

CURRENT AFFAIRS= 21-03-2020

Cabinet Approvals on August 19, 2020



Cabinet approves setting up of National Recruitment Agency to conduct Common Eligibility Test; Rs. 1517.57 cr sanctioned

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to set up the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) that will conduct a Common Eligibility Test (CET) for non-gazetted posts (Group B and C) of Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) and

the Institute of Banking Service Personnel (IBPS). Candidates who qualify CET can apply to any recruitment agencies for higher level of examination. Therefore CET will be a first level test (preliminary) to shortlist candidates which will be held **twice** a year with score validity of **three years**.

- It will eliminate multiple tests, time as well as reduction in costs with expected savings of Rs 600 crore.
- The Government has sanctioned a sum of **Rs. 1517.57 crore** for NRA.

Incorporation of NRA:

NRA will be a Society registered under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**. It will be headed by a Chairman of the rank of the Secretary to the Government of India and have representatives of the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance/Department of Financial Services, the SSC, RRB & IBPS.

Key Points:

-The National Recruitment Agency (NRA) was first proposed by the government in the Union Budget 2020.

-There will be different CETs for graduate level, 12th Pass level and 10th pass level.

-It will be conducted in 12 major Indian languages in comparison to current languages of English and Hindi only.

-There will be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate to appear in the CET subject to the upper age limit.

Cabinet approves proposal for leasing out three airports – Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram of AAI through PPP

Cabinet approves FRP of sugarcane payable by sugar mills for the sugar season 2020-21 at Rs 285 per quintal

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a hike in Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane payable by sugar mills for the sugar season 2020-21 (October-September) at Rs 285 per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10% on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.

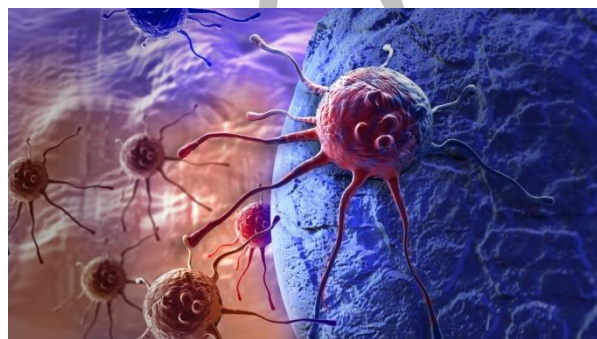
- A premium of Rs. 2.85 per quintal would be paid for every 0.1% increase above 10% in the recovery.
- There will be a reduction in FRP by Rs 2.85 per quintal for every 0.1 percentage point decrease in recovery, in respect of those mills whose recovery is below 10% but above 9.5 per cent.
- For mills having recovery 9.5% or below, the FRP is fixed at Rs 270.75 per quintal.

The “Fair and Remunerative price” of sugarcane is determined under Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966.

–Cabinet approves liquidity measure in the Power Sector amid financial stress caused by COVID-19

The CCEA has approved a one-time relaxation to Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) for extending loans to Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) above limits of working capital cap of 25% of 2019’s revenues under Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) amid COVID-19. One-time relaxation would help in providing liquidity to the power sector and ensure payments by State Governments to DISCOMs.

Report of NCRP 2020: Cancer in India may rise from 13.9 Lakh in 2020 to 15.7 lakh in 2025



The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Centre for Disease Informatics & Research (NCDIR), Bengaluru released a new Report of National Cancer Registry Programme 2020. The report estimates that cancer in India will rise by 25% in 2020 and may rise 12% from the 1392179 cases in 2020 to 1569793 cases in 2025 and tobacco

related cancers are estimated to constitute around 27% of all cancers.

About the report:

i. The report contains data of 5 years (2012-2016) from 28 Population Based Cancer Registries (**PBCRs**) and 58 Hospital Based Cancer registries (**HBCRs**) working under National Cancer Registry Programme (**NCRP**)

Population profile:

i. The Delhi PBCR registered 60,097 cases followed by Mumbai with 53,714, Chennai with 31,271, Bengaluru with 29,049 and Thiruvananthapuram with 27,833 cases.

ii. For all sites of cancer, Aizawl, Mizoram had the highest incidence of Age Adjusted Rates (AAR), 269.4 in males and Papumpare district has AAR, 219.8 in females followed by Aizawl, Mizoram, Kamrup, Bengaluru, Delhi, Hyderabad and Chennai.

iii. The North East registries has the highest incidence rate in cancers of oropharynx, oesophagus, nasopharynx, hypopharynx, stomach, colorectal, liver, gallbladder, larynx, lung, cervix uteri and ovary.

iv. Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore and Delhi has the highest breast cancer incidence

Childhood Cancer:

i. The report presents the analysed incidence rate of the age groups 0-14 and 0-19 and the comparison of AAR per million (pm) of childhood cancers across the registries within NCRP with registries in Asian and Non-Asian countries.

ii. Delhi PBCR recorded the highest proportion of childhood cancers in both the age groups (2.7% in 0-14 years & 4.9% in 0-19 years).

iii. Among other cancers leukaemia was the most common in both 0-14 years (boys, 46.4%; girls, 44.3%) and 0-19 years (boys, 43.2%; girls, 39.2%).

iv. Delhi has a high incidence rate of 125.4 AAR pm in the 0-14 age group and Thiruvananthapuram district has the highest incidence rate of 123.5 AAR pm in the 0-19 age group.

Mortality rates:

i. Barshi rural PBCR recorded the highest Mortality-Incidence percent (M/I%) of 67.2%.

ii. Aizawl district recorded the highest Age Adjusted Mortality Rate (AAMR) in males – 152.7 and females – 89.5.

India Ranked 57th in Digital Quality of Life 2020, Denmark tops: DQL Index 2020 by SurfShark



In accordance with the 2nd edition of global research “Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020” released by online privacy solutions provider SurfShark, India ranked 57th out of 85 countries in terms of overall category “Digital Quality of Life 2020” with 0.5 index points which has been topped by **Denmark** with 0.79 points.

- The DQL Index 2020 analyzes 85 countries around the world covering 6.3 billion people or 81% of the global population in terms of five core pillars: internet affordability, internet quality, e-infrastructure, e-security, and e-government, and results are premised on 12 different factors.

Following tables shows the rankings of India and toppers in overall and 5 different countries:

Rank	Country
Digital Quality of Life 2020	
57	India
1	Denmark
2	Sweden
3	Canada
Internet Affordability	
9	India
1	Israel
2	Canada
3	Azerbaijan
Internet Quality	
78	India
1	Singapore
2	Sweden
3	Netherlands
Electronic (E)-infrastructure	

79	India
1	United Arab Emirates (UAE)
2	Sweden
3	Denmark
E-security	
57	India
1	United Kingdom (UK)
2	France
3	Lithuania
E-Government	
15	India
1	Singapore
2	UK
3	United States of America (USA)

Key Points:

-India ranked lowest in the world in terms of e-infrastructure by occupying 79th rank.

-In regional front, **Scandinavia** has the most active internet users' viz. 95% while Southern Asia is the least active region globally with only 35% of users.

– Among countries, **Canada** is at front with the highest digital quality of life in the Americas, while **Japan** takes the leading position in Asia. Among the countries in Africa, South Africa has highest quality of digital lives whereas New Zealand leads in Oceania.

-This 2020 DQL Index found that seven of the 10 countries with the highest digital quality of life are in Europe.

India and Israel Signed Cultural Agreement to Strengthen Bilateral Relations to Promote People to People Exchange



On 20th August 2020 India signed a cultural agreement with Israel, which outlines a three year programme of cooperation for 2020 to 2023, to strengthen the strategic bilateral relations through promoting the people to people exchange.



Gabi Ashkenazi, Foreign Minister of Israel and Sanjeev Singla, India's Ambassador to Israel signed the agreement at the foreign Ministry in Israel.

i. This cooperation will contribute to the development in the relation between India and Israel.

ii. This will also contribute to raise awareness among youth about the history and culture of the people of both countries.

iii. Literary fest and book fairs will be organised under this program to promote the translation of famous works in prose, poetry and other literary works of other languages.

Keith Rowley Becomes Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago for a 2nd Consecutive Term

On August 19, 2020 **Keith Rowley** (Full name- Keith Christopher Rowley) sworn in as **Prime Minister** of the Republic of **Trinidad and Tobago** for a **2nd consecutive** 5 year term at the President's House, following victory in general elections held on August 10, 2020. In addition to him, his new cabinet ministers were also sworn in. He is from the ruling People's National Movement (PNM).

Note– The new cabinet sworn in was delayed due to requests for recounts of ballots.



Key Info

About Republic of Trinidad and Tobago:

Capital– Port of Spain

Currency– Trinidad and Tobago dollar

President– Paula-Mae Weekes O.R.T.T.,

Francisco Asue is Reappointed as the Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea

Francisco Pascual Eyegue Obama Asue was reappointed as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and He was sworn in at the People's Palace in Malabo before President Teodoro



About Francisco Asue:

- i. Francisco Asue was first appointed as the Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea on 23rd June 2016.
- ii. This is the third consecutive term for Francisco Asue as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

About Republic of Equatorial Guinea:

Prime Minister– Francisco Asue
President– Teodoro Obiang
Capital– Malabo

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