



Newsletter for the month of July 2020

India

Covid-19 review meeting:



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chairs review meeting on Covid-19 pandemic

On 11 July, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired a review meeting on Covid-19 pandemic preparations. The meeting was attended by, among others, Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Member, NITI Aayog, Cabinet Secretary and other senior officials of Government of India. PM Modi took stock of the situation in various parts of the country, the preparedness of various States and the ongoing efforts to contain the spread of infection. He stated that a top priority was to keep close monitoring and guide the containment works in regions where the infection rate was high. He

reiterated the need to observe personal hygiene and social discipline in public places, and emphasized that awareness about Covid should be disseminated widely. At the meeting, successful initiatives being undertaken across India to ensure that the coronavirus was kept under check were also highlighted.

India Ideas Summit 2020:



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivers keynote speech at the India Ideas Summit 2020

On 22 July, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the India Ideas Summit 2020, hosted by the US-India Business Council (USIBC) under the theme "Building a Better Future". In the virtual summit, which brought together senior officials

from the Government of India and the US to set the post-pandemic economic recovery agenda, PM Modi invited US businesses to invest in various economic sectors of India, such as healthcare, energy, infrastructure, civil aviation, defence and space, and finance and insurance. PM Modi stated that global economic resilience could be achieved by stronger domestic economic capacities, and that this meant improved domestic capacity for manufacturing, restoring the health of the financial system and diversification of international trade. He also underlined that India was contributing towards a prosperous and resilient world through the clarion call of an “Aatmanirbhar Bharat”, a self-reliant India.

President of India flags off Red Cross relief supply:



President Ram Nath Kovind flag s off Red Cross relief supply

On 24 July, India’s President Shri Ram Nath Kovind flagged off nine trucks of Red Cross relief supplies from Rashtrapati Bhavan, destined for flood-affected people in the states of Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The relief supplies for the flood-affected people of Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were to be carried from Delhi to the concerned states by train, and would be received by the Red Cross branches of the respective states. The relief material included items such as tarpaulins, tents,

saris, dhotis, cotton blankets, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, bed sheets, buckets and two water purification units. In addition, COVID-19 protection items such as surgical masks, PPE kits, gloves and face shields were also part of the relief material, meant to safeguard and protect health workers associated with the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) medical services in these states.

India-EU Virtual Summit 2020:



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attends the India-EU Virtual Summit 2020

On 15 July, India’s Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the India-EU Virtual Summit 2020. PM Modi stated that he was committed to deepen and strengthen the relations between India and the EU, and that a long-term strategic perspective for this should be adopted. PM Modi also called for the creation of an action-oriented agenda, which could be implemented within a stipulated time frame. He highlighted that India and the EU were natural partners, and referred to that both sides shared universal values like democracy, pluralism, inclusivity, respect for international institutions, freedom, multilateralism and transparency. PM Modi also emphasized that the partnership between India and the EU was useful for peace and stability in the world.

High-level Segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC): On 17

July, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivered a keynote address virtually at this year's High-Level Segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) session, held under the theme "Multilateralism after Covid-19: What kind of UN do we need at the 75th anniversary". In his keynote address, PM Modi recalled India's long association with the ECOSOC and the UN's developmental work, including for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He pointed out that India's success in improving the socio-economic indicators of its vast population had a significant impact on global SDG targets, and highlighted India's commitment to also support other developing countries in meeting their SDG targets. PM Modi emphasized India's focus on environmental sustainability and conservation of biodiversity, and referred to India's leading role in the establishment of the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

Indian States / Festivals

Jharkhand:



*Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi, Jharkhand
Photo: Hecltd.com*

Jharkhand is located in Eastern India, bound by Odisha on the south, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh on the west, Bihar on the north, and West Bengal on the east. The state economy of Jharkhand ranks

19th among India's 36 states and union territories with an estimated GDP of USD 45.3 billion in 2019-2020, and the state had a GDP growth rate of 2.7% from 2017-18 to 2018-19. Jharkhand, which is famously known as "The Land of Forests", is one of the richest mineral zones in the world and holds about 40% and 29% of India's mineral and coal reserves, respectively. Mining and mineral extraction are the major industries in the state, and the resources include coal, iron, copper, uranium, mica, bauxite, granite, limestone, silver, graphite, magnetite and dolomite. Moreover, Jharkhand is the only state in India producing coking coal, uranium and pyrite. Besides mining and mineral extraction, other key industries include engineering, iron and steel, chemicals, handloom, food and beverages, automotive and cement. Moreover, the state has implemented business promotion initiatives such as implementation of the Jharkhand State Solar Power Policy 2015 to boost private sector participation in increasing solar power generation to 2,500 MW by 2020, Jharkhand Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy 2016 to foster manufacturing and innovation, establishment of a single window clearance system for investors in the state, and implementation of policies for IT and Special Economic Zones (SEZs), offering sector-specific incentives.



*Jonha Falls
Photo: Incredibleindia.org*

Moreover, Jharkhand has a rich cultural and historical heritage, religious places of worship, wide bio-diversity and a moderate climate which make the state a great destination for tourism. Some of the most famous tourist attractions include religious destinations like the holy city of Deogarh which is home to the Baidyanath temple, and the holy pilgrimage site of Shikharji located on Jharkhand's highest mountain of Parasnath Hill, waterfalls like the Dassam Falls and Jonha Falls, cities like Jamshedpur and Ranchi, and national parks like the Betla National Park.



Betla National Park
Photo: Jharkhandtourism.gov.in

Amarnath Yatra: From 21 July to 3 August, the pilgrimage Amarnath Yatra to the famous Amarnath cave temple took place. The Amarnath cave is among the most famous caves in India, and houses a representation of Shiva made out of ice. The Amarnath Yatra is considered one of the toughest pilgrimages in India to complete, as the journey entails inclement weather, slippery paths and very high altitude. The pilgrimage navigates the Mount Amarnath, located about 140 kilometres from the city of Srinagar, and there are two routes to the shrine: The traditional 45 kilometres Pahalgam track in the Anantnag district, and the 16 kilometres track from Baltal in Ganderbal. In 2020, pre-registration was required, and

there were strict caps on the number of daily pilgrims allowed onto the mountain.



Amarnath Yatra
Photo: Tripsavvy.com

International commercial & business activities in India

India Global Week 2020: From 9 to 11 July, the three-day, virtual conference India Global Week 2020 was organized under the theme "Be The Revival: India and a Better New World". The event is an annual flagship event organized by the London-based media house India Inc. to bring the opportunities in India to a global audience and make the links between India and the UK stronger. Among several business, strategic and cultural opportunities in a brighter future beyond Covid-19, the conference focused on India's trade and foreign investment processes as the country has done many reforms such as boosting private investment in the space sector.

India-Norway

Ambassador meets Norwegian MFA Secretary General: On 6 July, Ambassador Dr. B.Bala Bhaskar called on the Norwegian MFA Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had wide-ranging discussions on bilateral and multilateral issues.