

NATIONAL WEEKLY (03 - 09 JANUARY)

MOC ON SPECIFIED SKILLED WORKER

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) between the Government of India and Government of Japan, on a Basic Framework for Partnership for Proper Operation of the System Pertaining to "Specified Skilled Worker".

- The MOC would set an institutional mechanism for partnership and cooperation between India and Japan on sending and accepting skilled Indian workers, who have qualified the required skill and Japanese language test, to work in fourteen specified sectors in Japan.

UDYOG MANTHAN

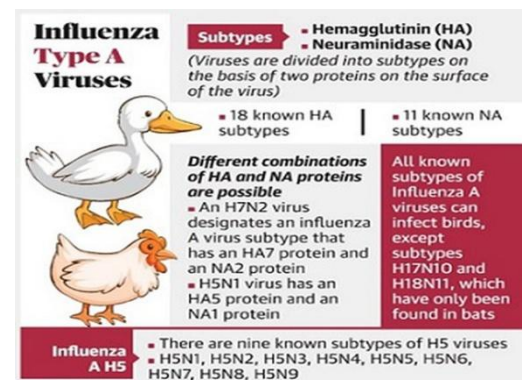
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India is organizing 'Udyog Manthan' in association with Quality Council of India, National Productivity Council, and Industry bodies.

- Udyog Manthan is a marathon of focused sector-specific webinars for promoting Quality and Productivity in Indian Industry.

BIRD FLU

Bird flu has been reported among wild geese in Himachal Pradesh, crows in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and ducks in Kerala. In Haryana, around one lakh poultry birds have died mysteriously in the last few days.

- Avian influenza or bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease caused by Influenza Type A viruses which generally affects poultry birds such as chickens and turkeys.



NEW REWARI - NEW MADAR SECTION OF WDFC

Prime Minister Modi will dedicate to the nation the 306 Km New Rewari - New Madar Section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) on 7th January 2021.

- The New Rewari - New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor is situated in Haryana (approx. 79 Km, in Mahendragarh and Rewari districts) and Rajasthan (approx. 227 Km, in Jaipur, Ajmer, Sikar, Nagaur and Alwar districts).

SWASTH VAYU

- The expert committee constituted by Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, has concluded that SwasthVayu may be used on Covid-19 patients who require oxygen supplementation up to 35%.



40th INDIAN SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTICA

India launched the 40th scientific expedition to Antarctica

- This Indian expedition marks four decades of country's scientific endeavour to the southern white continent.
- The 40th expedition journey will be flagged off from Goa on January 5, 2021, with 43 members onboard.
- The Indian Antarctic programme has now credited to have built three permanent research base stations in Antarctica—named Dakshin Gangotri, Maitri, and Bharati. As of today, India has two operational research stations in Antarctica named Maitri and Bharati.

KHANIJ BIDESH INDIA LTD

India, through a newly-floated state-owned company, inked a pact with an Argentine firm mid-last year to jointly prospect lithium in the South American country that has the third largest reserves of lithium.

- The new company, Khanij Bidesh India Ltd was incorporated in August, 2019 by three state-owned companies, NALCO, Hindustan Copper and Mineral Exploration Ltd, with a specific mandate to acquire strategic mineral assets such as lithium and cobalt abroad
- It is also learnt to be exploring options in Chile and Bolivia, two other top lithium-producing countries.
- Lithium, the silver-white alkali metal is a crucial building block of the lithium-ion rechargeable batteries that power electric vehicles (EVs), laptops and mobile phones
- Currently, India is heavily dependent on import of these cells and the move to ink sourcing pacts for lithium is seen as another salvo in the front against China, a key source of both the raw material and cells.

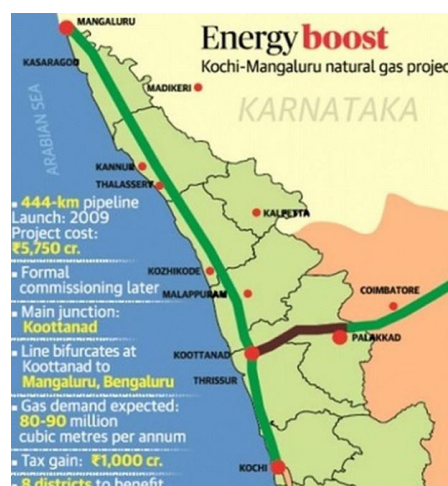
ZyCoV-D

The Nation's first indigenously developed DNA vaccine candidate against COVID-19, ZyCoV-D, by M/s Zydus Cadila has been approved by Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), for conduct of the Phase III clinical trials.

- The candidate has been supported by the National Biopharma Mission (NBM) under the aegis of BIRAC and the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.
- Zydus Cadila completed Phase-I/II clinical trials of this DNA Vaccine candidate, in India, in more than 1,000 participants and interim data indicated that the vaccine is safe and immunogenic when three doses were administered intradermally.

KOCHI - MANGALURU NATURAL GAS PIPELINE

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate the Kochi - Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline to the nation on 5th January 2021.



DCGI GIVES FINAL APPROVAL FOR COVID-19 VACCINES OF SII, BHARAT BIOTECH

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has formally announced the final approval for Oxford-AstraZeneca “Covishield” and Bharat Biotech “Covaxin” vaccines against the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) for emergency use.
- CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation) accepts the subject expert committee reform rations on Serum and Bharat Biotech Covid vaccines
- The subject expert committee (SEC) under CDSCO had recommended Oxford-AstraZeneca’s vaccine, which is being manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII) as Covishield, for emergency use and Covaxin for restricted use.
- Covaxin is the indigenous vaccine being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

UNDP AND PCMC JOIN HANDS FOR ‘FIRST SOCIAL IMPACT BOND’

- Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Pune has recently signed an MoU with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India to co-create India’s first Social Impact Bond (SIB).
- This is the first time that a government body will act as the ‘outcome funder’ in a bond, whereas traditionally most government-funded public projects require large and early investments by the government with a substantial gestation period of outcomes and involve various kinds of risks.
- A Social Impact Bond also called pay-for-success bond or pay-for-success financing or simply social bond is basically a contract with public sector authority, where it pays for better social outcomes.
- This bond is a form of outcome-based contracting and aims at improving social outcomes for a specific group of citizens.

MADHYA PRADESH WEEKLY (03 - 09 JANUARY)

MP GOVT LAUNCHES 'LAUNCH PAD SCHEME' TO MAKE YOUTH SELF-RELIANT

- The government of Madhya Pradesh has launched a 'Launch Pad Scheme' for the boys and girls coming out of child care institutions and having completed 18 years of age.
- This scheme has been launched by the Women and Child Development Department of the state with the objective to provide a platform to these youth, through which they will be able to become self-reliant by continuing their education and training.
- The District Administration will provide space to these youths for the opening of coffee shops, stationery, photocopying, computer typing and DTP work.
- All the 52 districts of the state have been divided into 5 clusters with headquarters at Indore, Sagar, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Bhopal.
- An amount of Rs 6 lakh will be provided by the Women and Child Development Department for the installation of each launch pad.
- These launch pads will be operated through non-governmental organizations.

MP BAGS 3 GOLD, 2 SILVER IN 8th NATIONAL CANOE CHAMPIONSHIP

- The players of Madhya Pradesh Water Sports Kayaking Canoeing Academy have won a total of 5 medals including three gold and two silver in the 8th National Canoe Slalom Championship.
- The championship was held at Sahastradhara, Maheshwar in Khargone from January 5 to 7. The competition for the Asian Championship and Olympic Qualification selection trials were organized.

LARGEST FLOATING SOLAR PROJECT TO BE BUILT ON OMKARESHWAR DAM

- The world's largest floating solar project is going to be built on the Omkareshwar dam on the Narmada river in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh
- The estimated investment in this six hundred MW project is Rs 3,000 crores.
- The International Finance Corporation, World Bank and Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for cooperation in project development.

PM MODI LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF LIGHT HOUSE PROJECTS (LHPS)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPS) at six sites across six States through video conference on 1st January, 2021.
- The LHPS will be implemented at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Agartala (Tripura) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh).
- The project is being constructed under the Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC)- India. It has been conceptualised by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- Under the programme, over 1,000 houses would be built in each of the six cities in 12 months along with allied infrastructure facilities.