

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

17TH AUGUST, 2020

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- In what could prove a gamechanger in the global battle against COVID19, a new, rapid diagnostic test for the novel coronavirus that uses saliva samples was granted an emergency use authorisation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has set new deadlines for the rejuvenation of the polluted Bellandur, Varthur, and Agara lakes in Bengaluru.
- The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has denied a Right to Information (RTI) request related to the PM-CARES Fund on the grounds that providing it would "disproportionately divert the resources of the office".
- The J&K administration decided to restore high speed mobile Internet, 4G, in the twin districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur on "a trial basis".
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved a proposal of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) for a major expansion scheme in all the border and coastal districts.
- China's Foreign Minister and State Councillor Wang Yi has made a rare visit to inspect "border infrastructure" in Tibet, which Chinese media has linked to the recent tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India.
- A ship *MV Wakashio* that has leaked more than 1,000 tonnes of oil in pristine waters off the coast(southeastern) of Mauritius has split in two.
- Tens of thousands of user accounts for online government services in Canada were recently hacked during cyberattacks, authorities said.
- Global influenza vaccine makers have produced a record number of doses for the coming flu season, as authorities try to ease the burden on hospitals ahead of an expected COVID19 resurgence.

INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION(ISRO) IS EXPANDING ITS ROLE INTO DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.

1. ISRO, apart from its role of satellite launch, has enlarged its role in developmental activities such as **Agriculture, Railways, telemedicine, disaster management, etc.**
2. In Agriculture-ISRO technology is being used to carry out **crop production forecasts for major crops** and to improve crop condition and productivity by using remote sensing satellites data.
3. In Railway sector-applications of space technology are realised in **guarding unmanned railway crossings**, detecting obstructive objects on rail tracks to avoid train accidents etc.

OPENING CITY GAS DISTRIBUTION(CGD) TO BENEFIT CUSTOMERS

1. Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board(PNGRB) proposed **that CGD companies would have to provide their infrastructure access to third-party companies** to market Compressed Natural Gas(CNG) and Piped Natural Gas(PNG) based on a transportation tariff.
2. Tariff would be set by the incumbent players but regulated by the PNGRB.
3. Impact on the consumers-End of marketing exclusivity may lead to some competition and **lower prices for CNG.**

PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME(PLI)

1. So far, a total of 22 companies have registered for Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's(MeitY) PLI scheme for electronics sector.
2. These include global companies like Samsung, Rising Star, etc.
3. About PLI-It would **give incentives of 4-6% to electronics companies** which manufacture mobile phones and other electronic components. It is a part of the National Policy on Electronics.

SEZ-BASED SOLAR MANUFACTURERS OPPOSE BASIC CUSTOMS DUTY(BCD)

1. Solar equipment makers have pointed out that local solar factories in SEZs **will have to shut down if the government levies a BCD(Basic Custom Duty) on the import of solar cells** and modules without providing a level-playing field to these manufacturing units.
2. If the BCD is imposed, those in the domestic tariff area who buy cells and modules from the SEZ units will have to pay duty under the 2005 SEZ Act.
3. **BCD is a type of duty or tax** imposed under the Customs Act, 1962.

NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE ONLINE DASHBOARD

1. Online dashboard is envisaged as a **one stop solution for all stakeholders looking for information on infrastructure projects** in India.
2. Financing with prospective investors, domestic and foreign, able to access updated project level information.
3. Dashboard is being hosted on the **India Investment Grid(IIG)**, an interactive online platforms that showcases updated & real-time investment opportunities in the country.