

## Current Affairs: 06/07.02.2021

### Piyush Goyal Co-chairs First India-EU High Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment



The first India-European Union High Level Dialogue (HLD) was held on 5th February 2021.

The HLD was co-chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry **Shri Piyush Goyal** from India side and the European Union Executive Vice-President & Trade Commissioner **Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis**, from the EU

side. This Dialogue was organised in line with the commitment made at the **15th India-EU Leader's Summit** held in July 2020.

#### Outcome of HLD

1. Ministers agreed for further deepening of bilateral trade and investment relationship through a series of regular engagements, aiming at quick deliverable for the businesses in these tough times.
2. They also agreed to meet within the next three months, to reach consensus on a host of bilateral trade & investment cooperation issues like bilateral Regulatory Dialogue; an India-EU Multilateral Dialogue to explore further possibilities of cooperation.

**European Union (EU) Headquarters location:** Brussels, Belgium

#### So far 12 states complete 'Ease of Doing Business' Reforms

As per the recent data by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), four more states have completed the reforms in the 'Ease of Doing Business', as stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

The four states are- **Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab.**

These states have become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources to the tune of **Rs 5,034 crore** through **open market borrowings.**

Now the **total number of states that have undertaken the reforms to promote Ease of Doing Business till now have gone up to 12.**

The other states are **Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.**

All together, these twelve states have been granted additional borrowing permission of **Rs 28,183 crore.**

#### South Korea to Build World's Largest Offshore Wind Farm

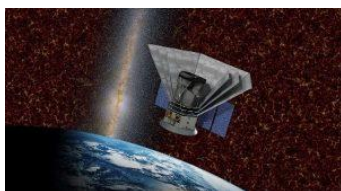
**President Moon Jae-in-led South Korea Government** has approved a plan to **build the world's largest wind power plant in the country by 2030.**

# Cross & Climb, Rohtak



The project will help to foster an environmentally-friendly recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and fasten the step to achieve the target of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. The estimated cost of the project is **48.5 trillion won (\$43.2 billion)**. The Wind power Plant will be located in the **southwestern coastal town of Sinan**. It will have a maximum capacity of **8.2 gigawatts**. Currently, the world's largest offshore wind farm is **Hornsea 1 in Britain**, which has 1.12 GW capacity.

## NASA Selects SpaceX to launch its SPHEREx Mission



The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** has selected spaceflight company, **SpaceX** to launch its **SPHEREx Mission**.

SPHEREx is short for Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer (SPHEREx) spacecraft. Through this mission, NASA aims to perform an all-sky survey to measure the near-infrared spectra of approximately 450 million galaxies across the universe and 100 million stars inside our Milky Way galaxy. The **small astrophysics spacecraft, SPHEREx, weighs 329-lb. (178 kilograms)**.

It will be launched to space aboard SpaceX's **Falcon 9 rocket, in June 2024**, from Space Launch Complex 4E at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

## Square Kilometre Array Observatory formed to set up World's Largest Radio Telescope

The newly constituted **Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) Council** held its maiden meeting on 4 February 2021 and approved for the establishment of the world's largest radio telescope.

### What is SKAO?



SKAO is a new intergovernmental organisation dedicated to radio astronomy.

The headquarter of SKAO is based in the **United Kingdom**

Currently organisations from **ten countries** are a part of the SKAO, which include Australia, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK.

French-born Dr Catherine Cesarsky has been appointed as the first Chair of the SKAO Council.

# Cross & Climb, Rohtak



The Indian contingent of over 20 institutions will be lead by **Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) of TIFR.**

## Objective of SKAO

- To look into some of the unexplored areas of the universe and seek answers about its history and evolution, study fundamental physics in extreme environments and know about galaxies over cosmic time.
- The telescope will enable astronomers to monitor the sky in unprecedented detail and survey the entire sky much faster than any system currently in existence.

## What are radio telescopes?

- Radio telescopes, unlike optical telescopes, can detect invisible gas and can reveal areas of space that may be obscured by cosmic dust.

## Where will be world's largest radio telescope located?

- The SKAO telescope will be an array of antennas located in two continents, i.e. **Africa and Australia.**
- The operation, maintenance and construction of the telescope will be overseen by SKAO.
- The development of the telescope is expected to take nearly a decade at a cost of over £1.8 billion.

## Federal Bank launches 'FedFirst' savings account scheme for children



Federal Bank has launched a **special savings account scheme for children below the age of 18 years**, called **FedFirst.**

**Purpose:** to enable children learn the importance of money management.

The account will develop among children a healthy saving and spending habits, and give them the freedom to save, spend and earn.

## Key Features

- The account comes with FedFirst contactless Debit Card with a daily cash withdrawal limit of Rs. 2,500.
- POS/e-com limit of Rs. 10,000.
- Free online facilities including access to internet banking, mobile alerts and e-mail alerts.

## Google Cloud appoints Bikram Singh Bedi as Managing Director for India business

Google Cloud has appointed **Bikram Singh Bedi** as the new **Managing Director for its India Business.**

# Cross & Climb, Rohtak



Bedi will succeed Karan Bajwa, who has been elevated as Vice president for the Asia Pacific (APAC) region cloud operations at Google Cloud.

## Nigeria's Okonjo-Iweala set to become first female Chief of WTO



**Nigerian economist Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, has been chosen as the next **Director General of the World Trade Organization (WTO)**.

She would be the **first woman as well as the first African national** to lead the organization.

Okonjo-Iweala, the former finance minister of Nigeria, will succeed **Roberto Azevedo**, who stepped down in August 2020.

World Trade Organization (WTO) headquarter: **Geneva, Switzerland.**

## Michael Bloomberg Re-Appointed as United Nations Climate Envoy



The **United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres** re-appointed **Michael Bloomberg** as his **Special Envoy on Climate Ambition and Solutions**.

Bloomberg is the founder and owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent company of Bloomberg News.

Bloomberg will work to strengthen the group of governments, companies, cities and financial institutions that are working to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

He would also work to mobilise stronger and more ambitious climate action in the lead-up to **2021 United Nations Climate Change conference in Scotland in November 2021.**

Bloomberg was previously appointed as the U.N. special envoy for climate action between March 2018 and November 2019.

## 'Sound of Music' fame Oscar-winning Canadian actor Christopher Plummer, passes away at 91



**Oscar-winning actor Christopher Plummer**, who rose to prominence for his critically-acclaimed film **'Sound of Music'**, has passed away. He was 91.

The prolific and versatile **Canadian-born actor** has received various awards for his work, which includes Academy Award, two Primetime Emmy Awards,

two Tony Awards, a Golden Globe Award, a Screen Actors Guild Award, and a British Academy Film Award.

He is the only Canadian and one of the few performers globally to have received the **Triple Crown of Acting**, which are Academy Award, Emmy Award, and Tony Award.