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1. Amit Shah e-launched the presence of cooperatives on the Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal (Aug. 9, 2022)

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on 9 August e-launched the onboarding of cooperatives on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal in New Delhi.

Important facts

- 589 cooperative societies have been selected as eligible for onboarding.
- Recently, the Ministry of Cooperation in its advisory made NCUI as the nodal or lead agency to facilitate the presence of cooperatives on GeM, to coordinate with the officials of GeM and to guide the cooperatives in the process of this presence.
- NCUI has prepared a list of cooperative societies having turnover/deposit amounting to Rs 100 crore and asked to initiate their onboarding process on GeM.
- A helpdesk of the GEM technical team has been set up at NCUI to help the cooperatives in the entire process.
- Onboarding of Cooperative Societies/Banks on GeM will be done in a phased manner.

Government e-Market (GeM) portal

- GeM is an acronym for One Stop Government e-Market Place hosted by DGS&D ((Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals) where common user goods and services can be procured.
- GeM is a dynamic, self-sustaining and user-friendly portal for procurement by government officials.
- Public procurement is a very important part of government activity and reform of public procurement is one of the top priorities of the present government.
- The Government e-Marketplace originated in January 2016 based on the recommendations of two Groups of Secretaries.
- Apart from reforms in DGS&D, they recommended setting up of a dedicated e-market for various goods and services bought or sold by the Government/PSUs.
- Subsequently, the Finance Minister in his budget speech for the financial year 2016-17 announced the setting up of a technology driven platform to facilitate procurement of goods and services by various ministries and agencies of the government.
- DGS&D with technical support from the National e-Governance Division (Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology) has developed a GeM portal for procurement of both products and services.
- The portal was launched on 9 August 2016 by the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

2. Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine (Aug. 9, 2022)

The Government of India has established the Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy.

Important facts

- It will be a subordinate office under the Ministry of Ayush.
- The government has merged the Pharmacopoeia Commission of Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) and two central laboratories – Pharmacopoeia Laboratory for Indian Medicine (PLIM), Ghaziabad and Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory (HPL).

Functions of the Commission

- It will work for the development of pharmacopoeial standards for Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy medicines.
- It will also work as Central Drug Testing cum Appellate Laboratory for Indian systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy.

What is Pharmacopoeia?

- Pharmacopoeia is an officially recognized book of standards of medicines as per the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945 thereunder.
- As per the Second Schedule to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, it is designated as the Official Book of Standards for drugs imported for sale or distribution in India and/or manufactured for sale, stock or exhibition.
- It specifies the standards of drugs manufactured and marketed in India in terms of their identity, purity and potency.

3. India begins cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces (Aug. 9, 2022)

India began cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)

Background

- In April 2022, during the India-US 2+2 talks, India announced that it would join the CMF as an associate partner to strengthen cooperation in regional security in the western Indian Ocean.
- In July 2022, India formally commenced cooperation with the Joint Maritime Force (CMF), a multilateral partnership based in Bahrain.

What are Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)?

- The CMF is a multinational naval partnership to promote security, stability and prosperity in the approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which include some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

- The Group of 34 Nations is commanded by a Vice Admiral of the US Navy, who also serves as Commander US Naval Forces Centcom and US Fifth Fleet.
 - All three commands are co-located in US Naval Support Activity Bahrain. Pakistan is a full member of the CMF.
 - India is the 35th member of this group.
 - **It consists of four task forces -**
1. CTF 150 (maritime security and counter-terrorism)
 2. CTF 151 (counter-piracy)
 3. CTF 152 (Arabian Gulf security and cooperation)
 4. CTF 153 (Maritime security in the Red Sea & Gulf of Aden)

Significance of CMF

- Curb illegal fishing
- Counter-piracy
- Counter-terrorism
- Protection of trade routes

About Bahrain

- Prime Minister - Salman ibn Hamad Al Khalifah
- Capital - Manama
- Official Language - Arabic
- Official Religion - Islam
- Currency - Bahraini Dinars

4. Gustavo Petro sworn in as Colombia's first leftist President (Aug. 8, 2022)

Gustavo Petro was sworn in as the first leftist president of Colombia on 7 August.

Important facts

- He has promised to fight inequality in the country and bring about a significant change in the history of a country ravaged by a prolonged war between the government and guerrilla groups.
- Petro (62) has promised to address Colombia's social and economic inequalities by increasing spending money on poverty alleviation programs and investing in rural areas.

- Gustavo Petro, a former member of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla group, won the presidential election in June by defeating conservative parties by a huge margin.
- The victory of former rebel Petro was an extraordinary event for the country Colombia, as voters in the country did not support leftist leaders.
- Left leaders are often accused of being soft on crimes or sympathising with the guerrillas.
- He has described US-led anti narcotics policies, such as the forced elimination of illegal coca crops, as a major failure.

About Colombia

- Capital - Bogota
- Name - Republic of Colombia
- Official Language - Spanish
- Currency - Colombian peso

5. ITU's Regional Standardization Forum for Asia and Oceania Region held in New Delhi (Aug. 8, 2022)

International Telecommunication Union's Regional Standardization Forum for Asia and Oceania region will begin in New Delhi on 8 August.

Important facts

- The Ministry of Communication is hosting the International Telecommunication Union's Regional Standardization Forum (RSF) for Asia and Oceania region.
- The theme of the Forum - "Regulatory and Policy aspects of Telecommunications/ICTs".
- Minister of State for Communications Devusinh Chouhan inaugurated this Forum.
- It will be organised from 8th August 2022 to 12th August 2022.
- More than 250 delegates from 20 countries will participate in the forum.
- It aims to provide an insight into the experience of the Asia and Oceania region from a policy and regulatory perspective under various sub-themes.
- The meeting of the Regional Group of Asia and Oceania is being held after a gap of three years due to Kovid-19.
- It will be led by Dr Bilel Jamousi, head of study groups at ITU Geneva.

Objective of the meeting

- To contribute to the standardization work of ITU-T Study Group 3 and to safeguard the interests of the Asia and Oceania region.

About the Regional Standardization Forum

- It is a platform for creative exchange of ideas, discussion on standardization topics in various areas of technology and role of ITU standards, use of technologies for digital and financial inclusion in emerging markets, development of data value chain and digital health.

What is the Oceania region?

- It is the collective name for the islands spanning most of the Pacific Ocean.
- Oceania covers the entire island region between Asia and the Americas.
- It has traditionally been divided into four parts - Australasia (Australia and New Zealand), Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.

About International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

- Founded - in 1865
- **Objective** - To allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits to facilitate international connectivity in communication networks, develop technical standards that enable seamless interconnection of networks and technologies.

6. US Navy ship docks in India for the first time for repairs (Aug. 8, 2022)

American Naval Ship Charles Drew arrived in India for the first time on 7 August for repairs and maintenance at L&T Kattupalli Shipyard at Ennore near Chennai.

Important facts

- This will be the first time that a US Navy ship is being repaired at an Indian shipyard.
- India had proposed during the 2+2 dialogue in April that the US Navy could leverage the services and expertise of the Indian shipyard.
- The repair of US Navy ships at the Indian shipyard has been enabled due to the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016.
- LEMOA facilitates the exchange of goods and munitions between the two navies.
- The USNS Charles Drew will be at Kattupalli shipyard for 11 days and undergo repairs in various areas.
- It is a new dimension to the fast expanding Indo-US strategic partnership.

Major Shipyards in India

- Cochin Shipyard Limited - Cochin/Kochi - Kerala
- Hindustan Shipyard Limited - Visakhapatnam - Andhra Pradesh

- Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers - Kolkata - West Bengal
- Goa Shipyard Limited - Goa - Goa
- L&T Shipbuilding Limited - Hazira - Gujarat
- ABG Shipyard Limited - Mumbai - Maharashtra

Largest Shipyard in India and the world

- Cochin Shipyard is the largest shipyard in India.
- In terms of revenue, the largest revenue generated by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers is ₹1,658.79 crore.
- INS Vikrant, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier is being built by Cochin Shipyard.
- Hyundai Heavy Industries in Ulsan, South Korea is the largest dockyard in the world.
- Seawise Giant is the largest ship ever built in history. It was made in Japan by Sumitomo Heavy Industries.
- INS Vikramaditya is India's largest aircraft carrier and warship.

7. ASEAN bars Myanmar from ASEAN meetings (Aug. 6, 2022)

The ASEAN Regional Group has said that Myanmar will not be allowed to participate in any ASEAN meetings until it shows progress on the peace plan.

Important facts

- ASEAN has said that Myanmar should act in a way that shows progress has been made in the peace plan.
- The regional group expressed concern over the long-running political crisis in Myanmar and the executions of four opposition activists.
- ASEAN expressed its deep disappointment at the limited progress and highlighted the lack of commitment of the Nay Pyi Taw officials towards the implementation of the Five Point Consensus.
- ASEAN's five-point agreement was reached in Jakarta, Indonesia on April 24, 2021, calling for an immediate end to violence in Myanmar and constructive dialogue among all parties to seek a peaceful solution.
- On the Rohingya issue, ASEAN reiterated its support for facilitating the voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe and dignified manner in accordance with the bilateral agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

About ASEAN

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is an international organisation formed in Bangkok, Thailand in 1967.

- It promotes economic development, peace, security, social progress and cultural development in the Southeast Asian region.
- ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta.
- General Secretary of ASEAN - Lim Jock Hoi, Brunei
- Official Languages - Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese
- Working Language - English
- ASEAN Summit is the supreme policy making body of ASEAN.
- ASEAN is third largest market in the world
- It is the sixth largest economy in the world, third in Asia.
- ASEAN has Free-trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

ASEAN Member Countries

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Brunei
- Vietnam
- Laos
- Myanmar
- Cambodia

8. Govt to make 1.5 lakh Ayushman Bharat Health, Wellness centres functional by December (Aug. 6, 2022)

Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya has said that the target of setting up 1.50 lakh Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centers (AB-HWCs) will be made operational by December this year.

Important facts

- Mandaviya said that out of the total target of setting up 1.50 lakh such centres, one lakh 22 thousand are working now.

- The Prime Minister had decided to set up 1.5 lakh health and wellness centers in 2017-18.
- These centers will also organize yoga classes for health twice a week.

Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres

- The central government has announced the setting up of 1,50,000 Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centers (AB-HWCs) in February 2018.
- These centers provide comprehensive primary health care (CPHC) including child and maternal health services, non-communicable diseases, diagnostic services, and free essential medicines.
- These centers provide comprehensive health care including non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services.
- They will also provide free essential medicines and diagnostic services.

9. PM Narendra Modi to chair NITI Aayog governing council meeting (Aug. 6, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the 7th Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog at Rashtrapati Bhawan Cultural Centre, New Delhi on 7 August.

- PM will pave the way for a new era of collaboration between the Centre and the States.
- This will be the first physical meeting of the council after July 2019 and its members will include all chief ministers.
- On the 75th anniversary of independence, the states need to be agile, resilient and self-reliant and move towards "Atmanirbhar Bharat" in the spirit of cooperative federalism.
- In June this year, a National Conference of Chief Secretaries was held in Dharamsala, which was presided over by the Prime Minister.

The agenda of the meeting

- The agenda of the meeting includes crop diversification, achieving self-sufficiency in oilseeds, pulses and agro-communities, implementation of the National Education Policy and urban governance.
- The Governing Council meeting will try to finalize a roadmap and result-oriented action plan on each subject.
- The meeting will also emphasize the importance of the presidency for India in a federal system and the role of states in highlighting India's progress on the G-20 platform.

Governing Council of NITI Aayog

- This includes the Chief Ministers of all the states and the Lieutenant Governors of the Union Territories.

- It also includes ex-officio members of NITI Aayog, Vice-Chairman and whole-time members of NITI Aayog.
- It presents a platform to discuss inter-sectoral, inter-departmental and federal issues.

About NITI Aayog

- It is the premier policy think tank of the Government of India, it provides directional and policy inputs.
- It designs strategic and long-term policies.
- It also provides relevant technical advice to the Centre, States, and Union Territories.
- The Governing Council of NITI Aayog is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Chief Ministers of all the States and Union Territories and the Lieutenant Governors of other Union Territories.
- It was constituted on January 1, 2015.
- NITI stands for National Institution for Transforming India.
- The Government of India constituted the NITI Aayog to replace the Planning Commission, which was set up in 1950.
- This step was taken to better meet the needs and aspirations of the people.

10. 9 Indian companies in Fortune 500 Global list 2022 (Aug. 5, 2022)

Recently, Life Insurance Corporation listed on the stock exchange has joined the list of Fortune's Global 500 companies. With this, now nine Indian companies have made their place in the list.

Important facts

- LIC, the country's largest life insurer with a revenue of USD 97.26 billion and profit of USD 553.8 million, is ranked 98th in the recently released Fortune 500 list.
- Reliance Industries jumped 51 places to 104 in the 2022 list.
- Reliance has been on the list for 19 years with a revenue of USD 93.98 billion and a net profit of USD 8.15 billion in the latest year.
- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) jumped 28 places to 142nd position, while Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) moved up 16 places to 190th.
- The list includes two Tata group companies - Tata Motors at 370th position and Tata Steel at 435th position.
- State Bank of India (SBI) climbed 17 places to 236th and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited climbed 19 places to 295th.
- The Fortune Global 500 list ranks companies based on total revenue for the respective fiscal years ended on or before March 31, 2022.

Global position

- American retail company Walmart tops the list of Fortune Global 500.
- Amazon is in second position.
- Chinese energy giant's State Grid, China National Petroleum and Sinopec rounded out the top five.

Top 10 companies in 2022 Fortune Global 500 list

1. Walmart, U.S
2. Amazon, U.S
3. State Grid, China
4. China National Petroleum, China
5. Sinopec, China
6. Saudi Aramco, Saudi Arabia
7. Apple, U.S
8. Volkswagen, Germany
9. China State Construction Engineering, China
10. CVS Health, U.S.