralympic Committee of India Secretary-General: Gursharan Singh.
- President of FIFA: Gianni Infantino; Founded: 21 May 1904; Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland.

- International Cycling Union (UCI) Headquarters: Aigle, Switzerland; President: David Lappartient.
- Federal Bank Limited Chairperson: Grace Elizabeth Koshie; MD & CEO: Shyam Srinivasan.
- Federal Bank Limited Headquarters: Aluva, Kerala.
- MoneyGram Chairman & CEO: Alex Holmes.
- Managing Director & CEO of Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd: Pawan Goenka.
- Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh: Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- Governor of Madhya Pradesh: Lal Ji Tandon.
- Chief Minister of Karnataka : B.S. Yediyurappa; Governor: Vajubhai Vala.
- Chief Minister of Jharkhand: Hemant Soren; Governor: Shrimati Droupadi Murmu.
- Chief Minister of Telangana: K Chandrasekhar Rao; Governor: Tamilisai Soundararajan.
- Minister of Jal Shakti: Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- Minister of State in the Ministry of Jal Shakti: Rattan Lal Kataria.
- Chief Minister of Uttarakhand: Trivendra Singh Rawat.
- Governor of Uttarakhand: Baby Rani Maurya.
- Chief Minister of West Bengal: Mamata Banerjee; Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar.
- Chairman of World Economic Forum: Klaus Schwab; Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Capital of Israel: Jerusalem; Prime minister: Benjamin Netanyahu; Currency: Israeli Shekel.
- Chief Minister of West Bengal: Mamata Banerjee; Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar.
- President of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: Jin Liqun.
- Director-General of UNESCO: Audrey Azoulay.
- Chairman of National Book Trust India: Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma.
- Chief Executive Officer of Facebook: Mark Zuckerberg.
- Facebook Headquarters: California, US.
- Chief Minister of Gujarat: Vijaybhai R. Rupani; Governor: Acharya Dev Vrat.



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