

## LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTRE, NOIDA

# GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



# JULY – 2020

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ***Medium Term Growth in India to Remain Undisturbed: IHS Markit***

NEW DELHI: The medium-term economic outlook for India remains favourable supported by a host of key growth drivers despite a projected dip in gross domestic product in FY21 due to the coronavirus induced recession, IHS Markit said on Thursday. "An important positive factor for India is its large and fast-growing middle class, which is helping to drive consumer spending. Total Indian consumer spending is forecast to grow by 42% between 2020 and 2025, measured in dollar terms at constant prices," the data analytics firm said in a statement.

## ***No Commission to be charged by Google on its E-Commerce Platform***

NEW DELHI: Search giant, Google on Thursday announced a significant change to its e-commerce marketplace product, Google Shopping. The company will now let sellers — ranging from small retailers to big businesses — and sell products on its marketplace commission free. "Soon, sellers who participate in our Buy on Google checkout experience will no longer have to pay us a commission fee," the company wrote in a blog post last night. Google is also letting retailers use third-party platforms like Shopify and Paypal to get on the Buy on Google platform.

## ***New Website of Prime Minister to Include 6 UN Languages and 22 Indian Languages***

The government on Thursday sought proposals from agencies to redesign the Prime Minister's official website which will be available in six UN languages and 22 scheduled Indian languages. The current website of the Prime Minister is accessible in 12 languages. The government looks to engage a qualified and experienced agency having experience in the field of design, development and maintenance of websites, according to a request for proposal (RFP) floated by National e-Governance Division (NeGD). "the agency would be required to prepare a detailed software requirement specification, provide end-to-end managed service for development.

## ***Microsoft to Launch Largest-Ever Xbox Gaming Series***

New Delhi: After witnessing a breakthrough quarter for gaming, Microsoft has said that it will launch Xbox gaming series this fall with the largest launch lineup for any console ever. The Xbox Game Pass is seeing record subscriber growth across both, console and PC and now includes content from more than 100 studios, according to Microsoft CEO Satya Madella. "It was simply a breakthrough quarter for gaming. We saw record engagement and monetization, led by strength on and off-console, as people everywhere turn to gaming to connect, socialize, and play with others," he said during the earnings call after declaring the company's fourth quarter results of its fiscal year 2020.

### ***Samsung Becomes the 2nd Largest Smartphone Brand in India in April-June Quarter***

NEW DELHI: The online smartphone retail channel registered a market share of 44.8% in the April-June quarter of 2020, but declined 39.9% year-on-year in unit terms with Xiaomi maintaining its dominance in the channel with a share of 42.3% on the back of its Mi Commerce solution. Korean handset brand Samsung secured the second spot in the online channel with 22.8% in the quarter. It was also the leader in the offline channel with a 29.1% share. Samsung partnered with Benow and Facebook to enable its retailers to start sales using digital platforms.

### ***\$1 Million Medical Assistance Provided by India to North Korea***

New Delhi: India has extended medical assistance worth about USD 1 million to North Korea in response to a request received from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday. India is sensitive to the shortage of medical supply situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and decided to grant a humanitarian assistance of USD 1 million in the form of anti-tuberculosis medicines, the MEA said.

### ***RBI to extend \$400 million Currency Swap Facility to Sri Lanka***

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India in a significant move has signed necessary documents for extending \$ 400 million currency swap facility to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. This currency swap arrangement will remain available till November 2022 will help Colombo address the economic hardships caused due by pandemic. The Indian High Commission in Colombo has earlier conveyed this information to senior officials in the Government of Sri Lanka and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

### ***UP University Develops Device to alert Users for Social Distance Breach***

Researchers at a private university in Uttar Pradesh's Noida have developed smart devices that raise alarm when social-distancing norms are breached and a user touches their face, besides designing gloves that dispense sanitiser automatically. The wearable-devices are affordable and operate on battery, they said, claiming they can be effective in fighting the spread of the novel coronavirus.

### ***'Dare to Dream 2.0' Launched by DRDO***

DRDO Dare to Dream 2.0: DRDO launches innovation contest Dare to Dream 2.0! The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Monday launched 'Dare to Dream 2.0', which is an innovation contest. The contest was launched on the fifth death anniversary of renowned scientist and former President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement. Known as the Missile Man of India, the celebrated aerospace and defence scientist always envisioned self-reliance, the statement added.

### ***Flipkart Enters into Hyperlocal Service Space with Flipkart Quick***

Walmart-owned Flipkart on Tuesday announced the launch of its hyperlocal delivery service 'Flipkart Quick' that will enable customers to receive grocery, fresh vegetables, meat and mobile phones in 90 minutes. The service will be available in select locations in Bengaluru initially and gradually scaled up and expanded to six large cities by the end of the year, Flipkart Vice-President Sandeep Karwa told PTI. "everything which we expect our neighbourhood departmental store to carry is all what we made live.

### ***National Education Policy 2020 Approved by Cabinet***

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved National Education Policy 2020 bringing major reforms in higher education including a target of 50 per cent Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) by 2035 and provision for multiple entry and exits. Addressing a press conference here, Union Minister Prakash Javadekar said a 21st century National Education Policy (NEP) has been approved by the cabinet today. "Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given approval to the new education policy for the 21st century.

### ***Malware, Ransomware attacks pose biggest cyber threat challenge in India: Microsoft***

New Delhi, India experienced a higher encounter rate for malware and ransomware attacks than the regional average in Asia Pacific last year, according to the latest edition of Microsoft's Security Endpoint Threat Report. India registered the seventh highest malware encounter rate across the region, at 5.89 per cent in the past year, showed the India findings of the report released on Wednesday. This was 1.1 times higher than the regional average.

### ***Govt extends deadline for filing income tax returns till September 30***

The government on Wednesday extended the deadline for filing income tax returns for 2018-19 fiscal by two months till September 30. "In view of the constraints due to the Covid pandemic & to further ease compliances for taxpayers, CBDT extends the due date for filing of Income Tax Returns for FY 2018-19 (AY 2019-20) from 31st July, 2020 to 30th September, 2020," the Income Tax Department said in a tweet. This is the third extension given by the government for taxpayers to file both original and revised tax returns for 2018-19 fiscal.

### ***Five Rafale fighter jets, built by Dassault Aviation of France, arrive at Ambala airbase***

Amid border tensions with China in eastern Ladakh, the Indian Air Force's first five Rafale warplanes on Monday took off from Mérignac in France and will reach their home base in Ambala on July 29 after a one-day stopover at the Al Dhafra airbase near Abu Dhabi, the IAF said in a statement. The two-leg flight will involve the Rafales covering a distance of nearly 7,000 km. The five fighters landed safely at Al Dhafra after a seven-hour flight from France on Monday evening.

### ***SIDBI, TransUnion CIBIL launch financial knowledge platform for MSMEs***

The Small Industries Development Bank of India in association with TransUnion CIBIL has launched a comprehensive financial education and knowledge platform for micro, small and medium enterprises. The one-stop knowledge portal- MSMEsAksham, will guide MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) seeking seamless and quick access to finance and will also support them in managing their credit obligations, a release said. SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) is happy to partner with TransUnion CIBIL in empowering MSMEs.

### ***Govt. to spend ₹ 11.85 crore for funding 112 agri start-ups this year***

To promote agri firms, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday said the government will fund 112 start-ups in the first phase with a sum of ₹ 11.85 crore in the current financial year. The funds will be given to the start-ups selected by different knowledge partners and agribusiness incubators in the area of agro-processing, food technology and value addition, he said. The funds will be provided under the Innovation and Agri-entrepreneurship Development Programme launched under the revamped Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

### ***Flipkart's Samarth supports 6 lakh artisans in India***

New Delhi: Walmart-owned Flipkart on Friday said it supports over six lakh artisans, weavers and craftsmen across the country through its Samarth programme and is working on onboarding more such sellers to the platform. The Samarth programme was launched last year, wherein the e-commerce major had partnered with five non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help artisans use the online marketplace to sell their products. Samarth supports the livelihood of over six lakh artisans.

### ***Pragyata Guidelines for Digital Education – Key Points on Online Classes***

Union HRD Ministry on Tuesday released the guidelines for Digital Education. The ministry has recommended a cap on the screen time for students. As per the guidelines, online classes for pre-primary students should not be for more than 30 minutes. It further mentions that two online sessions of up to 30-45 minutes each should be conducted for classes 1 to 8 and four sessions for classes 9 to 12. Earlier today, HRD Minister tweeted.

### ***IIT Delhi Launches "Corosure", a Low-Cost Test Kit for COVID 19***

NEW DELHI: A low-cost COVID-19 test kit developed by Indian Institute of Technology Delhi that uses an alternative testing method will be launched on Wednesday, according to the IIT director here. IIT Delhi, which became the first academic institute to develop a COVID-19 testing method, gave non-exclusive open licence to companies for commercialising the test, but with a price rider. While the institute had kept a price rider of Rs 500 per kit.

### ***Indian Economy to Shrink by 9.5% in FY 2020-2021: ICRA***

Credit rating agency Icria on Thursday sharply revised its forecast on the contraction in the Indian economy to 9.5 per cent for 2020-21 from its earlier assessment of five per cent. It attributed the revision to the climbing Covid-19 infections resulting in a spate of localised lockdowns in some states and cities, arresting the nascent recovery that had set in during May-June 2020. Icria's projection, in fact, is the sharpest contraction in the gross domestic product (GDP) for FY21 among all estimations so far.

### ***Ind-Ra pegs Estimated Fiscal Deficit at 7.6% for FY 2020-2021***

The Centre's fiscal deficit is expected to touch 7.6 per cent in 2020-21, more than double the Budget Estimate, as the country spends extra to minimise the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic while facing a shortfall in revenues, a report said on Friday. At a combined level, the fiscal deficit of the Centre and states together will come at 12.1 per cent, with the states contributing 4.5 per cent, India Ratings and Research said in the report.

### ***Private Trains to Start from 2024***

Indian railways has decided to extend the timeline to introduce first passenger train run by private operators by a year to 2024, railway board chairman Vinod Kumar Yadav said on Friday. "So by March 2024, we expect a lot of capacity enhancement, and that is the reason we have planned the introduction of (running passenger trains by) private train operators in 2024," Yadav said, adding that these trains will be in addition to the trains that the national transporter is already operating.

### ***Music says a lot about Your Personality: IIIT-H***

Hyderabad: Scientists at the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Hyderabad have developed a machine learning model that can look at the natural movement of listeners to music and predict their personalities besides cognitive styles. Using an automated machine learning model, the scientists researched on 'extraversion' and 'neuroticism' dimensions in listeners.

### ***Patanjali Cannot Use the Trademark 'Coronil': Madras HC Interim Order***

New Delhi: The Madras High Court Thursday barred Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved from using the trademark 'Coronil' for a drug it developed and marketed as a cure for the novel coronavirus. The court's order came while hearing a suit filed by a Chennai-based firm which claimed that 'Coronil' is a trademark owned by it since 1993. The company's registered trademark, called 'CORONIL-92 B', is an acid inhibitor product to clean heavy machinery and chemical preparations for industrial use.

### ***Facebook to Have New Section on Corona Myths***

Facebook has announced that it will launch 'Facts About Covid-19' -- a dedicated section -- on its social media platform next week to limit the spread of misinformation about the pandemic. The section is likely to be launched on Tuesday. It will debunk common myths that have been identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) such as drinking bleach will prevent the coronavirus or that taking hydroxychloroquine can prevent Covid-19.

### ***'Manodarpan' Initiative for Mental Health Awareness to be launched***

The Centre on Tuesday launched an initiative to focus on the mental and emotional well being of students, teachers and parents as they navigate the situation presented by the Covid-19 outbreak. The 'Manodarpan' platform, which comprises a national helpline – 8448446032 – and a special webpage, is aimed at providing psycho-social support to students through a group of experienced counselors, psychologists, and mental health professionals.



### ***Tata Communications Gets Telecom License in Saudi Arabia***

Tata Communications has secured a 'Type B' telecom licence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), which entitles the company to be an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and offer related telecom services to enterprises. This will enable the company to make the shift from offering services as a foreign carrier in the Middle East to a local licensed service provider, the company said in a statement. "By securing this telecom licence in KSA, we will be able to seamlessly bring carrier-neutral services like internet connectivity.

### ***Airtel Payments Bank and NSDC Come Together to Skill Rural Youth***

NEW DELHI : Airtel Payments Bank Ltd has collaborated with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to train and skill young people in rural areas on financial services, enabling them to find jobs and become entrepreneurs in the sector, the payments bank said in a statement on Wednesday. The partnership aims at designing and conducting targeted skill development programs for rural youth that will focus on adoption of tools to boost online banking and digital financial services at a time when the smartphone market is growing and usage of 4G has increased due to stay-at-home restrictions.

### ***World's First online B.Sc course in Programming and Data Science launched in India***

Chennai: "Even during this challenging time, when the nation is fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and everyone is forced to be at home, the IITs have come together to innovate for the sake of the nation. Several innovations such as ventilators, masks and drones have come from the continuous research from the IITs," said Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', the Union Minister of HRD while launching IIT-M's first India's first online B.Sc. degree in Programming and Data Science on Tuesday.

### ***BSE and IIT Alumni sign pact: To encourage startups listing***

NEW DELHI: Leading stock exchange BSE on Monday said it has signed a pact with IIT Alumni Council to encourage listing of startups and develop a 'high investor depth' platform for such new generation companies. The newly-formed partnership will ensure a complete end-to-end ecosystem for the proposed social stock exchange, BSE said in a statement. In addition, it will revitalise the startup platform by attracting a wide range of venture capital.

### ***Google to invest 10 billion USD in India***

Tech behemoth, Google on Monday announced a \$10 billion (Rs 75,000 crore) Google for India digitization fund in India over the course of next 5-7 years to support small businesses/startups, online education for the country's digital transformation. Google's Indian origin CEO, Sundar Pichai said during the company's first virtual Google for India event that the investment will happen through a mix of mix of equity investments, partnerships, and operational, infrastructure and ecosystem investments.

### ***India's Tiger Census sets World Record: Largest Ever Camera Trap Survey in the world***

India's 2018 tiger census has made a world record of being the largest ever camera trap wildlife survey. The census has entered the Guinness Book of World Record. The fourth edition of the census, which was carried out between 2018-19.





### ***200% increase in Cyber incidents in India***

There has been a 200 per cent rise in cyber incidents in India in the last couple of months but there is no evidence that the cases increased due to the tensions between India and China, Chief Information Security Officer in the Prime Minister's Office Gulshan Rai said on Monday. "There have been larger cases of phishing, service issues and ransomware which have gone up. These cases have gone up not merely because of heightened tensions, these cases have gone up from January and February-end because of the culture of working from home," he said.

### ***National Skill Development Corporation and Microsoft sign agreements to empower Indian Youth***

NEW DELHI : Microsoft and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) on Wednesday announced a strategic partnership aimed at providing digital skills to over one lakh youth in the country over the next one year. Microsoft will collaborate with NSDC's eSkill Indiaportal to provide free access to learning resources and conduct digital skilling awareness drives, equipping the next generation of learners with the skills they need to thrive in a digital economy.

### ***First ever News Magazine Programme in Sanskrit***

The All India Radio (AIR) will broadcast its first- ever 'News Magazine' programme in Sanskrit on Saturday which will have news from the world of Sanskrit and prominent developments of the week, a statement said. The programme titled, 'Sanskrit Saptahiki', will air from Saturday onwards and will be of 20 minutes duration. It can be heard on All India Radio FM News Channel (100.1 MHz frequency) every Saturday with a repeat broadcast on Sundays.

### ***NSE launches refiner standards for BIS standard Gold***

The National Stock Exchange has announced NSE Refiner Standards (NRS) for BIS-Standard gold to be delivered for settlement of the gold futures contracts traded on its platform. The NRS will come into effective from Friday, it said. Currently, the NSE accepts serial-numbered gold bars produced by London Bullion Market Association-approved refiners for settlement of the gold contracts traded on the commodity derivatives segment of the exchange. NSE will now empanel refiners producing gold bars as per Bureau of Indian Standards for delivery.

### ***Indian Air Force develops Airborne Locust Control System***

To deal with the unprecedented Locust attack, which has been spreading across many states, No. 3 Base Repair Depot of the Indian Air Force (IAF) located at Chandigarh has been asked to undertake the challenging task of indigenously designing and developing an Airborne Locust Control System (ALCS) for Mi-17 helicopters. According to the IAF, "In the ALCS, all indigenous components have been used and the atomized airborne spraying of pesticide has been successfully achieved.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ***US to pay \$2 Billion approx. to Pharma Companies for COVID 19 Vaccine***

The U.S. will pay Pfizer and biotech firm BioNTech \$1.95 billion to produce and deliver 100 million doses of their Covid-19 vaccine if it proves safe and effective, the companies announced Wednesday. It was the largest such deal between the government and companies racing to develop a coronavirus vaccine. Under the agreement, the U.S. can acquire 500 million additional doses, the Department of Health and Human Services said. Germany-based BioNTech and Pfizer are jointly developing four potential vaccines.

## ***TikTok banned on Government Devices in the US***

US federal employees would be barred from using Chinese-owned mobile video app TikTok on government-issued devices under a bill that passed a US Senate Committee on Wednesday, as lawmakers feared the security of users' personal data. The "No TikTok on Government Devices Act" from Senator Josh Hawley was passed unanimously by the US Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and will be taken up by the US Senate for a vote. TikTok's wide popularity among American teens have brought scrutiny from U.S. regulators and lawmakers.

## ***First Mars Mission Launched by China***

China successfully launched its first Mars probe on Thursday, aiming to complete orbiting, landing and roving in a single mission, taking an ambitious step towards planetary exploration of the solar system. A Long March-5 rocket, China's largest and most powerful launch vehicle, carrying the spacecraft with a mass of about five tonnes, soared into the sky from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on the coast of southern China's island province of Hainan, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

## ***UK Organization to Conduct First-Ever British-Indian Census***

LONDON: The India League, a UK-based diaspora group which dates back to 1916, on Thursday announced the launch of a first-ever British Indian Census to collate data around Britain's estimated 1.5 million Indian-origin population. The census will be conducted online in collaboration with the University of Oxford and will culminate in a British Indian Report later this year, reflective of the true make-up of Britain's Indian diaspora and their concerns in 2020.

### ***Israeli Firm to develop 30-second Coronavirus Breath Test***

An Israeli company is developing a coronavirus breathalyser test that gives results in 30 seconds, billing it as a "front line" tool that can help restore a sense of normality during the pandemic. NanoScent, the firm making the test kits, said an extensive trial in Israel for the presence of live virus delivered results with 85 percent accuracy, and the product could receive regulatory approval within months. Chief executive officer Oren Gavriely told AFP the breathalyser would not replace lab tests, but was a mass screening tool that could help people gain "the confidence to go back and act as normal".

### ***Google Provided \$39.5 Million to News Publishers amid COVID 19 Crisis***

Google has so far provided \$39.5 million in funding to more than 5,600 publishers in 115 countries who are facing financial hardship as a result of the economic and advertising downturn in the pandemic. India's digital-only news organisation East Mojo and Tamil language publication Minnambalam are among the small and medium local newsrooms around the world that will receive emergency funding from Google.



### ***US bars Foreign Students taking Online Courses from Entry to the Country***

Kansas City: Newly enrolled international students can't come to the U.S. if their university has announced a 100% online reopening for the fall semester, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said on Friday. While students already studying in the U.S. at schools that have declared fully online models are allowed to stay, those abroad won't be allowed to enter the country unless their schools plan to offer a hybrid or fully in-person model of instruction.

### ***China Looks at Expanding State Jobs for Freshers***

BEIJING: China's thousands of state-owned enterprises, local governments, and public institutions are expanding hiring as a record number of students graduate into a job market left reeling by the COVID-19 pandemic. Around 8.7 million Chinese students are graduating this year, almost half a million more than last year, heading into an uncertain future as private firms rein in recruitment. Job stability for the young is a longstanding political concern in China.

### ***Facebook Sues EU Anti-Trust Regulator for Excessive Data Requests***

Facebook is suing EU antitrust regulators for seeking information beyond what is necessary, including highly personal details, for their investigations into the company's data and marketplace, the U.S. social media group said on Monday. Facebook has been under EU competition enforcers' scrutiny since last year, with one investigation focused on its trove of data and the other on its online marketplace launched in 2016 and used by 800 million Facebook users in 70 countries to buy and sell items.

### ***US Banking Regulator Extends Crisis Lending Programs till Dec 31***

The Federal Reserve said Tuesday that it is extending its menu of lending programs to businesses, governments and individuals to the end of 2020. Originally set to expire Sept. 30, the myriad facilities, stretching from credit to small businesses up to the purchase of junk bonds now will stretch to Dec. 31. The Fed began rolling out the initiatives as market functioning broke down in March.

### ***Japan Court Recognizes 'Black Rain' Victims for the First time***

TOKYO: A Japanese court on Wednesday for the first time recognized people exposed to radioactive "black rain" that fell after the 1945 US atomic attack on Hiroshima as atomic bomb survivors, ordering the city and the prefecture to provide the same government medical benefits as given to other survivors. The Hiroshima District Court said all 84 plaintiffs who were outside of a zone previously set by the government as where radioactive rain fell also developed radiation-induced illnesses and should be certified as atomic bomb victims.

### ***Indians Lead in Acquiring Australian Citizenship in 2019-2020***

More than 38,000 Indians became Australian citizens in 2019-2020, a 60% increase from the previous year and the largest diaspora group to be granted the country's citizenship. Out of the over 200,000 people who became Australian citizens in 2019-2020, 38,209 were Indians, the highest number on record, followed by 25,011 Britishers, 14,764 Chinese and 8821 Pakistanis. Australia's Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alan Tudge said citizenship was an important part of Australia.

### ***NASA Prepares to Launch the Mars Rover Perseverance***

Nasa's most sophisticated rover yet is due to blast off for Mars on a mission to answer one of the most profound questions: did life ever emerge on another planet? Mission controllers have set their sights on the 28-mile-wide (45km) Jezero crater north of the planet's equator. The landing site is one of the most promising spots for any microbial Martians to have been preserved in rock formed when the crater held a lake nine times larger than Loch Ness.

### ***World's 1st COVID19 vaccine to be ready for use by August 12, claims Russia***

Moscow: Russia will register its first vaccine against the coronavirus on August 12, Deputy Health Minister Oleg Gridnev said on Friday. The vaccine has been developed jointly by the Gamaleya Research Institute and the Russian Defence Ministry. "The vaccine developed by the Gamaleya centre will be registered on August 12. At the moment, the last, third, stage is underway. The trials are extremely important. We have to understand that the vaccine must be safe.

### ***Turkey Passes Law to Regulate Social Media Content***

ANKARA: Turkey's parliament passed a government-backed law regulating social media on Wednesday, that critics said will increase censorship and help authorities silence dissent. President Tayyip Erdogan's ruling AK Party, which has a majority with an allied nationalist party, had backed the bill. The assembly began debate of the new regulations on Tuesday, and its passage was as announced by parliament on Twitter.

### ***China celebrates the completion of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System***

BEIJING: China is celebrating the completion of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System that could rival the U.S. Global Positioning System and significantly boost China's security and geopolitical clout. President Xi Jinping, the leader of the ruling Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army, officially commissioned the system Friday at a ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. That followed a declaration that the 55th and final geostationary satellite in the constellation launched June 23 was operating after having completed all tests.

### ***Amazon plans to invest \$10 billion to build satellite infrastructure***

WASHINGTON: Amazon.com Inc said on Thursday it will invest more than \$10 billion to build a network of 3,236 satellites that will provide high-speed broadband internet services to people around the world who lack such access. The announcement follows the Federal Communications Commission's approval of the plan, called "Project Kuiper", for the constellation of low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellites that will compete with the Starlink network being built out by Elon Musk's SpaceX.

### ***Facebook and Google to pay for news in Australia, for the first time in the world***

Facebook and Google will be forced to pay Australian media sites to feature their news or face fines totalling hundreds of millions of dollars, under new laws set to come into force this year. Australia has unveiled its plan to introduce a new royalty-style system, requiring the two tech giants to share the revenue they generate from advertising alongside news content. Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said it was "about a fair go for Australian news media businesses".

### ***First-ever EU cyber sanctions imposed on Russian, Chinese, North Korean agents***

The European Union has imposed its first-ever sanctions over cyberattacks, slapping them on alleged Russian military agents, Chinese cyber spies and organisations including a North Korean firm. The six people and three groups hit with sanctions include Russia's GRU military intelligence agency. EU headquarters blamed them in a statement for the 2017 "WannaCry" ransomware and "NotPetya" malware attacks and the "Cloud Hopper" cyberespionage campaign.

### ***Britain bans Huawei from its 5G network***

The US is lobbying the UK to exclude it on the grounds of national security. Huawei insists it would never take orders from the Chinese government. Prime Minister Boris Johnson is chairing a meeting of the National Security Council at which the decision will be made - although it may not be announced immediately. There is speculation Mr Johnson might choose to ban Huawei from the "core" parts of the networks only.

### ***Getting Work Permits in Germany gets easier for NID students***

Students of National Institutes of Design (NID) will be able to apply easily for work permits in Germany now as its centres have been included in the European country's Anabin database, the commerce and industry ministry said on Wednesday. It said Germany has opened a Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) which acts as the sole authority for the evaluation of foreign qualifications there.

### ***Pakistan Terrorist Declared as 'Global Terrorist' by the UN***

The United Nations on Thursday (local time) designated Pakistan based terror organisation Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan's leader, Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud, as a global terrorist. The United States Security Council 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee added Mehsud to its ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List. Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud was listed pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 4 of resolution 2368 (2017) for "participating in the financing, planning, facilitating or perpetrating of acts or activities.

### ***Hypersonic Missile Tested by US***

Washington: The United States announced Friday it has successfully tested an unarmed prototype of a hypersonic missile, a nuclear-capable weapon that could accelerate the arms race between superpowers. The Pentagon said a test glide vehicle flew at hypersonic speeds - more than five times the speed of sound, or Mach 5 -- to a designated impact point. The test followed the first joint US Army and Navy flight experiment in October 2017, when the prototype missile demonstrated it.

### ***\$536 Million to be paid by Japan to Companies for Leaving China***

Japan's government will start paying its companies to move factories out of China and back home or to Southeast Asia, part of a new program to secure supply chains and reduce dependence on manufacturing in China. Fifty-seven companies including privately-held facemask-maker Iris Ohyama Inc. and Sharp Corp. will receive a total of 57.4 billion yen (\$536 million) in subsidies from the government, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said Friday.

### ***UAE Becomes the First Arab Nation to Launch Mars Mission***

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates launched its first mission to Mars on Monday as it strives to develop its scientific and technological capabilities and reduce its reliance on oil. The Hope Probe blasted off from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center at 1:58 a.m. UAE time/6:58 a.m. Japanese time Monday (2158 GMT Sunday) for a seven-month journey to the red planet, where it will orbit and send back data about the atmosphere. The first Arab mission to Mars was initially due to launch

### ***Cristiano Ronaldo becomes First Player to Score 50 Goals in Serie A, Premier League and La Liga***

TURIN: Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first player to score 50 goals in Serie A, Premier League and La Liga. Ronaldo scored two goals against Lazio in Juventus 2-1 victory on Monday (local time) at the Allianz Stadium and as a result, he registered 50 goals in Serie A. With these two goals, Ronaldo also became the fastest player to register 50 goals in Serie A since 1995, Goal.com reported. Ronaldo registered goals against Lazio in the 51st and 54th minute of the match respectively.

### ***Ben Stokes Becomes No 1 All-Rounder in ICC Test Rankings***

England all-rounder Ben Stokes has become the number one all-rounder in Tests after his heroics in the second Test against West Indies in Manchester. Stokes scored 176 runs in the first innings of the Manchester Test and followed it up with an unbeaten 78 off just 57 deliveries in the second innings to help England win by 113 runs and level the series 1-1. He also picked up three wickets in the game and impressed with the red cherry.

### ***Indian-Origin Nurse Conferred with President's Award in Singapore***

A 59-year-old Indian-origin nurse in Singapore has been conferred with the President's Award for Nurses for serving on the frontline during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kala Narayanasamy was among the five nurses given the award, the Ministry of Health announced on Tuesday. Each recipient was awarded a trophy, a certificate signed by President Halimah Yacob and SGD 10,000 (USD 7,228).

### ***India-US to begin joint Ayurvedic Clinical trials for COVID-19***

Washington: Ayurvedic practitioners and researchers in India and the US are planning to initiate joint clinical trials for Ayurveda formulations against the novel coronavirus, the Indian envoy here has said. In a virtual interaction with a group of eminent Indian-American scientists, academicians, and doctors on Wednesday, Indian Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu said the vast network of institutional engagements have brought scientific communities between the two countries together in the fight against COVID-19.

### ***Vladimir Putin wins referendum***

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday won the referendum vote which would allow him to extend his tenure as head of the country until 2036. Putin reiterated that the constitutional amendments were necessary as they "improve the political system and fortify social guarantees" as well as "strengthen sovereignty." Putin, already in power for 20 years as president or prime minister, is the current President of Russia who has been in power since 2012. He is 67 years old.

### ***Iran requests INTERPOL to issue "Red Notice" to President Trump***

Interpol has rebuffed a request by the Iranian regime to issue a so-called red notice for Donald Trump over the assassination of Qassim Soleimani, one of the regime's most senior commanders, earlier this year. On Monday, an Iranian prosecutor announced he had issued an arrest warrant for the US president and was also seeking help from Interpol. But shortly after, Interpol announced it would not consider the Iranian request, which means the President faces no risk of being detained.

### ***Asia Cup 2020 cancelled***

The 2020 edition of the Asia Cup has been cancelled, the tournament's governing body confirmed after a meeting on Thursday. The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) is looking at a window in June 2021 to host the tournament. Pakistan, who were set to host the tournament this year in the United Arab Emirates, have exchanged hosting rights with Sri Lanka, who will stage next year's event, while the Pakistan Cricket Board will host the 2022 edition.

### ***China to increase its Nuclear Power: Plans to build 6 to 8 reactors/year***

SHANGHAI: China will build six to eight nuclear reactors a year between 2020 and 2025 and raise total capacity to 70 gigawatts (GW), up 43.5 per cent compared to the end of May, the official China Daily said on Thursday, citing the country's nuclear association. The China Nuclear Energy Association said the country's total installed nuclear capacity is expected to stand at 52 GW by the end of 2020, falling short of a 58 GW target.



### ***China launches Shiyun-6, Gaofen and APStar-6D satellites***

HELSINKI — China launched the classified Shiyun-6 (02) satellite into orbit Saturday, following launch of a new Gaofen 'multi mode' Earth observation satellite two days earlier. A Long March 2D carried the Shiyun-6 (02) experimental remote sensing satellite from Jiuquan at 7:45 p.m. Eastern Saturday. The China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. (CASC) announced success within half an hour of launch, providing the first official confirmation of the activity. Chinese media state the satellite is intended for 'space environment study and related technology experiments'.

### ***Singapore Election: PM Lee Hsein Loong wins again***

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has secured a "clear mandate" with his ruling People's Action Party (PAP) winning 83 of the 93 contested parliamentary seats in the general election held amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, with the Opposition gaining ground by winning a record 10 seats. The ruling party, in power since independence in 1965, secured 61.24 per cent of the total votes cast in the election, down from 69.9 per cent in 2015. About 2.6 million Singaporeans voted on Friday.

### ***Russia: First Country in the world to complete COVID-19 human trials***

MOSCOW: Russia has become the first nation to complete clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccine on humans, and the results have proven the medication's effectiveness, the media reported on Sunday. Chief researcher Elena Smolyarchuk, who heads the Center for Clinical Research on Medications at Sechenov University, told Russian news agency TASS on Sunday that the human trials for the vaccine have been completed at the university and they will be discharged soon. "The research has been completed and it proved that the vaccine is safe.



**Thank  
You!!!**