

PLUTUS IAS



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1.National Pharmacy Week celebrated in India

The Indian Pharmaceutical Association in collaboration with Delhi Pharmaceutical Trust celebrated the 59th National Pharmacy Week between November 16, 2020 and November 22, 2020. The National Pharmacy Week was celebrated under the theme

Theme: Pharmacists: Frontline Health Professionals

The Indian Pharmaceutical Association has been organizing the National Pharmacy Week every year during the third week of November. This year the 59th National Pharmacy Week was celebrated.

[Indian Pharmaceutical Association](#)

The Association was established in 1935 as the United Provinces Pharmaceutical Association. Later it was

renamed as Indian Pharmaceutical Association. The headquarters of the association is located in Mumbai.

Pharma Sector of India

India is the largest provider of generic drugs to the world. The Indian pharmaceutical industry accounts to 50 percent of global vaccine demand. Around 80% of the antiretroviral drugs that are used to combat AIDS is being supplied by the Indian pharmaceutical companies. The Indian Pharmaceutical market is the third largest Market in the world in terms of volume. The cost of Pharmaceutical manufacturing is the lowest in the world. It is lower than that of the United States.

Dependence on China a major concern

Though India is the largest supplier of high-quality medicines, the Indian Pharmaceutical sector is highly dependent on China especially for its Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API). Around 70 percent of the total drug requirements of India comes from China. The production cost of API in China is 40% cheaper than that of India.

What is Hollowing out in Indian Pharmaceutical sector?

“Hollowing out” is the deterioration of a manufacturing sector. Here the producers move towards low-cost

facilities overseas. Currently the Indian Pharmaceutical sector is facing hollowing out of manufacturers.

Price capping

The Indian Pharmaceutical sector is also facing pressure from price capping of the government. In order to make generic medicines more affordable to the largest section of population, the Government of India had introduced several price capping in the sector. This has had a huge impact on the net profits of the Pharma Companies.

2.Daniil Medvedev wins ATP Finals

Daniil Medvedev defeated the Russian player Rafael Nadal to win the ATP tournament. The tournament was held in London.

About ATP Tournament

The ATP tournament is the second highest tier of men's Tennis Tournament after the Grand Slam. The tournament was first held in 1970.

Daniil Medvedev

He is a Russian tennis player at rank number 4 under ATP ranking. He was born in Moscow.

What is the qualification for a player to participate in ATP tournament?

The participation of a player in the ATP tournament is determined by their ranking. The major qualifications are as follows

- **Top 7 players of ATP ranking**
- **Two Grand Slam winners ranked between 8 and 20**
- **The rest of the players in the ATP ranking till the court of 8 is reached.**

How is ATP ranking calculated?

ATP is the Association of Tennis Professional. The ATP rankings are determined based on the qualification for entry and rating of the players in singles and double tournaments. The first ranking for the singles tournaments was published in 1973 and for the Doubles tournaments in 1976. The points are awarded based on Prestige of the tournament and stage of the tournament reached. For instance, the point awarded to a Grand Slam winner is the highest.

The ranking of a player is based on the total points he has won in the following tournaments

- **The four Grand Slam tournaments namely US Open, Australia Open, Wimbledon and the French Open.**
- **The ATP tour Masters 1000 tournaments**
- **The best of six from non-mandatory ATP tour 500, ATP 2000, ATP Challenger, ATP tour 250, futures series and Davis Cup.**

If a player has not participated in any of the above tournaments, his rankings moves down. On the other hand, a player who is out of the competition for more than 30 days due to a verified injury will not receive any penalty while calculating ranking.

Between 2000 and 2012 rankings were awarded based on Summer Olympics as well. However, this was changed and from 2016 Olympics was not included.

3.SIMBEX 2020: India-Singapore Naval Exercise

The Indian and Singapore Navy are to hold maritime exercise SIMBEX-20 in the Andaman Sea between November 23, 2020 and November 25, 2020. The exercise has been conducted between the countries since 1994. The exercise aims to enhance mutual interoperability between the countries.

About the Exercise

The Indian Navy ships to participate in the exercise are destroyer Rana along with Chetak helicopter, corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk. Also, submarine Sindhuraj and P81 reconnaissance aircrafts are to participate in the exercise.

India-Singapore Defence Policy

In September 2020, India and Singapore held the 14th Defence Policy Dialogue. It was held under revised India-Singapore Defence Cooperation Agreement that was signed in 2015. During the dialogue, the countries agreed to enhance security partnership.

Background

India and Singapore hold a strong long standing cultural, economic relation. Singapore is a part of Greater India.

Greater India

Greater India refers to the Indian subcontinent and the region surrounding India that has adopted Indian language and religions. These countries of Greater India are sanskritised. Greater India is also called “Akhand Bharat”. It comprises of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia and the coastal Asian countries of Indian Ocean.

India-Singapore Defence Relations

- In 2003, the countries signed Defence Cooperation Agreement that allowed Singapore to conduct training on Indian soil.**
- In 2017, the countries signed Naval Cooperation Agreement that allowed both the countries to refuel, rearm and restock their ships in their military bases.**
- In 2018, India and Singapore signed bilateral agreement for Naval Cooperation that gave Indian**

Naval ships access to the Changi Naval Base. The Changi Naval base is located near the disputed South China sea.

India-Singapore Trade

The Look East Policy helped to boost trade between the countries. Among ASEAN member nations, Singapore accounts to 38% of trade.

4.NASA launches Sentinel satellite to track Earth's sea level rise

NASA launched the Copernicus Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich satellite to monitor oceans. The satellite was launched in a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. The satellite launch was a part of the Mission Jason Continuity of Service. The mission was launched to measure the height of the ocean. Measuring the height of the ocean is one of the key components in understanding climate change. The spacecraft consists of two components. The other component of the spacecraft is to be launched in 2025.

Who developed the satellite?

The satellite was jointly developed by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, European Space Agency and European Organization for the Exploration of

Meteorological satellites and French National Centre for Space Studies.

What are the main objectives of the satellite?

The satellite will make sea level observations and will provide measurements on global sea level rise. To measure the sea surface height, the satellite will send pulses to the Earth's surface and will measure the returning signals. The satellite will also measure water vapour in the earth's atmosphere. It will also collect data supporting oceanography.

Michael Freilich

The satellite has been named after Michael Freilich, an Earth scientist. He retired from NASA in 2019. He was an oceanographer.

GRACE Satellites

The Grace satellites found that the ice sheets contributed 1.2 millimetres per year sea level rise between 2002 and 2017. The GRACE satellite was launched in 2018. It was a joint mission of NASA and German Aerospace Centre. GRACE mission measured gravity anomalies and how mass is distributed around the planet. It mainly measured distribution of water across the planet.

Other satellites launched to measure Ocean

- **The Aquarius was launched in 2011 by NASA**

- Jason-1 was launched in 2001, Jason-2 in 2008 and Jason-3 in 2016 by NASA. All the three studied about Ocean.

Oceansat, Cartosat were launched by ISRO to study oceans.

5.RBI Mohanty Panel for Bank License to Large Corporate Houses

The Reserve Bank of India had earlier constructed an Internal Working Group under P K Mohanty. The committee was set up to review ownership guidelines of Indian private sector banks. The committee has submitted a report about the bank licensing in India

Key Recommendations

- Large industrial houses and corporates shall be allowed as promoters of banks. However, this is possible only after making required amendments to the Banking Regulations Act, 1949.
- Well established Non-Banking Finance Corporations with an asset size of Rs 50,000 crores and above shall be considered for conversion into banks.
- The committee has recommended a 3-year operational time for a Payment Bank to be converted into a Small Finance Bank. Currently, the Payment

banks can apply for conversion into small finance banks only after five years of operation.

- **Non-Operative Financial Holding company shall be continued as a preferred structure to issue new licenses.**

Background

In June, 2020, the Reserve Bank of India had set up a Mohanty Panel to review the ownership of private sector banks. It examined the regulations to hold financial subsidiaries through non-operative financial holding companies.

What are Small Finance Banks?

Small Finance Banks offer basic banking services. They are allowed to provide loans to underserved and unserved sections of the society. On the other hand, the Payment Banks are not allowed to lend.

What are NOFHC?

NOHFC falls under the category of Non-finance banking company. They are governed by the RBI with a separate set of guidelines. The main objective of the NOHFC is to separate financial activities carried out by the same financial company.

What are Non-Banking Financial Companies?

According to the Reserve Bank of India, a Non-Banking Financial Company is engaged in acquisition of shares,

business of loans, securities issued by the Government. They are registered under Companies Act, 1956.

5. IRNSS Satellite Constellation of India recognized under WWRNS by IMO

The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) has been accepted as a component of the World-Wide Radio Navigation System by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) for its operation in the Indian Ocean Region. This will enable the vessels to use IRNSS to obtain position information similar to GLONASS and GPS.

Impacts

The navigation system up to 1,500 km in the Indian Ocean waters can now replace GPS. This means that the ships in the Indian Ocean can obtain information from IRNSS for their position at sea.

India has now become the fourth country in the world to have an independent regional satellite navigation system and recognized by IMO under its WWRNS.

The entire process to get recognized for the IRNSS took two years.

Also, it increases military security of the country. This is because Indian ships will no longer depend on US or Russian navigational system to obtain position information at sea

What does the IMO recognition mean?

The IMO is an organization of the United Nations. With the recognition, India has become the fourth country after US, Russia and China to have its own navigation systems. With this recognition, the Indian Navigation system is similarly placed along with the popular systems used by vessels for navigation such as GLONASS and GPS. It increases India's reputation in the Indian Ocean Region.

Who can use IRNSS?

All the security agencies can use IRNSS. Also, the merchant vessels including small fishing boats are authorized to use the system. However, IRNSS is only a regional navigational system and not a global navigational system.

What is IRNSS?

It is an independent regional navigational satellite system that was developed by India. It provides accurate position information services to help ships in their navigation. The GPS is a Global Positioning System owned by the United States. GLONASS is the Global Navigation Satellite System of Russia. The GLONASS satellite was completed in 1995

The operational name of IRNSS is NavIC. It covers India and 1500 km of region covering India. It has eight constellations in its orbit.

6.India-International Cherry Blossom Festival of Shillong cancelled

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Every year the cherry blossom festival is hosted by Meghalaya in the starting of November. This year the festival has been cancelled due to covid-19. It is the only Cherry festival being conducted in India.

The India International Cherry blossom festival is organised by the Government of Meghalaya every year. The festival hosts live music, stalls showcasing the cuisine, beauty pageants, etc.

Cherry blossom festival is a national festival of Michigan. It is celebrated in Japan as well.

Cherry production in India

India is the 26th largest producer of cherry in the world. The top three producers of cherry are Turkey, USA and Iran. Cherry in India was introduced from Europe before India's independence. On the other hand, the commercial sour Cherry was introduced from the United States of America. The other varieties of cherry were introduced from British Columbia.

In India, cherry is commercially cultivated in Jammu and Kashmir where the hail storm problem is not

encountered. The Cherry productivity in Jammu and Kashmir is 1.73 tons per hectare.

Cherry cultivation

Cherries require cold climatic conditions. They grow well at height of 2500 metres above sea level. It requires 100 to 125 CM of annual rainfall. Cherry is required for sandy loam soil with high moisture holding capacity. They are sensitive to water stagnation.

Why is commercial Cherry cultivation less in Meghalaya as compared to J&K?

The cherry blossom trees in Meghalaya are different from the cherry trees in the regions of Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. The cherry tree that are producing best flowers frequently have insignificant fruits. The trees with the most delicious taste have less emphasis on flowers. Thus, the cherries in the Northern part of India are used for commercial cultivation and those in the North Eastern parts are used to promote tourism.

Also, the cherries require 1200-1500 hours of chill climate. This requisite cannot be achieved in Meghalaya. However, a popular underutilised cherry fruit is grown in Meghalaya called the SOHIONG.

7. What are the five technologies recommended by the Technical Committee of Jal Jeevan Mission?

A Multi-disciplinary Technical Committee that was set up under the Jal Jeevan Mission has recommended five technologies in order to provide field level solutions to the states.

What are the technologies?

- **Grundfos AQPure: It is a solar energy-based water treatment plant. It uses ultra-filtration as well.**
- **Janajal Water on Wheel: It is an Internet on Things based technology that delivers safe water to the doorsteps of households. It is GPS enabled.**
- **Presto Online Chlorinator: It disinfects water and removes bacterial contamination. It is a non-electricity dependent online chlorinator.**
- **Johkasou Technology: It is an inbuilt sewage and bath water treatment system. It has advanced anaerobic-aerobic configuration and can be installed underground.**
- **FBTec: It is a decentralized sewage treatment system.**

Background

The Jal Jeevan Mission gives utmost importance to realize the objective of Jal Jeevan Mission. It aims to provide household tap water connection to every household by 2024.

What are the challenges addressed by the technologies?

The technologies address water quality challenges, issues of dealing with grey water and convergence with sanitation sector, variations in regional endowment of water resources.

Jal Jeevan Mission

The mission aims to provide 55 litres of water per person per day to every household by 2024. Usually, the funding pattern of the schemes is in the ratio of 60:40 between the Centre and States respectively. However, the funding pattern of Jal Jeevan Mission is 50:50 between the centre and the states.

During the COVID-19 times, to reduce unemployment and to help the migrant workers with livelihood, the central government asked the states to implement the Jal Jeevan Mission. As the mission is implemented in village and district levels, it helped the migrant workers to earn a living. These migrant workers had shifted to their native villages due to COVID-19.

Under the mission, every village creates a Village Action Plan that will have three components namely water source and its maintenance, greywater management and water supply.

8.India to host G20 Summit in 2023

The G20 summit of 2020 was hosted by Saudi Arabia recently. The subsequent G20 summits are to be held in Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

About G20 summit, 2020

The main focus of the Summit was on resilient, inclusive and sustainable recovery from covid-19 crisis. During the Summit the leaders discussed on the preparedness of the countries in response to the pandemic. They also shared their vision on building a resilient future

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 2020 G20 summit that was held under the theme of “realising opportunities of the 21st century for all”. The theme mainly focuses on empowering people, safeguarding the planet, shaping new frontiers. In order to mark the G20 Presidency of Saudi Arabia the country released a 20 Riyal commemorative banknote.

G20 summit

After the financial crisis of 1997-98, it was agreed that the participation of major emerging market countries are essential in the International Financial System. In order to achieve this the G7 finance ministers agreed to establish the G20 meeting in 1999. The G20 finance Ministers and

the central Bank governors meet mainly focuses on monetary policy issues and major economic decisions. Their main objective is to achieve stable and sustainable Global economic growth.

This was later upgraded to a forum of leaders from major developed and emerging markets. In 2009, during the third Summit of G20, the leaders designated the grouping as a premium forum for international economic cooperation. The G20 summit were held semi-annually until 2010 and annually from 2011. The G20 countries account to 80 percent of World Trade and hold two third of the World Population.

Previous G20 summits

The last G20 summit was held in March 2020. During the Summit the leaders developed an understanding to help contain the spread of covid-19 pandemic.