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1. U.S. to fund 3 Indian research institutions (June 17, 2022)

The United States of America has announced \$122 million in funding to the top three Indian medical research institutes to help prevent preventable pandemics, early detection of disease threats, and prompt and effective response.

- A total amount of US\$ 122,475,000 will be disbursed to three top Indian health research institutes over a period of five years.
- These three research institutes are Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune and National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai.
- The fund will accelerate progress towards India that protects against infectious disease threats by focusing on emerging pathogens.
- The fund will help in detecting and controlling zoonotic disease outbreaks through a 'one health' approach, evaluate vaccine safety monitoring systems, capacitance of the public health workforce in epidemiology and outbreak response.
- Starting from September 30, 2022, eligibility for funding is limited to ICMR, and ICMR institutions, which are the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, and the National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai.

• Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

- It is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world headquartered in New Delhi for the coordination and promotion of biomedical research.
- It works under the Department of Health Services (DHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- It was established in 1911 as Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA).
- Later in 1949 its name was changed to ICMR.

• National Institute of Virology (NIV)

- It is one of the major institutes of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- It was established at Pune, Maharashtra in 1952.
- It was established as Virus Research Center (VRC) under the aegis of ICMR and Rockefeller Foundation (RF), USA.

• National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE)

- It is a permanent premier institute of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) established on 2 July 1999.
- It was established by merging the Central JALMA Institute for Leprosy (CJIL Field Unit), Avadi with the Institute for Research in Medical Statistics (IRMS), Chennai.
- The objectives of the Institute are conducting epidemiological studies, development of human resources in epidemiology and bio-statistics etc.

2. Industrial Decarbonization Summit - 2022 (June 16, 2022)

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates Industrial Decarbonization Summit 2022 in New Delhi on 16 June.

- He stressed on maintaining a balance between ecology, environment and development.
- He said that green hydrogen is the priority of the government and by using biotechnology we can increase the productivity of biomass.
- By the use of biomass, we can make Bio-ethanol, Bio-LNG and Bio-CNG
- He said that the use of methanol and ethanol will reduce pollution.
- **What is Decarbonisation?**
- It refers to the process of reducing 'carbon intensity', which reduces the amount of greenhouse gas emissions generated by the burning of fossil fuels.
- It specifically uses renewable energy sources such as wind power, solar energy and biomass.
- Decreasing carbon intensity in the power and transportation sectors could help achieve the net zero emissions target.

3. India's first Display Fabrication Unit in Hyderabad (June 16, 2022)

Recently Telangana Government has signed an MoU with Bengaluru based Elest to set up India's first Display Fabrication Unit in Hyderabad.

- This display fabrication unit will be set up with an investment of Rs 24,000 crore.
- It will be set up under the India Semiconductor Mission program of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The Generation 6 AMOLED Displays FAB will be set up in Hyderabad to manufacture next generation displays for tablet computers, smartphones and laptops.
- **Importance of Display Fab**
- Setting up Display Fab in Telangana will put India on the global map along with countries like the US, China and Japan.
- Having a display fab in Telangana will give a boost to the electronics and IT ecosystem in the state and its subsidiaries.
- Ever since the Bharat Semiconductor Mission has been announced, the Telangana government is working on a mission mode to set up the fabs in the state.
- **Semiconductor mission**

- ISM was launched in 2021 under the aegis of Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore.
- The scheme is a part of a comprehensive program for the development of the semiconductor and display ecosystem in India.
- It was launched with the aim of providing financial assistance to companies investing in semiconductors, design ecosystem and display manufacturing.

4. Ministry of Textile inaugurated the 'Lota Shop' at National Crafts Museum, New Delhi (June 16, 2022)

The Ministry of Textile inaugurated the 'Lota Shop' at National Crafts Museum, New Delhi on 14 June.

- Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Limited (CCIC), popularly known as Central Cottage Industries Emporium, has opened 'Lota Shop'.
- It displays the finest handicrafts, souvenirs, handicrafts and textiles based on the traditional craft forms of India.
- It has immense potential to attract foreign tourists and buyers.
- It will give a new direction to the handicrafts sector as well as the artisans in the light of the 'One Nation One Product' initiative launched by the Centre.
- The centre is also working towards one district one product which will give impetus to the handicrafts sector as well as the artisans.
- The museum provides accommodation facilities and also provides audio-visual facilities for the visitors.

• What is One District One Product scheme?

- It aims to realize the true potential of a district, promote economic development and generate employment and rural entrepreneurship.
- The Ministry of Food Processing had entered into an agreement with NAFED to develop 10 brands into one district one product brand.
- Of this, six brands have been launched till now.
- All products will be available across NAFED markets, e-commerce platforms and leading retail stores across India.
- It was launched by the Uttar Pradesh government in January, 2018, and was later adopted by the central government after seeing its success.
- Its aim is to identify, promote and brand a product from one district.

5. India's first road constructed from steel slag inaugurated in Surat (June 16, 2022)

Union Steel Minister Ram Chandra Prasad Singh on June 15 inaugurated the first 6-lane highway built using steel slag in Gujarat's Surat city to connect the port with the city.

- The road, built using 100 percent steel-processed slag, is a true example of "converting waste into wealth" and improving the sustainability of steel plants.
- The Minister emphasized the need to promote circular economy and resource efficiency by converting all waste into money.
- Promoting a circular economy is the need of the hour as all types of natural resources are getting depleted in the world.
- The use of such material in road construction will not only increase the durability but will also help in reducing the cost of construction as the slag-based material has better properties.
- The production of steel slag through various processes in India is expected to increase by 2030.

- **What is a steel slag road?**

- The slag is generated from a steel furnace burning at around 1,500-1,600 degree centigrade in the form of molten flux material as an impurity.
- The molten material is then poured into slag pits for cooling as per the optimized process and further processed to develop stable steel slag aggregates.
- It is a substitute for natural aggregates commonly used in road construction with better physical properties.

- **What is a circular economy?**

- In the current economy, products are made from materials taken from the earth, and they are finally thrown away as waste.
- In a circular economy, by contrast, we first stop producing waste.
- In such an economy, all kinds of waste such as clothing, scrap metals and obsolete electronics are returned to the economy or used more efficiently.

- **The circular economy is based on three principles-**

1. Eliminate waste and pollution
2. Circulating products and materials (at their highest value)
3. Nature of regenerate

6. Indian Railways flags off country's first private train under Bharat Gaurav scheme (June 16, 2022)

The first train to be operated between Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) and Shirdi (Maharashtra) by a private operator under the "Bharat Gaurav" scheme of the Indian Railways was flagged off on June 14.

- With this Southern Railway became the first zone of the Indian Railways to be the first registered service provider under the "Bharat Gaurav" scheme.
- The stoppages of the train are Tiruppur, Erode, Salem, Yelahanka, Dharmavaram, Mantralayam Road and Wadi.
- South Star Rail based in Coimbatore is the registered service provider operating the train.
- The service provider company has paid Rs 1 crore as security deposit to Southern Railway for the rake having 20 coach structure.
- **Features of the train**
- First AC Coach -1, 2-tier AC coaches - 3, 3-tier AC coaches-8, Sleeper Class coaches-5 , Pantry car-1 and Luggage-cum-Brake Vans-2. (Total - 20 coaches).
- **About Bharat Gaurav Scheme**
- In November 2021, Indian Railways introduced Bharat Gaurav trains which will be operated by private operators and will run on theme-based circuits.
- Through this scheme operators have the "Right of Use" of railway rakes and infrastructure.
- Under this scheme, private players and tour operators can buy trains on lease from the Railways and operate them on any circuit of their choice and decide the fares, route and quality of services.
- Till now, railways used to operate the passenger section and goods section but now the tourism section has also been added under this scheme.
- The scheme has been developed after extensive discussions with several state governments including Odisha, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and stakeholders.

7. ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meet (June 16, 2022)

India is hosting the special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi from June 16-17 to mark the 30th anniversary of the dialogue relations. It also marks the 10th anniversary of India's strategic partnership with ASEAN.

- The year 2022 has been designated as the ASEAN-India Friendship Year.
- This is the first time that India is hosting such a special meeting with ASEAN foreign ministers.
- External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar and Vivian Balakrishnan, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Singapore will co-chair the meeting.
- Myanmar's foreign minister is unlikely to attend the 24th ASEAN-India Ministerial Summit.
- Foreign Ministers of other ASEAN Member States and ASEAN Secretary General will participate in the meeting.
- The **theme** of the meeting - **Building Bridges in the Indo-Pacific.**

• ASEAN-India dialogue

- It was initiated in 1992 with the establishment of the Regional Partnership, which evolved into a Full Dialogue in December 1995, a Summit-level Partnership in 2002, and a Strategic Partnership in 2012.
- At present, the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership stands on a strong foundation.
- ASEAN is central to India's Act East Policy and the Comprehensive Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- This multi-faceted partnership includes several regional dialogue mechanisms and working groups that meet regularly at various levels and include annual summits, ministerial and senior officials' meetings.
- Ongoing India-ASEAN cooperation is guided by the 2021-2025 Action Plan that was adopted in 2020.

• 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

For more details please visit News of 13 May 2022

8. Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri, Kamorta on 3-day visit to Jakarta (June 16, 2022)

As part of deployment to South East Asia, Indian Naval Ships INS Sahyadri and Kamorta are on a three-day visit to Jakarta.

- During the visit, Indian Navy personnel will participate in interactions with the Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL) towards further enhancing interoperability and mutual cooperation.
- In addition, a number of social and informal exchanges are also planned with an aim to strengthen ties and mutual understanding between the navies.
- The visit of INS ships seeks to enhance maritime cooperation and strengthen India's friendship with Indonesia which will contribute towards security and stability in the region.

• INS Sahyadri

- It is the Shivalik-class advanced, guided-missile frigate warship.
- It is built by the Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai.
- It was launched in 2005.
- It was commissioned along with INS Shivalik (F-47), INS Satpura (F-48) into the Indian Navy on July 21st, 2012.
- It is 468 feet in length and 55 feet in breadth.
- It has a displacement capacity of 6,800 tons.
- It has a massive surface speed of 32 knots.

• INS Kamorta

- INS Kamorta is first of the four ASW Stealth Corvettes.
- It was designed by the Navy's in-house organisation, the Directorate of Naval Design (DND), under Project 28.
- With a length of 110 m, width of 14 m and a displacing capacity of 3500 tonnes, it can achieve a speed of 25 knots.
- It is suited with anti-submarine rockets and torpedoes, medium and close-in weapon systems and indigenous surveillance radar Revathi.
- It was commissioned on 23 Aug 2014.

9. Cabinet approves auction of 5G spectrum (June 15, 2022)

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to conduct a 5G spectrum auction by the end of next month.

- The successful bidders will be assigned spectrum for providing 5G services.
- A total of 72097.85 MHz spectrum with a validity period of 20 years will be auctioned by the end of July 2022.
- The auction will be held for spectrum in various Low (600 MHz, 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz), Mid (3300 MHz) and High (26 GHz) frequency bands.
- The auction will be conducted for spectrum in various low, medium and high frequency bands.
- DoT has started spectrum auction and Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) has been issued on 15th June 2022.
- **What is 5G technology?**
- The fifth generation mobile network is called 5G.
- The 5G network will operate in the millimeter-wave spectrum (30-300 GHz) which can send huge amounts of data at very high speeds.
- It is the newest upgrade in Long Term Evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks.
- Internet speeds in the high-band spectrum of 5G have been tested to exceed 20 Gbps (gigabit per second).

10. Cabinet approves MoA for setting up BIMSTEC tech transfer centre in Colombo (June 15, 2022)

The Union Cabinet has approved a memorandum of association (MoA) by India for the establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Centre in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

- The MoA was signed by the BIMSTEC member countries at the 5th BIMSTEC Summit held at Colombo, Sri Lanka on 30th March, 2022.
- **Objective of Technology Transfer Centre**
- To strengthen coordination, facilitation and cooperation in technology transfer among BIMSTEC member states.
- Promoting the transfer of technologies, sharing of experiences and capacity building.
- **Priority areas**
- Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Information and Communication Technology, Space technology applications, Agricultural technology, Food processing technology.

Pharmaceutical technology automation, New and renewable energy technology automation, New and Renewable energy technology, Oceanography.

• Nuclear Technology Applications, E-waste and solid waste management technology, Health Technologies, Technologies pertinent to Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation.

• **Expected outcomes**

1. Databank of technologies available in BIMSTEC Countries
2. A repository of information on best practices in the areas of technology transfer management, standards, accreditation, metrology etc.
3. Capacity building, sharing of experiences and best practices in development
4. Transfer and use of technologies among BIMSTEC countries

• **About BIMSTEC**

- It was set up as Bangladesh, India Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) on 6 June 1997 at Bangkok, Thailand.
- It was renamed as Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation on 31 July 2004 when the first summit meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- The member countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan India, Maldives ,Myanmar ,Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- The group was formed to promote economic cooperation between the member countries.
- Headquarters : Dhaka, Bangladesh

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