

Centre Approves 'Startup India Seed Fund Scheme'



The Central Government has approved 'Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme' (SISFS) on January 29, 2021, which aims to provide financial assistance to start-ups for the product trials, market-entry, proof of concept, prototype development and commercialization.

Total Corpus: Rs 945 crore

Validity: Five years (2021-25). The scheme will become operational from April 1, 2021. The scheme will be implemented by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DIIT)**. The funds under the scheme will be disbursed through the selected incubators across the country.

The startup will receive seed support only once.

5th Joint Meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum



The **fifth joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum (AEF)** was held on 28 January 2021 in New Delhi.

The meeting was co-chaired by **Foreign Secretary Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla**, and **Suzuki Satoshi**,

Ambassador of Japan to India.

The AEF was established in **2017** to provide a platform for India-Japan collaboration in the North Eastern Region under India's "Act East Policy" and Japan's vision for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

During the 5th meeting, the AEF reviewed progress of ongoing projects in the North Eastern Region of India in various areas including connectivity, hydropower, sustainable development, harnessing of water resources, and skill development.

They also exchanged views on cooperation in new areas such as healthcare, agro-industries and SMEs, bamboo value chain development, smart city, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.

Prakash Javadekar Launches 2021 as Indo-French Year of the Environment

The Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change **Prakash Javadekar** launched the **Indo-French Year of the Environment**, along with **Barbara Pompili**, the French Minister for Ecological Transition in New Delhi on 28 January 2021.

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The Indo-French Year of the Environment is the **Indo-French partnership on Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change and other allied areas to be undertaken throughout 2021**

The basic objective of this partnership is to strengthen Indo-French cooperation in sustainable development, increase the effectiveness of actions in favor of global environment protection and give them greater visibility. The Indo-French Year of the Environment will be implemented over the period 2021-2022. It would be based on **five main themes**: environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, sustainable urban development, and the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency.

Prime Minister of Italy Giuseppe Conte resigns



Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has resigned from his post, after losing majority support from his coalition government over his handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

The lack of a majority would restrict government business. Giuseppe Conte tendered his resignation to the president, **Sergio Mattarella** on 26 January 2021. However, Conte will keep his government running till a new government is sworn in. Giuseppe Conte is serving as Prime Minister of Italy since **1 June 2018**.

Italy capital – Rome and Currency- Euro

Microsoft launches its new Taj Mahal inspired Engineering Hub in NCR



Tech major **Microsoft** has launched its new **India Development Center (IDC) facility in Noida, Uttar Pradesh** on 28 January 2021.

IDC NCR is the **third** development center of Microsoft in India after **Bengaluru and Hyderabad**.

The new centre will serve as a leading hub for driving advanced engineering and innovation. The IDC NCR workspace architecture is inspired by the **Taj Mahal**, one of the seven wonders of the world.



Bharti AXA General Insurance launches 'Krishi Sakha' App for farmers

The **Bharti AXA General Insurance** has launched a new app called '**Krishi Sakha**' to help farmers in adopting best farming practices and enhancing productivity through catering to the specific needs of the farmers .

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Key Features of the 'Krishi Sakha'

Bharti AXA 'Krishi Sakha' aims at helping



Indian farmers make informed decisions through customized information related to their farming requirements.

The app shares relevant information about the scientific way of farming, crop cultivation, sowing, or harvesting of a major crops.

It is a one-stop shop for all crop insurance-related requirements.

It offers the farmers a variety of innovative and tailored solutions along with crop advisories by experts to help them protect their invaluable crops and increase the overall farming productivity.

It guides the farmers about weather forecasting, market and crop prices and government schemes related to insurance and agriculture.

World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day : 30 January

The second **World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day (World NTD Day)** is being observed on **January 30, 2021** to celebrate the achievements made towards control of the world's NTDs.

2021 theme is **Face NTDs: End the Neglect**

The first World NTD Day was held on 30 January 2020

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) include a range of conditions that can blind, disfigure, or even disable people.

Currently, the World Health Organization (WHO) identifies 20 major conditions as NTDs.