

## **LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTRE, NOIDA**

# **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY**



# **APRIL – 2020**

### ***Asian Youth Games to be held in China in November 2021***

NEW DELHI: The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) on Wednesday said that the coastal city of Shantou in southern China will remain as hosts of the third Asian Youth Games that will be held from November 20 to 28, 2021. "The OCA while maintaining a very strict isolation policy is still continuing its activity and liaising with the various Asian Games Organizing Committee to ensure that the preparations for the Games are not hindered," said OCA Director General Husain Al Musallam in a letter written to the Presidents and Secretary Generals of all Olympic bodies under its ambit. "In this respect I have the pleasure to inform you that the OCA in coordination with the Shantou 3rd Asian Youth Games Organizing Committee (SAYGOC) has decided the dates and sports programme of the 3rd Asian Youth Games."

### ***World Games, 2021 postponed to avoid clash with Tokyo Olympics***

World Games 2021 Postponed: The International World Games Association (IWGA) - the organizer of the World Games 2021 have decided to postpone the mega sporting event by nearly an year to avoid a clash with Tokyo Olympic Games. The 11th Edition of the World Games which had originally been planned to take place from 15–25 July 2021 have now be pushed by an year, and will be held from 7th to 17th July 2022. The 11th Edition of the World Games 2021 will be hosted by Birmingham, United States. The decision of IWGA comes in the wake of postponement of Tokyo Olympics 2020. Earlier on 30th March 2020, the IOC i.e. International Olympic Committee decided to postpone the Tokyo Olympics 2020, to July next year, owing to the global health emergency of COVID-19.

### ***COVID-19: Wimbledon cancelled for the First Time since World Wars***

Wimbledon was canceled on Wednesday because of the coronavirus pandemic, the first time since World War II that the oldest Grand Slam tennis tournament won't be played. The All England Club announced after an emergency meeting that the event it refers to simply as The Championships is being scrapped for 2020. Wimbledon was scheduled to be played on the club's grass courts on the outskirts of London from June 29 to July 12. Instead, the next edition of the tournament will be June 28 to July 11, 2021.

### ***FIFA Under 17 Women's World Cup postponed to November***

The Postponement of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, scheduled to be played in November in India, will not derail preparations for the tournament as the country is still committed to "delivering a memorable" meet whenever it is possible, Roma Khanna, the tournament director of the Local Organising Committee, said. FIFA, the world's governing body for football, on Saturday announced that it took the decision to postpone the tournament after FIFA-Confederations working group, which was recently established by the Bureau of the FIFA Council to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, recommended the same.

### ***Gol extends Foreign Trade Policy***

New Delhi: The government on Tuesday extended the existing foreign trade policy for one year till March 2021 amid the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic outbreak and the lockdown to contain its spread. "The existing foreign trade policy 2015-20 which is valid up to March 31 this year is extended up to March 31, 2021," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification. As per the notification, the validity of various import-linked export schemes.

### ***National Health Authority partners with Uber: Dedicated Transport Services for Health care workers***

The National Health Authority has announced its partnership with Uber India to provide safe, reliable and efficient transport for India's frontline healthcare workers engaged in the treatment of Covid-19 patients. Uber will initially facilitate the provision of 150 cars free of cost to support medical facilities in New Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Prayagraj and Patna through its recently launched UberMedic service. All UberMedic cars supplied to NHA will be equipped with roof-to-floor plastic sheeting enclosing the driver's seat.

### ***Ex-Service Men rise to "Service Before Self" to fight COVID-19***

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Thursday announced that it is mobilising thousands of ex-servicemen (ESM) to assist state governments and district administrations wherever required to supplement the country's efforts to fight the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic. An MoD spokesperson said the department of ex-servicemen welfare has taken the initiative to mobilise the services of veterans as part of an overall plan to increase the available workforce to assist the civil administration across the country.

### ***PM Modi discusses COVID-19 measures with the Chief Ministers***

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold a video conference with all the Chief Ministers of the states on Thursday over COVID-19. Earlier, the Prime Minister had on March 20 interacted with the Chief Ministers via video conferencing to discuss measures to combat COVID-19. At that time, he said that the threat of COVID-19 is common for all states and underscored the need of Centre and all states working together.

### ***Ordinance passed for 100% Tax Exemption on donations to PM Cares Fund***

New Delhi: The government has issued an ordinance to give effect to the relaxation in several compliances including extension in last dates to June 30 for making investments in instruments such as National Savings Certificates, Public Provident Fund for claiming income tax benefits. Income tax Act, Benami Act are being sought to be amended via the ordinance - Taxation and Other LAws(Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020. The ordinance also seeks to amend the Income Tax Act.

### ***India seeks 6 billion USD loans from ADB, AIIB***

India is seeking loans worth \$6 billion from multilateral institutions including the Asian Development Bank to combat COVID-19, Bloomberg reported on Friday. The central government is in talks with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and ADB to secure these loans to further the testing and infrastructure facilities in the country. India has already secured \$1 billion funding from the World Bank to better its health sector for fighting against the coronavirus pandemic according to previous reports.

### ***COVID-19: World Bank offers 1 billion USD for India' Emergency Response Project***

Washington: The World Bank has approved USD 1 billion emergency funding for India to help it tackle the coronavirus pandemic, which has claimed 76 lives and infected 2,500 people in the country. The World Bank's first set of aid projects, amounting to USD 1.9 billion, will assist 25 countries, and new operations are moving forward in over 40 nations using the fast-track process, the bank said on Thursday.

### ***India and China celebrate their 70th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations***

On April 1, 2020, China and India usher in the important moment of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Looking around the world, China and India, as the only two emerging countries with a population of more than 1 billion, shoulder the historical mission of national rejuvenation, play a key role in the process of the collective rise of developing countries, and inject strong momentum into the profound changes unseen in a century.

### ***United Nations Nuclear Agency sends COVID-19 testing gears to 40 countries***

The U.N. atomic agency is sending an initial batch of equipment to about 40 countries with which they will be able to perform a standard test for the coronavirus involving a technique derived from nuclear science, it said on Wednesday. The technique, real time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/how-is-the-covid-19-virus-detected-using-real-time-rt-pcr>, or real time RT-PCR.

### ***United Nations adopts first resolution on Corona Virus***

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Friday welcomed the adoption of a resolution that has called for intensified international cooperation to defeat the coronavirus, describing it as an important step in the fight against the pandemic and its economic and social consequences. The General Assembly on Thursday unanimously adopted the resolution, co-sponsored by 188 nations including India. "It's a very important step, gathering all countries of the world in a very strong.

### ***Operation Sanjeevani: 6.2 million tonnes of essential medicines supplied to Maldives***

An Indian Air Force (IAF) C-130J transport aircraft on Thursday delivered 6.2 tonne of essential medicines and hospital consumables to Maldives under Operation Sanjeevani. These medicines and consumables were procured from eight suppliers in India but couldn't be transported through any other means due to the 21-day lockdown imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19, an official statement said.

### ***Bio Fortified Carrots developed by farmer scientist***

Madhuban Gajar is a biofortified carrot variety that is highly nutritious and has been developed through the selection method with iron content (276.7 mg/kg) and higher Beta-Carotene content (277.75 mg/kg).



### ***India begins working on Genome Sequencing of COVID-19***

Indian scientists have started genome sequencing strains of the novel coronavirus isolated from patients in different parts of the country as they work against time to track its spread and look for signs of emerging mutations. This is part of a large sequencing project led by the New Delhi-based National Centre for Disease Control with the help of scientists from two premier research laboratories, the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, and the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), New Delhi.

### ***Gol to provide "Mass Manufacturing Ready" hardware and software for free***

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune on Thursday announced two innovations -- Digital IR Thermometer and oxygen enrichment unit -- that can help in the mitigation of the coronavirus outbreak. The CSIR-NCL's Venture Centre's incubatee BMEK headed by Pratik Kulkarni has developed a handheld digital IR thermometer, which is an important component of measures to mitigate COVID-19.



### ***MHRD AICTE COVID-19 Student Helpline portal" launched***

MHRD Ministry launched the unique MHRD-AICTE COVID-19 student helpline portal on April 3, 2020. The portal has been developed by student interns Shivanshu and Akash of Graphic Era University in the record time of one day. The Minister of Human Resource Development, Ramesh Pokhriyal launched the website in the presence of MP Poonia, Vice Chairman AICTE, Buddha Chandrashekhar, Chief Coordinating officer AICTE.

### ***Cabinet: Ordinance to cut salary of PM and MPs by 30% approved***

The Union Cabinet on Monday approved a 30% cut in the salaries of all Members of Parliament and a two-year suspension of the MP Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme so that the amount saved can go to the Consolidated Fund of India to fight COVID-19, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said on Monday. Addressing a press conference after a Cabinet meeting, Mr. Javadekar said the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved an ordinance to amend the Salaries.

### ***Task Force to be set up to prevent Human and Animal transmission of COVID-19***

A day after a tiger at a New York City zoo tested positive for the coronavirus, wildlife authorities across India have been asked to remain on high alert, check for any symptom among animals, and reduce human interaction with them.



### ***Gol launches 5 research projects to mitigate the spread of COVID-19***

The government has launched a nationwide research and development (R&D) initiative to combat coronavirus, which neither has a medicine nor a vaccine. The Department of Science and Technology - Science and Engineering Board (DST-SERB) has announced several special research projects. The first set of 5 projects have been selected for further development into implementable technologies. These projects were selected after peer-review and assessment by a Special Expert Committee for CoVID-19 projects.

### ***Govt launches AarogyaSetu mobile app to track spread of COVID-19***

New Delhi: The ministry of electronics and IT launched a mobile app on Thursday called AarogyaSetu which will help people in identifying the risk of getting affected by the CoronaVirus. The app built through public private partnership "assesses themselves the risk for their catching the Corona Virus infection. It will calculate this based on their interaction with others, using cutting edge Bluetooth technology, algorithms and artificial intelligence," an official statement said.

### ***Gol launches "Containment Plan for Large Outbreaks***

The outbreak of the novel Coronavirus across the world has affected around 1 million people. This has impacted India as well where more than 3,000 positive cases have been reported and more than 70 people have died. Assessing the risk and strategic approach to combat COVID-19 infection,



### ***India restricts export ban of HCQ drug***

The Government of India announced on Tuesday that it had rescinded its earlier ban on the export of malaria drug hydroxychloroquine (HCQ), which is now being used in countries such as the U.S. as a possible line of treatment for COVID-19, setting off a controversy over whether the two-day old blanket ban was overturned under pressure from Washington. Data | United States bears the global brunt of new coronavirus cases . "In view of the humanitarian aspects of the pandemic.

### ***Imports of Edible Oil decline in India by 32.44%***

NEW DELHI: India's edible oil imports declined 32.44 per cent to 9,41,219 tonne in March due to government restrictions on purchase of refined palm oil from the overseas market, trade body SEA said on Monday. India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, had imported 13,93,255 tonne in March last year. The share of palm oil is more than 60 per cent of the country's total vegetable oil imports. As per the provisional data released by the Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEA), there was a 90 per cent fall in import of RBD palmoil.

### ***Supreme Court rules private labs to make COVID-19 tests free of cost***

Tests relating to COVID-19, whether done in approved government or private laboratories, shall be free of cost, the Supreme Court ordered on Wednesday. Issue the necessary directions immediately, it told the government. A Bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and S. Ravindra Bhat held that tests relating to COVID-19 must be carried out only in NABL accredited Labs or any agencies approved by the WHO or the ICMR. The order was passed on a petition filed by advocate Shashank Deo Sudhi to implement free COVID-19 testing by private labs.

### ***Indian Railways: 2,500 doctors, Isolation wards, time tabled parcel trains***

Stepping up its fight against COVID-19, Indian Railways has decided to deploy more than 2,500 doctors and 35,000 paramedical staff across the country. The railways has 586 health units, 45 sub-divisional hospitals, 56 divisional hospitals, 8 production units hospitals and 16 zonal hospitals across the country. "Most of these facilities will now be dedicated to combat the coronavirus. It has also been decided that all health services of Indian Railways will be available to all Central government employees across the country now.

### ***Gol sanctions Rs 15,000 crores for its COVID-19 Package***

The Centre on Thursday approved a Covid-19 package worth Rs 15,000 crore to build on health infrastructure till March 2024 even as the numbers surged past 6,000-mark. The Covid-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package will be given to state governments and Union Territories in three phases — January 2020 to June 2020, July 2020 to March 2021 and from April 2021 to March 2024. This fund would be divided on the basis of the number of positive cases and the size of the state and the UT.

### ***Delhi Government announces 5T plan to control COVID-19***

To fight the Covid-19 pandemic, Delhi government has launched a 5T plan, which consists of testing, tracing, treatment, team work, tracking and monitoring. "We have prepared a 5-point plan after talking to experts on how to control coronavirus and to make sure Delhi is ready to fight corona — this is the 5T plan," said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Emphasising on the importance of testing, Kejriwal said that testing is very important to deal with coronavirus.."

### ***"Operation Shield" launched by the Delhi State Government***

The Delhi government on Friday claimed that 'Operation SHIELD', aimed at countering the community spread of the novel coronavirus announced a day earlier by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, has stalled COVID-19 from spreading at Dilshad Garden. In the last 10 days, there had been no reported cases from the area, the government claimed in a statement while terming it as the first instance of the "successful implementation" of the initiative.



### ***Japan declares Emergency***

Japan's prime minister, Shinzo Abe, has declared a month-long state of emergency in response to the coronavirus pandemic, and unveiled a record stimulus package aimed at steering the world's third-largest economy through its biggest crisis since the war. Abe told a televised news conference a recent sharp rise in Covid-19 cases in Tokyo and other urban areas had forced him to rethink Japan's approach towards stemming the outbreak.

### ***United Nations suspended rotation and deployment of Peace keeping forces***

UN chief Antonio Guterres has suspended the rotation and deployment of peacekeepers until June 30 to mitigate the risk of transmission of the novel coronavirus. "Our priorities are to ensure the Covid-19-free status of incoming uniformed personnel, and mitigate the risk that UN peacekeepers could be a contagion vector and simultaneously maintain our operational capabilities," Guterres' Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said at the daily press briefing on Tuesday.

### ***Saudi-led Coalition calls Ceasefire in Yemen***

The coalition said it wanted to support UN efforts for a political solution and help stop coronavirus spread, though no cases have been reported in Yemen. UN Secretary General António Guterres welcomed the move. But a senior official in the rebel Houthi movement, which is battling pro-government forces backed by the coalition, called it a "ploy". Hours after the coalition's ceasefire announcement on Wednesday night, both sides accused one another of having launched attacks.

### ***Life Insurance Council: "Force Majeure" does not apply for COVID-19 cases***

Life Insurance Council, the face of the Indian Life Insurance industry, has confirmed that the clause of 'Force Majeure' will not apply in case of COVID-19 death claims. The Life Insurance Council has assured that all life insurance companies will process COVID-19 death claims. Hence, all life insurers, both public and private, are committed to process any death claim pertaining to COVID-19 at the earliest.

### ***RBI: CPI Inflation to ease from 4.8% to 4.4% in Q2***

Consumer price index based inflation which stayed elevated in the last few months is expected to soften during the course of the financial year, the Reserve Bank of India said in its monetary policy report. CPI inflation is tentatively projected to ease from 4.8% in Q1:2020-21 to 4.4% in Q2, 2.7% in Q3 and 2.4% in Q4, with the caveat that in the prevailing high uncertainty, aggregate demand may weaken further than currently-anticipated and ease core inflation further, while supply bottlenecks could exacerbate pressures more than expected," RBI said.

### ***"iGOT"-An Online Training Portal launched on DIKSHA platform of MHRD***

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday (April 9, 2020) launched a training module named 'Integrated Government Online training' (iGOT) portal on Ministry of Human Resource Development's (MHRD) DIKSHA platform for the capacity building of frontline workers to handle the COVID-19 pandemic efficiently.



### ***NASA's Artemis: First Human Base Camp on moon's south pole by 2024***

As per the report submitted by NASA, the Artemis base camp will be a lunar foundation surface habitat that will host four astronauts at the moon's south pole for a week's visit. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has been working on the 'Artemis Program' that aims at landing humans on the moon by 2024.



### ***Prana Vayu: Low Cost Portable Ventilator developed by IIT Roorkee***

Amid the growing demand for hospital ventilators due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IIT-Roorkee has developed a low-cost portable ventilator in association with AIIMS-Rishikesh, which can be manufactured for just ₹25,000. On Friday, the machine was presented to more than 450 companies and several have expressed interest in commercial production, IIT-Roorkee said. Named 'Prana-Vayu'.

### ***"Dekho Apna Desh": A Webinar launched by Tourism Ministry***

New Delhi: The ministry of tourism said on Tuesday it was launching the Dekho Apna Desh webinar series. The ministry said the webinar series will provide information on the many destinations and the 'depth' and 'expanse' of the culture and heritage of India. The first webinar on Tuesday touched upon the history of Delhi and was titled "City of Cities- Delhi's Personal Diary". The ministry said owing to COVID-19, tourism is hugely impacted with no domestic or international movement.

### ***World Bank: India is expected to grow at 1.5% to 2.8%***

India is likely to record its worst growth performance since the 1991 liberalisation this fiscal year as the coronavirus outbreak severely disrupts the economy, the World Bank said on Sunday. India's economy is expected to grow 1.5 per cent to 2.8 per cent in the 2020-21 fiscal which started on April 1, the World Bank said in its South Asia Economic Focus report. It estimated India will grow 4.8 per cent to 5 per cent in the 2019-20 fiscal that ended on March 31.

### ***International Monetary Fund predicts India's Growth Rate at 1.9%***

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut its projection of India's economic growth to 1.9 per cent for the current financial year, the lowest since the 1991 balance of payments (BoP) crisis. It had earlier forecast a growth rate of 5.8 per cent. This revision was done in light of the impact of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), and the subsequent nationwide lockdown imposed by the central government to check the spread of the virus. However, the projection is not low comparatively.

### ***PUSA: Decontamination Tunnel developed by ICAR***

Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Chaudhary on Thursday inaugurated a 'PUSA decontamination and sanitizing tunnel' developed by the government research body ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute here in the national capital. The sanitization protocol includes hand washing with foot operated soap and water dispenser and fogging in a sanitizing tunnel for 20 seconds, an official statement said. In this tunnel.

### ***Two new products to enable COVID-19 disinfection process introduced by DRDO***

New Delhi (NVI): Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) introduced two new products today to enable COVID-19 disinfection process in public places. DRDO has been coming up with several solutions on the basis of its technology experience to help the country in fighting against the pandemic.



### ***"Global Indian Physician COVID-19 Collaborative" by doctors of Indian Origin***

Doctors of Indian origin across the world have joined hands under the umbrella of Global Indian Physician COVID-19 Collaborative' to combat coronavirus which has engulfed 185 countries and claimed over one lakh lives. The move aims to "foster cross systems learning" to develop prevention and management strategy for COVID-19 which will include encompassing vaccination, newer diagnostic tests, ventilation strategies, early warning algorithms to identify deterioration, use of antiviral therapy, plasma therapy and novel agents.

### ***OPEC and Russia approve biggest Oil Cuts***

Measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus have destroyed demand for fuel and driven down oil prices, straining budgets of oil producers and hammering the U.S. shale industry, which is more vulnerable to low prices due to its higher costs. The group, known as OPEC+, said it had agreed to reduce output by 9.7 million barrels per day (bpd) for May and June, after four days of talks and following pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to arrest the price decline.

### ***US stops WHO funding***

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday halted America's funding of the World Health Organisation, while ordering a review to assess the institution's role in "severely mismanaging and covering up" the spread of the deadly coronavirus. The novel coronavirus, which originated from Wuhan City of central China's Hubei province in November, has so far killed at least 119,000 people globally, including more than 25,000 in the United States, according to Johns Hopkins University.

### ***North Korea test fires anti-ship missiles***

The missile tests came on the eve of a national holiday in North Korea to celebrate the birthday of Kim Il-Sung, the founder of the country and grandfather of the current leader, Kim Jong-un. Launched at around 7 am (2200 GMT), the anti-ship missiles plunged into the sea more than 150 kilometres (93 miles) off the east coast town of Munchon, while the Sukhois carried out firing tests, officials at South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) told reporters.

### ***India attends G20 Finance Ministerial Meeting***

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday shared with G20 Finance Ministers the policy measures undertaken by the Government and RBI to support the poor, vulnerable and various sectors of the Indian economy to tide over the COVID-19 induced crisis. Participating in the virtual session of the 2nd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting under Saudi Arabian presidency today, Sitharaman said that so far within a couple of weeks.

### ***India-WHO engages National Polio Surveillance Network for COVID-19***

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has welcomed the world health body's cooperation with India to leverage strategies that helped the country win its war against polio into the response to COVID-19 outbreak, saying such joint efforts will help defeat the pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has said it will work with India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to leverage the strategies that helped the country eradicate polio to fight the pandemic.

### ***South Korea ruling party wins election***

South Korea's ruling party has won a landslide victory in national assembly elections, in what is being seen as an endorsement of President Moon Jae-in's response to the coronavirus pandemic. Moon's left-leaning Democratic party and its smaller affiliate won 180 seats in the 300-seat assembly – the biggest majority in the national assembly by any party since South Korea's transition to democracy in 1987 – according to the Yonhap news agency.

### ***India to receive 6,50,000 COVID-19 testing kits from China***

NEW DELHI : India on Thursday received 6,50,000 coronavirus testing kits from China even as it ramped up global hunt to procure more medical equipment including from the US, the UK, South Korea and France in view of rising cases of the infection, government sources said. They said large consignments of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits are being bought from a number of countries to meet their increasing demands by several states battling to stem the spread of the infection.

### ***Uttar Pradesh: First State to start Pool Testing***

Coronavirus in UP: Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India to start pool testing for Covid-19 infection. The state health department has tested 30 pools of five samples in Agra, one of the Covid-19 hotspots in the country and all tested negative, news agency ANI reported quoting UP Principal Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad today. There are as many as 14 testing labs in the state and all of them are conducting a test of over 2,000 samples every day.

### ***AIIB to finance 500 million USD projects to strengthen National Health Care Systems***

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is considering a proposal for financing \$500-million project in India to strengthen country's national health care systems. The scope of funding will also include the purchase of equipment and detection capacity as country battles COVID-19 pandemic. AIIB, Beijing based multilateral agency, in a statement said it is currently reviewing projects from several of its members, many in collaboration with other multilateral development banks. The assistance for healthcare project in India is one such example.



### ***India to host Asian Boxing Championship***

The national sports federation has announced on Monday that it will host the Asian Boxing Championships for men and women in November-December this year. The federation remains positive that the coronavirus pandemic will be wiped out by then, as per the Hindustan Times report. The event is usually a biennial competition but was held in consecutive years in the past. "We were awarded the hosting rights in February after a meeting of the Asian Boxing .

### ***IPL 2020 suspended by BCCI***

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Thursday suspended the 13th edition of Indian Premier League (IPL 2020) "till further notice" in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, which has claimed more than 400 lives and affected over 12,000 in the country. "Due to the evolving global health concerns regarding Covid-19 and lockdown measures implemented by the Government of India to contain the spread of the pandemic.

### ***National Rural Livelihood Mission: PPEs by Women SHGs***

With 1.3 billion Indians in the midst of an unprecedented 40-day lockdown to defeat the coronavirus, the collective strength of women's self-help groups (SHGs) has come to the fore. In over 90 percent of India's districts, away from the limelight of the cities.



### ***Integrated Geospatial Platform to complement Arogya Setu***

To "complement" the Arogya Setu App, a government endorsed application that helps trace the contacts of those who may have been infected by COVID-19, the Survey of India (SoI), the country's apex map maker has made public a trove of maps.



### ***US approves missile sales to India***

The U.S. State Department has approved two potential missile deals with India, for an estimated \$92 million and \$63 million, the State Department has said in a statement. The first deal, for which Boeing is the contractor, is for ten AGM-84L Harpoon Block II air launched missiles and related equipment. These missiles can be fitted onto Boeing's 8-PI (Poseidon Eight India) maritime patrol aircraft and are intended to enhance India's capability in anti-surface warfare while defending its sea lanes.

### ***Chess Legend Viswanathan Anand named ambassador of WWF India***

Five-time World chess champion Viswanathan Anand is the new Ambassador for World Wide Fund (WWF) India's Environment Education programme. Commenting on his association with WWF India, Anand said, "Our children deserve a better, greener and more sustainable world than the one we are living in today and it is our responsibility as parents and elders to show them the way. I am very excited and happy to join WWF India and work together with them to help more and more children and youth know about the need to protect our natural world.

### ***ADB assures 2.2 billion USD loan to India***

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masatsugu Asakawa on Friday assured Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman of \$2.2 billion (about ₹ 16,500 crore) support to India in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. In a call, Mr. Asakawa commended the Indian government's decisive response to the pandemic, including a national health emergency program, tax and other relief measures provided to businesses and a \$23 billion (₹1.7 lakh crore) economic relief package announced on March 26.

### ***What is Helicopter Money being suggested by World Experts?***

With no quick escape in sight for Covid-ravaged economies, authorities the world over are going back to the drawing board to find strategies to deal with this nightmare. One such strategy doing the rounds is 'helicopter money'. It basically means non-repayable money transfer from the central bank to the government. It seeks to goad people into spending more and thereby boost the sagging economy.

### ***RBI cuts Reverse Repo rate to 3.75%, Rs 50,000 crores for LTRO 2.0***

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday freed up more capital for banks to lend, announced a fresh Rs 50,000 crore targeted long-term repo operation (LTRO 2.0) to address the liquidity stress of shadow banks and microfinance institutions and hinted at the possibility of further rate cuts going forward. Addressing media for a second time within a month, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das unveiled fresh measures aimed at maintaining adequate liquidity.

### ***RBI launches OBICUS***

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday launched latest round of quarterly order books, inventories and capacity utilisation survey (OBICUS) of manufacturing sector. "The survey provides valuable input for monetary policy formulation," the RBI said as it launched the 49th round of survey for the reference period January-March 2020. The RBI has been conducting the OBICUS of the manufacturing sector on a quarterly basis since 2008.

### ***Electric Vehicle Sale increases by 20% in 2020-21***

NEW DELHI: Electric vehicle sales in the country increased by 20% to 156,000 units in the last financial year. According to data available with industry body Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV), this includes 152,000 two-wheelers, 3400 cars and 600 buses. The corresponding sale for the FY 18-19 was 126,000 two-wheelers, 3600 cars and around 400 buses making a total of 130,000 units. This growth of 20% has largely come from two-wheelers. This figure does not include E Rickshaws which is still largely with the unorganized sector with a reported sale of around 90,000 units.

### ***CBDT issues clarification over Section 115 BAC of Income Tax Act***

The finance ministry has clarified that an employer will have to deduct TDS for FY2020-21, from an employee's salary on the basis of the new lower tax regime if the employee opts for it and informs the employer of the same. It is further clarified that once the regime is opted by an individual at the start of the financial year, then such option cannot be changed during the financial year as far as TDS by the employer is concerned. However, the option can be changed at the time of filing.

### ***New Development Bank's financial assistance of 1 billion USD to India***

India has pitched for enhancing the emergency assistance of New Development Bank to \$10 billion from \$1 billion now. The issue was flagged by union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman at annual meeting of the board of governors of the National Development Bank (NDB) via video conference on Monday. Sitharaman appreciated the NDB's effort on fast tracking of financial assistance of about \$5 billion to BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries.

### ***United Nations: Consensus Resolution for equitable access to future vaccines***

The resolution also highlights the "crucial leading role" played by the World Health Organization, which has faced criticism from Washington and others about its handling of the pandemic. The resolution, which was drafted by Mexico and received US support, calls for strengthening the "scientific international cooperation necessary to combat COVID-19 and to bolster coordination," including with the private sector. The call for cooperation comes as research laboratories and pharmaceutical manufacturers launch expensive efforts to develop.

### ***World Bank: Decline of Money sent by Migrant Workers by 110 billion USD***

The amount of money migrant workers send back to their home countries is expected to decrease by almost \$110bn this year as the Covid 19 pandemic increases unemployment across the world. Remittances to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are projected to fall by nearly 20% to \$445bn (£360bn), “representing the loss of a crucial financial lifeline for many vulnerable households”, the World Bank said. Describing the decrease as the worst in recent history, including the 2008 financial crisis, the Washington-based development bank said.

### ***Lebanon: First Arab Country to legalize Marijuana cultivation***

Lebanese legislators approved a law on Tuesday legalising the cultivation of cannabis for medicinal and industrial use. The decision, which makes Lebanon the first Arab country to legalise marijuana growing, offers economic incentives for the debt-ridden state.



### ***Indian Army supports Narela Quarantine Centre***

The army has taken over the daytime management of the Narela quarantine centre, which is one of the biggest such facilities in India for handling suspected coronavirus cases and has been housing close to 1,000 people linked to a religious congregation of the Tablighi Jamaat last month. This is the first time that the army has taken control of a civilian quarantine centre. From April 16, the army took the initiative of managing the facility from 8 am to 8 pm, relieving the Delhi government doctors and medical staff, who would run the facility during the night.

### ***President's New Secretary: Former ret'd IAS officer Kapil Dev Tripathi***

Kapil Dev Tripathi was on Monday appointed Secretary to President Ram Nath Kovind. The 1980-batch retired IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre will replace Sanjay Kothari, who was selected as the Chief Vigilance Commissioner in February. Mr. Tripathi's tenure is on a contract basis and is co-terminus with the tenure of the President. Mr. Tripathi, who retired as the Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in June 2018, was heading the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) that does top-level recruitments in the central public sector enterprises.

### ***National Biofuel Coordination Committee: Surplus Rice to be used to make Sanitizers***

New Delhi: The government on Monday approved that surplus rice available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) can be converted into ethanol in order to manufacture alcohol-based hand sanitisers and also for blending with petrol. The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC). "A meeting of NBCC was held today under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan, wherein it was approved that the surplus rice available with FCI.

### ***Gol: Dashboard launched to provide details about dhabas and repair shops***

Amid Covid-19 fears, the government's digital dose, to revive the essential goods transportation following partial relief in lockdown, has hit the right road. In line with the latest tryst with technology, the ministry of road and transport will not just ensure smooth run on the national highways, but will also guide through the nearest dhaba or the truck repair shops. The ministry of road transport and highways (MoRTH) has launched an online dashboard link.

### ***"COVID India Seva": An interactive Platform launched by Gol***

On April 21, India's union minister of health and family welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the Covid India Seva, an interactive platform on Twitter aimed at providing real-time solutions to Covid-19 related queries. So, now people across India can get their novel coronavirus disease doubts cleared by tweeting to @CovidIndiaSeva, a Twitter account by the ministry of health and family welfare, Government of India. Vardhan announced on Twitter.

### ***Food Processing Industries to remain open during extended Lock Down***

The central government has released a list of economic activities that will be permitted after April 20, 2020 in certain areas keeping in view the interests of farmers and daily wage earners. The home ministry issued an order delineating a list of activities that will be allowed after April 20, 2020 and those which are prohibited. "The activities prohibited across the country include travel by air, rail and road; operation of educational and training institutions; industrial and commercial activities; hospitality services; all cinema halls, shopping complexes, theatres, etc.

### ***Ministry of HRD launches VidyaDaan 2.0***

NEW DELHI: The ministry of human resource development launched the national programme VidyaDaan 2.0 for inviting e-learning content contribution on Wednesday. It is a common national programme to develop and contribute e-learning content and a chance to be recognized nationally. The content will be used on DIKSHA app to help millions of children across the country to continue their learning anytime and anywhere. The union HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' e-launched VidyaDaan 2.0.



### ***ICMR: Pooled Testing only in areas of less than 5% COVID-19 prevalence***

Pooled testing is being seen as an effective way to conduct covid-19 tests on more people while reducing the load on laboratories. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has also recommended using it in low-prevalence areas. Mint analyses the pros and cons. Pooled testing involves putting multiple swab samples collected from people who may have been exposed to the SARS-Cov2 virus, and testing all of them using one real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test kit.

### ***Alternative Academic Calendar released by Ministry of HRD***

NEW DELHI: In order to engage students during their stay at home during the lockdown, Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Thursday released an Alternative Academic Calendar for upper primary classes (Classes VI to VIII). "The alternative academic calendars at primary and upper primary stage (Classes VI to VIII) have been developed by the NCERT under the guidance of the MHRD," read an official statement.

### ***PV Sindhu named as ambassador in the Badminton World Federation campaign***

NEW DELHI: World Champion PV Sindhu was on Wednesday unveiled as one of the ambassadors for Badminton World Federation's (BWF) 'i am badminton' awareness campaign. The campaign provides a platform for players to express their love and respect for badminton by advocating and committing to clean and honest play. Sindhu, an Olympic silver medallist, said playing clean and honest is very important in any sport. This message starts with one voice. If we as ambassadors can highlight this, then I think this will spread to more player.

### ***NASA: Air Pollution in India at 20 year low***

Washington DC: Air pollution over northern India has plummeted to a 20-year-low for this time of the year, according to satellite data published by US space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The US space agency's satellite sensors observed aerosol levels at a 20-year low post the countrywide lockdown, implemented to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. "We knew we would see changes in atmospheric composition in many places during the lockdown,".

### ***Uttar Pradesh-First State to Geo Tag Community Kitchens***

Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country to geotag its 7,368 community kitchens and community shelters across 75 districts which produce 12 lakh food packets a day, a senior official said on Sunday. The state government has also tied up with Google to 'Geo-map' the locations of all these establishments on the Google Maps app for ease of beneficiaries, he said. "The sudden onset of the COVID-19 lockdown in the country.

### ***Goa: The First State to become COVID-19 free; Manipur-Second and Tripura - Third***

Days after Goa and Manipur became India's first two states to have zero covid-19 cases, Tripura Chief Minister on Thursday announced that the state has become coronavirus- free after its second Covid-19 patient tested negative. "UPDATE! The Second corona patient of Tripura has been found NEGATIVE after consecutive tests. Hence our State has become Corona free. I request everyone to maintain Social distancing and follow Government guidelines. Stay Home Stay Safe," the chief minister tweeted.

### ***Gol brings in ordinance making attack on doctors punishable up to 7 years***

NEW DELHI: The Centre is set to promulgate an ordinance that will make violence and harassment against healthcare workers deployed in combating Covid-19 a non-bailable offence. The offence will attract a maximum punishment of seven years' imprisonment and Rs 5 lakh fine. The move follows reports of attack on doctors and other health workers in different parts of the country and a demand from the community for a law to protect them.

### ***SC on anti-narcotics law: Quantity will determine punishment not Purity***

New Delhi: In an important verdict, the Supreme Court has provided more teeth to the anti-narcotics law and held that it is the quantity of the entire banned drug mixture and not its purity which will determine the punishment for an offender under the legislation. The top court said that the amount of neutral substance in a mixture has to be included along with the actual weight of the banned substances for determining whether it is a "small or commercial quantity" under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

### ***CBDT releases relief funds to MSME***

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) today said that Income tax refunds to nearly 8.2 lakh small businesses worth Rs 5,204 crore have been issued since April 8th 2020. These income tax refunds would help MSMEs to carry on their business activities without pay cuts and layoffs in Covid-19 pandemic situations, the department said in a press release. The tax department said it has till date issued nearly 14 lakh refunds up to Rs 5 lakh each in order to help taxpayers in Covid-19 pandemic situation.

### ***Gol amends FDI policy***

Amid the coronavirus crisis, the government has brought a significant amendment in its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) regulations on Saturday, which could be a direct attack to its neighbour China on the economic front. According to a press note by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, any country that shares border with India has to approach the government for investing and not go via the automatic route.



### ***Fifteenth Finance Commission to assess impacts of COVID-19***

NEW DELHI : A key economic advisory council of the Union government will meet this week to brainstorm the public spending needed to revive the economy amid mounting demands for a fiscal stimulus. The council, led by Fifteenth Finance Commission chairman N.K. Singh, will over two days, starting Thursday, deliberate on the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on economic growth in this fiscal year and the next, and possible assumptions for tax buoyancy and revenue during the period.

### ***COVID-19: Hike in Dearness Allowance for the year 2021 put on hold***

The government, via an office memorandum dated April 23, 2020, announced its decision to put on hold the hike in dearness allowance (DA) for the year. (In March, the union cabinet had approved an increase of 4 per cent in DA to 21 per cent.) Central government employees and pensioners will now continue to receive DA at current rates, i.e., 17 per cent as part of their salary/pension, according to the memorandum.

### ***DRDO Mobile COVID-19 Testing Lab inaugurated by Defence Minister***

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched a first-of-its kind BSL3 Mobile Virology Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (MVRDL) in India, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), at the ESIC Medical College and Hospital at Sanathnagar. Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy, Union Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar and Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao attended the video conference of the launch.

### ***NOOR: Iran's first military satellite launched successfully***

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) surprised the world last week with a successful launch of its first military satellite dubbed Nour (light) into the Earth's orbit. The satellite was on board a previously unknown launch vehicle named Qased, or messenger, and was deployed from a military base in Semnan province, east of the capital, Tehran. The launch - carried out on the 41st anniversary of IRGC's establishment - brought an end to a string of previous failures in developing Iran's aerospace programme.

### ***What are Immunity Passports that are warned against by WHO?***

The World Health Organization has warned governments against issuing “immunity passports” to allow people who show antibodies for coronavirus to return to work. As leaders across the world turn their focus to reopening their economies after weeks of social restrictions designed to contain the pandemic, many have been hoping to deploy some form of certificate system allowing people deemed immune to travel and work. But in a scientific brief published on Friday evening, the WHO cautioned against such plans.

### ***India sends HCQ and sterile surgical gloves to Bangladesh***

India on Sunday gifted one lakh anti-malarial tablets of hydroxychloroquine and 50,000 surgical gloves to Bangladesh to help it combat the coronavirus pandemic which has infected nearly 5,000 people and killed over 100 in the country. India’s High Commissioner Riva Ganguly Das, on the occasion of India dispatching the second tranche of assistance to Bangladesh, invoked legendary poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore to highlight the importance of India-Bangladesh relations.

### ***Pakistan test fires anti-ship missiles successfully***

Islamabad: The Pakistan Navy on Saturday successfully test-fired a series of anti-ship missiles in the North Arabian Sea, a spokesman said. The missiles were fired from surface ships, fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, the Navy’s spokesperson Rear Admiral Arshid Javed said. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi witnessed the firing of the missiles, he said in a statement..

### ***G-20 launches COVID-19 Tools (Act) Accelerator***

New Delhi: The Saudi G20 Presidency has welcome the launch of “Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator”, a landmark, global and timely collaboration for the accelerated development, production and equitable access to new COVID-19 tools. The ACT Accelerator initiative will be a global platform for action to enhance connections and leverage interdependencies for collective partnership, problem-solving, mobilizing and guiding investments, and driving equitable access for new COVID-19.

### ***WHO map includes Ladakh as Chinese Territory***

New Delhi: The World Health Organisation (WHO), which is facing accusation of delaying declaring coronavirus a pandemic allegedly at Beijing’s behest, seems to have floundered on the depiction of China’s map on its website. Parts of Ladakh (Aksai-Chin) in the China section of the WHO website has been shown as part of Chinese territory with a dotted line and colour code. Also, Jammu & Kashmir and the rest of India are depicted in different colours.



### ***Exercise Pitch Black Cancelled***

Australia has informed India that their premier multilateral air combat training exercise Pitch Black 2020 scheduled from July 27 to August 14 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation, defence sources said. This was conveyed by Air Marshal Meg Hupfeld, Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), in a letter to Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, in mid-April. "The RAAF Chief informed of his decision to cancel the exercise this year due to the current and anticipated impacts of the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19,".

### ***ADB approves 1.5 billion USD for India to fight COVID-19***

The Asian Development Bank unveiled a \$1.5 billion Covid-19 package for India on Tuesday and is in discussions with the government on further aid for specific sectors. It's also in discussions with the country's private sector to provide support where needed. The multilateral lender has begun consultations with India on providing support for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and infrastructure projects through credit guarantees.

### ***BRICS Foreign ministers to attend COVID-19 meeting***

India will participate in a key meeting of the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) foreign ministers on Tuesday to discuss the fallout of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. The Sars-Cov-2, which first emerged in China's Wuhan city late last year, has killed more than 200,000 people worldwide and infected over 3 million others, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The meeting, to be held by the rotating chair Russia, will be convened via video conference.

### ***G20 Digital Economy Ministers meet held through video conference***

A co-ordinated global response using digital technologies is needed to fight covid-19, with greater impetus on strengthening IT and cybersecurity, in addition to enabling non-personal data exchange in a secure manner and promoting use of digital solutions in healthcare. This was agreed upon by G20 IT ministers including Electronics & IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad in a virtual meeting earlier today.



### ***India placed on the “Priority Watch List” for Intellectual Property Protection by the US***

The US on Wednesday placed India on the ‘Priority Watch List’ for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its intellectual property framework on the “long-standing” and “new challenges” that have negatively affected American right holders over the past year. The US placed 10 countries, including some of its major trading partners like India and China, on the list, alleging that enforcement of the intellectual properties have deteriorated or remained at inadequate levels and the Americans who rely on their protection.

### ***Hezbollah classified as Terrorist Organization by Germany***

Germany has banned Iran-backed Hezbollah activity on its soil and designated it a terrorist organisation, the Interior Ministry said on Thursday. Police conducted early morning raids in Germany to detain suspected members of the group. Security officials believe up to 1,050 people in Germany are part of Hezbollah's extremist wing. “Interior Minister Horst Seehofer has banned the Shiite terrorist organisation Hezbollah in Germany,” tweeted a ministry spokesman.

### ***Banking Services made Public Utility Services***

The government has declared banking industry as a public utility service for six months till October 21 under the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act. Bringing banking services under the provisions of this Act means that the banking sector would not see any strikes by employees or officers during the operation of the law starting from April 21. With the latest move, employees and officers of the highly unionised banking sector.

### ***RBI announces Special Liquidity Mutual Funds worth Rs 50,000 crores***

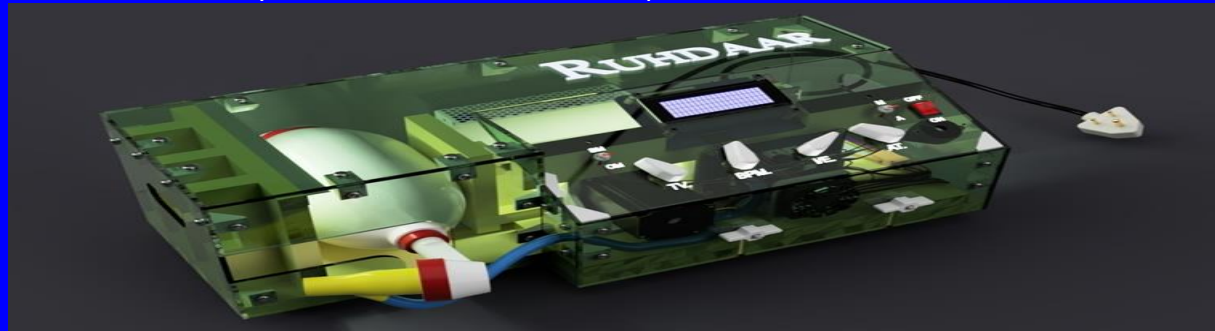
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday decided to open a special liquidity facility of Rs 50,000 crore for mutual funds to ease liquidity pressure on mutual funds. The sudden decision of Franklin Mutual Fund to close six of its debt mutual fund scheme has raised concerns about likely redemption pressures in the debt mutual fund space, and the depth of debt market to handle such a large-scale redemption.

### ***Hydrogen Fuel Bus and car launched by NTPC***

NTPCNSE 5.38 % Ltd on Sunday said it has invited global expression of interest (EoI) to provide Hydrogen Fuel Cell (FC) based electric buses and Hydrogen Fuel Cell based electric cars in Leh and Delhi. The EoI for 10 such buses and cars has been issued by NTPC's wholly owned subsidiary, NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVVN) Limited, an official statement said. The move to procure Hydrogen Fuel Cell based vehicles is first of its kind project in the country, wherein a complete solution from green energy to the fuel cell vehicle would be developed, it said.

### ***Ruhdaar: Low Cost Mechanical Ventilator developed by IIT Bombay***

A group of five friends from Jammu and Kashmir — all engineering students — have created a low-cost ventilator using locally available materials while in lockdown. They have named it Ruhdaar. The project began when Zulqarnain, a first-year student of Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay, teamed up with his friends.



### ***HCARD: Robot to assist COVID-19 frontline warriors***

Healthcare workers at hospitals are risking COVID-19 infection by taking care of those infected by it 24/7. Perhaps, the level of risk may get reduced with the help of a new friend, HCARD. The robotic device HCARD, in short for Hospital Care Assistive Robotic Device, can help frontline healthcare workers in maintaining physical distance from those infected by coronavirus. HCARD is developed by Durgapur-based CSIR lab, Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute.

### ***ATULYA: Microwave sterilizer to disintegrate COVID-19 developed***

From the moment the first positive case of COVID-19 was reported, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has ensured that all its labs working under Life Sciences cluster is ready to help the civil authorities. These labs have been producing spin-off technologies which are helping the government to combat COVID-19. Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune, a deemed university supported by Defence Research and Development Organisation has come up with a cost-effective solution to disintegrate coronavirus.

### ***Lucknow Medical Hospital first in the country to launch Plasma Treatment Therapy***

Lucknow: A 58-year-old doctor became the first coronavirus patient at the King George Medical University (KGMU) here to receive plasma therapy as an experimental treatment for the disease, a hospital official said on Monday. The doctor from Orai in Uttar Pradesh was administered the plasma donated by a woman doctor from Canada who was the first COVID-19 patient admitted to the KGMU and later recovered, Dr Tulika Chandra of the hospital's blood transfusion medicine department said.

### ***NTRO: Increase in Cyber Attacks due to work from home***

NEW DELHI: India's critical sectors may fall prey to inimical forces which could use relaxations in geofencing restrictions granted to employees working from home to make cyber attacks, said an assessment by the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO). Sectors including government undertakings, strategic and public enterprises, banking and financial services, telecom, power, energy and transport, among others, are susceptible to such attacks.

### ***Common Service Centres of Govt to take over E-Commerce in rural areas***

NEW DELHI: It's the desi, rural version of Flipkart and Amazon, and is promoted by the government. Concerned over the severe restrictions on mobility and lack of adequate supplies in times of Covid-19, the government has facilitated the creation of a village-level online retail chain, planning massive supplies of essentials through fast-expanding outlets that are taking orders online and offline, and carrying out home deliveries.

### ***GI Tag to Manipur Black Rice, Gorakhpur Terracotta and Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai***

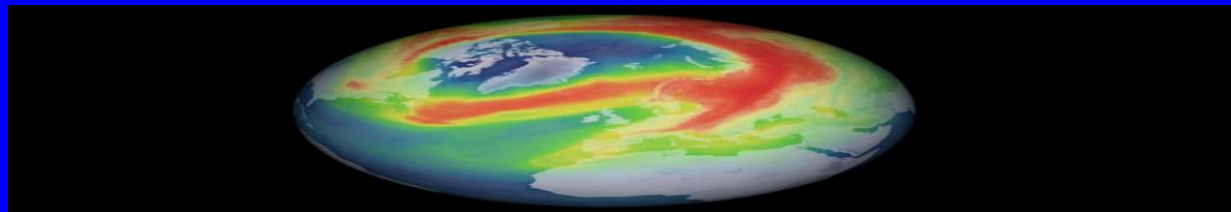
Chak-Hao, the black rice of Manipur and the Gorakhpur terracotta have bagged the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. Chinnaraja G. Naidu, deputy registrar, Geographical Indications, confirmed that the GI tag had been given for the two products on Thursday. The application for Chak-Hao was filed by the Consortium of Producers of Chak-Hao (Black Rice), Manipur and was facilitated by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Manipur.

### ***What is "Ball Tampering" that is being considered by ICC recently?***

The International Cricket Council is mulling on using an artificial substance under the supervision of umpires to polish cricket balls as applying saliva on balls could risk the spread of the novel coronavirus, as per media reports. The ICC is planning to use the artificial substance, which is banned in cricket as it leads to ball-tampering, as respiratory droplets is one of the ways for the virus to transmit.

### ***Largest hole in the Ozone Layer closes by itself***

Earlier this month, scientists reported a sharp drop in ozone concentrations over the Arctic, believed to have been caused by unusual atmospheric conditions. The hole — first identified in March 2020 — has now closed.



### ***Lock Down improves water quality of Ganges***

NEW DELHI: As the coronavirus-induced lockdown continues, the water quality of Ganga and Yamuna has improved significantly in the areas with reduced industrial activities. The river Ganga's water quality has improved with the increase in dissolved oxygen (DO) and reduced nitrate concentration. The tributaries of Ganga have also refined due to the concentration of DO increase during the lockdown period.



**Thank  
You!!!**