

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22ND TO 31ST AUGUST 2019

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

PM Modi Begins 3-Nation Visit

- He embarked a 2-day visit to France on 22nd August and hold talks with **French President Emmanuel Macron**. He met the **French Prime Minister Edouard Charles Philippe** and inaugurated a memorial for Indian Victims of Air Crashes in 1950 and 1966 in **Nid D' Aigle**.
- Modi reached UAE capital Abu Dhabi on 23rd and met with the **Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**.

IMF suggested Rule change on Age Limit

- The top candidate to serve as IMF managing director, **Bulgaria's Kristalina Georgieva** turned 66 in August 2019 and it makes her too old for the job.
- All **189 member countries** of the IMF have to vote on the recommendation for its implementation.

NATIONAL NEWS

Indian Railways Banned Single-use Plastic Materials

- The Indian Railways has directed the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** to set up plastic bottle crushing machines in major railway stations.
- The IRCTC will implement the return of plastic drinking water bottles as a part of **Extended Producer Responsibility**.

'San-Sadhan' Hackathon

- Government has invited applications for tech enthusiasts to participate in 'San-Sadhan' hackathon for **Divyangjan accessible toilets**.
- It is being organised jointly by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** and the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog.

Kathmandu-Siliguri Bus Service

- The initiative is a part of a **Motor Vehicle Agreement for Passenger Traffic** which was signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Nepal visit in **2014** to facilitate the movement of people between the countries and also promoting tourism.
- Presently, **13 routes** have been approved between India and Nepal for regular bus service and Kathmandu-Siliguri is the **11th route**.

EESL plans to Invest Rs 180 crore in Super-efficient ACs

- **Super-efficient AC programme (SEAP)**, EESL is planning to sell 50,000 AC in the first phase which will be based on first come first serve basis.
- It is expected to save 27 million kWh of electricity per year. A total investment of Rs 180crore is planned out of which it will be supported by grants from **Global Environment facility**.

Project SURE Launched by Ministry of Textiles

- SURE stands for '**Sustainable Resolution**', that points to a resolution/commitment from the industry for a clean environment.
- The project is a move towards **sustainable fashion** by setting up a sustainable pathway for the Indian fashion industry.

Mobile application-“Janaushadhi Sugam” Launched

- “Janaushadhi Sugam” will enable people to search and locate the nearby **Janaushadhi generic medicines and stores**.
- He has also announced to slash the price of “**Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin**” from 2 rupees 50 paise earlier to just **1 rupee per piece**.

Centre decided to Offer Sugar Export Subsidy

- The Centre has decided to offer **Rs10.45 per kg subsidy** to incentivise sugar mills to export their surplus stocks.
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** took the decision, as with record sugar production causing a drop in prices led to cane farmers facing huge arrears in payment.

Bill against conversion by Force Passed by H.P

- The new bill incurs stiffer punishments with a jail term is of **7 years** as compared to the Freedom of Religion Act in which punishment was only 3 years.
- As per the new bill, the person willing to convert his/her religion has to file a **month’s notice in advance** to the district magistrate.

BANKING

CBDT’s Clarification to Avail Tax Holiday

- CBDT (Central Board of Direct Taxes) clarified that small start-ups with turnover up to Rs. 25 crores, a condition specified in **Section 80-IAC of the Income Tax Act, 1961** will continue to get the promised tax holiday.
- The tax holiday for small startups provides a deduction for **100% of the income** of an eligible start-up for **3 years** out of 7 years from the year of its incorporation.

Enhanced Surcharge withdrawn by the Government

- To encourage investors in the capital market, the government has withdrawn surcharge **on tax payable on the transfer of certain assets**.
- Only the **Foreign Institutional Investors (FPI) derivatives** are treated as capital assets and gains from it are subjected to the special rate of tax as per the provision of **section 115AD of Act**.

Central Vigilance Commission set up ABBF

- The ABBF has been formed in consultation with the RBI and is constituted to examine bank fraud of **over 50 crore rupees** and recommend action.
- The board's jurisdiction is confined to cases of an allegation of fraud involving **officers of General Manager Level and above in the PSBs**.

Bandhan Bank Tie up with Standard Chartered Bank

- Bandhan Bank's growth of the **current account and savings account (CASA)** over the past 4 years is the deciding factor for the collaboration. CASA accounts for nearly **36% of Bandhan Bank's total deposit base** of about Rs 43,000 crore.
- Standard Chartered Bank has been growing at **15-20% on a y-o-y basis** and has 100 branches in India.

RBI will Transfer Rs 1.76 lakh Crore to the GOI

- RBI to transfer Rs1.76 Lakh crore to Government of India under '**Surplus Distribution Policy**' that include interim dividend of Rs28,000 crores paid on February 2019.
- RBI board **accepted all recommendation of Bimal Jalan Committee**.

Cabinet Decision to attract FDI

- The cabinet has relaxed the **requirement of 30%** by allowing it to be calculated over the first **five years** of operation.
- The cabinet has decided to **allow 100% FDI** under the automatic route in **contract manufacturing** in India which was only for the manufacturing sector earlier.

Govt. announced Mega Merger of 10 PSBs

- After the merger, the number of public sector banks will crease to **12 banks from 27 banks**.
- Among these banks, **PNB** got the highest share of **Rs 16000 crore** and Punjab & Sind Bank got the lowest i.e. Rs 750 crore.

INDEX AND RANKING

SARAL - 'State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index'

- **Karnataka** has been placed at **1st rank in the Index** whereas the 2nd, 3rd and 4th rank were occupied by Telangana, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
- SARAL has been **jointly designed by** the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF) and Ernst & Young (EY).

Composite Water Management Index 2.0

- The CWMI 2.0 is first of its kind water **data collection exercise** in partnership with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Rural Development and all the States/ Union Territories.
- CWMI 2.0 **ranks various states for the reference year 2017-18**, instead of the base year 2016-17.

Well-being Index by IFMR LEAD

- Well-Being Index Report is released by the non-government organisation **World Vision India and research institute IFMR LEAD on 27th August 2019**.

- **Kerala** (scored 0.76) **topped the chart** due to its exceptional performance in health, nutrition and education facilities. While Tamil Nadu (0.67), Himachal (0.67) are runner ups and Puducherry (0.77) was the best among UTs.

World's Safe Cities Index (SCI)

- **Mumbai** has been ranked at 45th position and **Delhi** at 52nd position in the SCI.
- Six out of the top ten safest cities are from the **Asia-Pacific (Apac) region**, with **Tokyo** at the top spot, Singapore at 2nd and Osaka at 3rd position.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Rajiv Gauba	Cabinet Secretary
Ajay Kumar	Secretary Defence
Subhash Chandra	Secretary, Defence Production
Brij Kumar Agarwal	Secretary, Lokpal

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Awards	Awardee
POSHAN Abhiyaan Awards	Himachal Pradesh
Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Awards 2018	
Name of the Person	Category
Aparna Kumar, Late Dipankar Ghosh, Manikandan K	For adventure in 'land category'
Prabhat Raju Koli	For adventure in 'Water category'
RameshwerJangra	For adventure in 'Air category'
Wangchuk Sherpa	For lifetime achievement

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Books	Authors
"The Diary of Manu Gandhi"	Dr Tridip Suhrud

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement

- The training programme 'NISHTHA' has the **objective** to motivate and equip teachers to encourage critical thinking in students.
- The programme **aims** to build the capacities of around **42 lakh participants** including all faculty members of State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), all teachers and Heads of Schools at the elementary level in all Government schools, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and Block Resource Coordinators.

Sabka Vishwas-Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019

- Sabka Vishwas-Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019 has been notified by the government and will be operationalized **from 1st September 2019 till 31st December 2019**.
- Finance Minister has announced the Sabka Vishwas-Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019 in the **Union Budget 2019-20**.

Union HRD Minister Launched 'Shagun'

- Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Union Human Resource Development Minister launched Integrated **Online Junction for School Education 'Shagun'** on 28th August 2019 in New Delhi.
- 'Shagun' (URL: <http://shagun.govt.in/>) is a junction for **all online portals and websites** to provide information about various activities of the Department of School Education, GOI and all States and UTs.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Sterile Insect Technique (SIT)

- The SIT for dengue control is also called as '**mosquito fights mosquito technique**'.
- In the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), **female Aedes aegypti mosquitoes** are turned infertile by releasing sterilised male mosquitoes in areas of dengue outbreak.

Biometric Seafarers Identity Document (BSID)

- The new **facial biometric technology** BSID is an addition to the security features and marked an improvement over two-finger or iris-based bio-metric data.
- Earlier, India has made a presentation on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on BSID and the new card is in confirmation of the **Convention No. 185 of the ILO**.

DEFENCE

Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to Mt Kun

- Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to Mount Kun (7077M) was held at **Zaskar Range in Ladakh** from 30th July to 29th August 2019.
- **Mount Kun** is Situated at an elevation of 7,077 meters (23,219 ft) and is the **second-highest** peak of the **Nun-Kun mountain massif**.

SPORTS

World Police and Fire Games 2019

- **CISF (Central Industrial Security Force)** Sports personnel represented India at the World Police and Fire Games-2019.
- CISF won **5 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze Medals** at the event, i.e. is a total of 10 medals.

PV Sindhu won Gold in World Badminton Championship 2019

- PV Sindhu becomes the **first Indian to win gold in World championship**.
- Sindhu crushes **Japan's Nozomi Okuhara** who is world no 4 and she beat world no 2 Tai Tzu Ying in quarters & 3 in Chen Yu Fei in semis.

Komalika Bari won Gold at World Archery Youth Championship 2019

- Komalika Bari belongs to Jharkhand and had won the title after a 7-3 victory over **Japan's Waka Sonoda** in the final.
- **Palton Hansda** was the first Indian to win the compound world junior men's champion in 2006. The second was **Deepika Kumari** who won it in 2009 and the world junior crown in 2011.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

First World Youth Conference on Kindness

- The 1st WYCK was organised by the **Ministry of Human Resource Development** and **UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development**.
- Youth leaders representing **over 27 countries** across the world participated in this Conference.

G7 Summit 2019

- G7 group this year's aim is to combat the root causes of inequality.
- This year **India's PM Narendra Modi** along with **Australian PM Scott Morrison** and **Spanish PM Pedro Sánchez** are invited as guests in G7.

7th Community Radio Sammelan

- The Sammelan is being organized by the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**.
- The theme of Community Radio Sammelan 2019 is '**Community Radio for SDGs**'.

