

Current Affairs=07-08-2020

India's first 'Kisan Rail' flagged off from Devlali Railway Station of Maharashtra



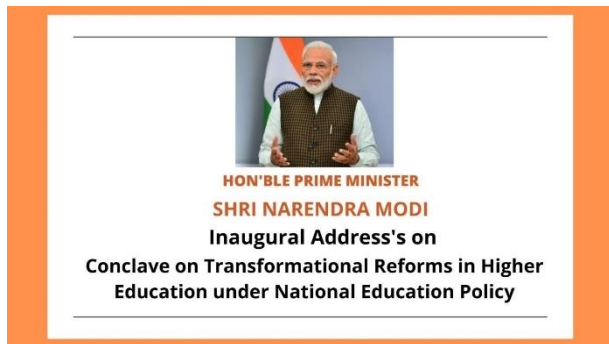
Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Railways and **Narendra Singh Tomar**, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare flagged off the India's **1st Kisan Rail**, a Special Parcel Train from Maharashtra's Devlali to Bihar's Danapur Railway

station

through video link. This is the **1st ever multi commodity train** of Indian Railways(IR) that carries fruits like Pomegranate, Banana, Grapes etc and vegetables like Capsicum, Cauliflower etc. The train will run on a **weekly basis**.

- The launch of Kisan Rail is a step towards achieving the target of doubling the income of farmers by 2022.
- The train is in pursuance of announcement made by Finance Minister Niramala Sitharaman in Union Budget 2020-21
- **Key Facts of Kisan Rail**
Weekly Basis
- **i.** Kisan Rail departs from Deolali every Friday at 11 am and reaches Danapur the next day at 6.45 pm.
- **ii.** On the return journey, the train will depart from Danapur every Sunday at 12 pm and reach Deolali at 7.45 pm the next day.
- **Distance covered**
- The train will cover a distance of 1519 kilometres in around 32(31.45) hours on a single trip.

PM Modi Addresses Conclave on Transformational Reforms in Higher Education under NEP



Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address at the Conclave on Transformational Reforms in Higher Education under National Education Policy (NEP) organised by the Ministry of Education in association with University Grants

Commission (UGC) over a virtual platform and discussed various aspects of NEP 2020, which replaces the National Policy on Education framed in 1986 with academicians and scientists.

Conclave:

i. In the Sessions dedicated to the significant aspects of education in the new National Education policy 2020 were discussed. The aspects include Holistic, multidisciplinary, futuristic education, quality research and equitable use of technology for better education.

ii. K Kasturirangan, an Indian space scientist, stated that to enable scientific steps to integrate technology in the education system, the National Research Foundation (NRF) will work closely with the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF).

iii. PM Modi stated that the successful implementation of the NEP 2020 requires the contribution of the important stakeholders from the education sector.

First Time in Indian Ocean Region UNESCO Recognises Two Coastal Villages of Odisha as Tsunami Ready



Pradeep Kumar Jena, Additional Chief Secretary announced that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognises the two coastal villages of Odisha as “Tsunami Ready” for their overall preparedness to face the tsunami

- Odisha became the **first state** in India and India became the **first country** in the Indian Ocean Region to achieve this status of “Tsunami ready” from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (**IOC**) of UNESCO.
- The two villages are,

Venktraipur (Boxipalli) village of Rangeilunda block in Ganjam district
Noliasahi village of Ersama block in Jagatsinghpur district.

Certification of Recognition:

On 7th August 2020, Over a virtual event in the presence of International and national delegates the certification of recognition was presented to the communities of Venktraipur and Noliasahi and P K Jena, Managing Director of Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), also received the certification from UNESCO.

FAO Introduce New Platform to Reduce Global Food Loss and Waste



On 29th July 2020, The Food and Agriculture Organisation(**FAO**) unveiled a new Platform, to support the global reduction of food loss and waste.

The official launch of the platform will be on the first International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and

Waste(**IDAFLW**) which will be observed on 29th September 2020.

Platform:

The platform will have information on measurement, reduction policies, alliance, actions and examples of models that were successful in reducing the food loss and wastages in the period of global pandemic.

The related portals from the development patterns will also be provided in this platform.

Importance of reduction of food loss and wastage:

The reduction of food loss and wastages will support in improving the food safety, security and nutrition.

This will result in reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, reduction in pressure on natural resources and increase the global productivity and economic growth.

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa registers landslide victory in Sri Lankan Parliamentary elections



Parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka were held on 5 August 2020 to elect 225 members to Sri Lanka's 16th Parliament.

ii. Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) headed by Prime Minister **Mahinda Rajapaksa** has won 145

(plus five more seats from allies) in the elections, securing two-thirds majority in the parliament

- The **two-thirds supermajority** will give them powers to change the constitution.
- Samagi Jana balawega (SJB) led by Sajith Premadasa has emerged as the main opposition party with 54 seats.
- Former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) has got only a single seat.
- Predominant Tamil National Alliance (TNA) which represents north and east tamil speaking regions has won only ten seats.
- The new parliament is set to meet for the first time on August 20.

iii. Sri Lanka is a democratic republic and unitary state, which is governed by a semi-presidential system, a mixture of parliamentary and presidential system. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Damodas Modi congratulated Mahinda Rajapaksa on the imminent victory of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP).

About Sri Lanka:

Capital – Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (legislative), Colombo (executive & judicial)

President – Gotabaya Rajapaksa

Prime Minister – Mahinda Rajapaksa

Highlights of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on August 4-6, 2020

To state “**2020-21 Resolution of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)**” a three day meeting of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) six-member MPC, headed by Shaktikanta Das was held from August 4-6, 2020 where it was forecasted that India's real gross domestic product (GDP) will contract in the first half (H1) of FY21 as well as full FY 2020-21 in view of rising inflation and declining of economic growth amid the gradual lifting of COVID-19) countrywide lockdown.

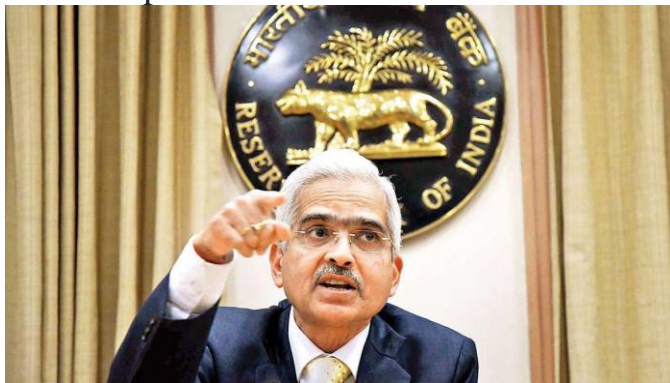
The central bank kept the repo rate unchanged at 4%, reverse repo rate at 3.35%, and marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 4.25%.

RBI Rates as on Aug 7, 2020

| Policy Rates | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Repo Rate | 4% |
| Reverse Repo Rate | 3.35% |
| Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF) | 4.25% |
| Bank Rate | 4.25% |
| Reserve Ratios | |
| Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) | 3% |
| Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) | 18% |

Following key decisions taken during the meet:

- Resolution Framework for COVID-19-related Stress: RBI sets up panel under KV Kamath for one-time restructuring of loans



RBI announces additional special liquidity facility of Rs 5000 cr each for NHB & NABARD
RBI introduced ASISO facility to help banks manage liquidity in COVID-19 scenario
RBI enhanced loan to value ratio to 90% of value of gold pledged
RBI extended provisions of

restructuring of MSME loans for borrowers with loan outstanding upto Rs 25 cr
RBI to bring start-ups under priority sector lending category
RBI to set up 'Innovation Hub' to promote financial inclusion, efficient banking
Positive Pay mechanism for all cheques above Rs 50,000

Former J&K Governor GC Murmu appointed as 14th CAG; Replaces Rajiv Mehrishi



Ram Nath Kovind, President of India as per the powers conferred on him by Section 1 of Article 148 of the Constitution of India has appointed Girish Chandra(GC) **Murmu** as 14th Comptroller and Auditor General(CAG) of India, with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office.

He succeeds **Rajiv Mehrishi** who completes his term on August 8,2020 as he attains the age of 65.GC Murmu will take oath on August 8, 2020 at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

- The CAG is appointed for a term of 6 years or till the incumbent attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

About CAG Of India:

The CAG of India is an authority established by Article 148 of the Constitution of India which audits all receipts and expenditure of the Government of India and the State Governments, including bodies and officials substantially funded by the Government.

Prof. Pradeep Kumar Joshi appointed as UPSC chairman



Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) appointed Professor Pradeep Kumar Joshi as its new Chairman. His tenure as the chairman of the UPSC will be till May 12, 2021.

He succeeds **Arvind Saxena** who retires as the UPSC chairman on 6th August 2020.

About Pradeep Kumar Joshi

i.He joined as the UPSC member in May 12, 2015 and was the chairman of

Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commissions

ii.He also served as Director of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA).

iii.Prof.(Dr.) Joshi taught more than 28 years at postgraduate level and held

many important positions in various policy making, academic and administrative bodies.

iv. He is a specialist in the field of Financial Management.

v. Prof. (Dr.) Joshi has published and presented research papers in several national and international conferences and seminars.

About Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

The commission conducts the civil services examination annually in three stages preliminary, mains and interview to select officers of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Foreign Service (IFS) among others.

Writer and activist Sadia Dehlvi dies aged 63

Writer and activist **Sadia Dehlvi** died of cancer at the age of 63 at Delhi. She was born in 1957, came from the royal 'Shama' family, edited the Urdu women's journal **Bano**.

Dehlvi, writing focuses on women, minorities, Islamic spirituality, and Delhi's heritage and culture. Her grandfather, **Hafiz Yusuf Dehlvi**, founded **Shama**, an iconic Urdu film in 1938 and literary monthly.

About Sadia Dehlvi

Carrier

i. Her popular books include '**The Sufi Courtyard: Dargahs of Delhi**' 2012 and '**Sufism: The Heart of Islam**' (2009) published by HarperCollins that narrates the Islam's Sufi traditions and importance of Sufi.

ii. Her book, '**Dilli ka Dastarkhwan**' – chapter in City Improbable: An Anthology of Writings on Delhi" was later edited by **Khushwant Singh**.

iii. She wrote a book in 2017, titled '**Jasmine & Jinns: Memories and Recipes of My Delhi**' that opens the Delhi's culinary history.

"Amazing Ayodhya" – A new book to tell the history of Ayodhya



- "Amazing Ayodhya" A book by **Neena Rai** promises to shed light on the history of Ayodhya.

- The book is set to give "authentic information" about the city of Ayodhya and will help in understanding the life and times of ancient Hindus.

- The book aims to gain knowledge of the architecture in Ayodhya, houses in Ayodhya, establishment of the city and animals which lived in Ayodhya.

6th edition of National Handloom Day is observed on August 7, 2020



Every year the Government of India (GoI) celebrates the **National Handloom day** on **August 7**, to create awareness about the Handloom Industry amongst the public at large and its contribution to socio-economic development. The 6th edition of the Nation Handloom Day is celebrated on

August 7, 2020.

History and Background:

- i. The Union Government had declared 7th August as the **first National Handloom Day in July 2015**. The day chosen in order to commemorate the **Swadeshi Movement**, launched on August 7, 1905.
- ii. The sector serves as a key for women empowerment since **70%** of the weavers and allied workers are women.
- iii. The Handloom sector provides **15% of textile production** of the country and more than **43 lakhs weavers** employed from the backward community.