



Newsletter for the month of June 2020

India

Announcement of Unlock:



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacting with Chief Ministers to discuss Unlock 1.0

On 30 May, India's Union Ministry of Home Affairs issued new guidelines to fight Covid-19 and announced that there would be a phased re-opening of areas in India outside the Containment Zones. The new guidelines came into effect from 1 June, 2020 and were effective until 30 June, 2020. The first phase of re-opening, known as Unlock 1.0, had an economic focus, and permitted re-opening of (i) religious places and places of worship for public, (ii) hotels, restaurants and other hospitality services, and (iii) shopping malls, with effect from 8 June. Regarding the second phase of re-opening, Unlock

2.0, decisions would be taken in the month of July, 2020. From 16-17 June, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held a two-day interaction with Chief Ministers via video conferencing to discuss the situation post Unlock 1.0 and the plan for tackling the Covid-19 pandemic. He stated that India's focus areas were prevention of the infection, curing of patients and at the same time boosting economic activity. PM Modi also highlighted that high density of population, difficulty in maintaining physical distance and daily movement of people in huge numbers had made the Covid-19 challenging, but underlined that due to the patience of citizens, readiness of the administration and dedication of corona warriors, the spread had been kept under control.

125th Annual Session of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII): On 2 June, the virtual, 125th Annual Session of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) was held under the theme "Building India for a New World: Lives, livelihood, growth". Addressing the Annual Session via videoconference, PM Shri Narendra Modi praised the Indian industry for

starting the discussion of getting growth back. He highlighted five priorities for building a self-reliant India and bringing India back on the path of rapid development, which were (i) intent, (ii) inclusion, (iii) investment, (iv) infrastructure, and (v) innovation. PM Modi also underlined that his trust in India's capabilities and crisis management, in India's talent and technology, in its innovation and intellect, in the farmers of India, in its micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs made him confident about getting the growth back.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivers inaugural address at the Annual Session of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)

Global Vaccine Summit 2020: On 4 June, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the virtual Global Vaccine Summit 2020, which was hosted by UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and gathered prominent participants of more than 50 countries including Heads of State and country leaders, government ministers, UN agencies, business leaders and civil society representatives. PM Modi stated that India stood in solidarity with the world during the current, challenging times, and highlighted that the country during the Covid-19 pandemic had attempted to live up to the Indian civilization's teaching of seeing the world as one family. He referred to that India had done so by sharing the country's

available stocks of medicines with more than 120 countries, by forging a common response strategy in the country's immediate neighbourhood, and by providing specific support to countries seeking this. At the summit, PM Modi also pledged USD 15 million to the international vaccine alliance GAVI.



World leaders at the Global Vaccine Summit 2020
Photo: Gavi.org

Historic reforms in the space sector: On 24 June, India's Union Cabinet approved far-reaching reforms in the space sector, aimed at boosting private sector participation in the entire range of space activities. The decision was in line with the long-term vision of transforming India and making the country self-reliant and technologically advanced. The reforms were designed to both accelerate the growth of India's space sector, and to enable Indian industry to be an important player in the global space economy. Through the reforms, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) could focus more on research and development activities, new technologies, exploration missions and human spaceflight.

Indian States / Festivals

Tripura: Tripura is located in Northeast India, bound by Bangladesh on the south, west and north, and Mizoram and Assam on

the east. The state economy of Tripura ranks 24th among India's 36 states and union territories with a GDP of USD 7.2 billion in 2017-2018, and the state is a fast-growing economy with GDP growth rate of 21.4% from 2016-17 to 2017-18. Tripura, which is also known as "The land of permanent spring", is the third smallest by area among the Indian states. The state has favourable agro-climatic conditions for growing various fruits and horticultural crops like rice, jackfruit, pineapple, potato, sugarcane, chili and orange, with rice being the major crop of the state, cultivated in 91% of the cropped area. Tripura has also experienced a gradual boost in tea production due to large availability of land and appropriate climatic conditions, and the tea is known for its good blending conditions.



Tea gardens in Tripura
Photo: Indianexpress.com

Besides agriculture and food processing, other key industries include natural rubber production, bamboo, handloom and handicrafts, and tourism. The state is the second largest producer of natural rubber among Indian states. Regarding natural resources, Tripura holds vast natural gas reserves, and is rich in glass sands, limestone, plastic clay and hard rock. An advantage of Tripura in pursuing economic growth is that the state has a high literacy rate of around 87.8%, which is higher than the national average rate. Moreover, the

state has implemented business promotion initiatives such as implementation of the North East Industrial Development Scheme 2017 to promote the Northeast as an attractive investment destination by providing concessions and incentives, digital transformation of government services and development of digital infrastructure through the IT/ITeS Policy and Roadmap 2017, and development of infrastructure, improved rail & air connectivity and establishment of trade routes under the Tripura Industrial Investment Promotion Incentive Scheme 2017.



Ujjayanta Palace
Photo: Tripuratourism.gov.in

Tripura is characterized by its lushness, greenery and scenic beauty such as breathtaking verdant hills, and has ancient places, temples, high bio-diversity and several wildlife sanctuaries. This makes the state a favoured tourist destination in North East India, and the number of foreign tourist arrivals in Tripura was 69,899 in 2017. Some of the top tourist attractions are palaces such as Ujjayanta Palace and Neermahal Palace located in and near the city of Agartala, temples such as the Tripura Sundari Temple and the Chaturdash Devta Temple, the archaeological sites of Unakoti and Pilak, as well as wildlife sanctuaries such as Sepahijala and Trishna.

Puri Rath Yatra Festival:



*Puri Rath Yatra Festival
Photo: Tripsavvy.com*

From 23 June to 4 July, the Puri Rath Yatra festival was held at the Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha. The festival is Odisha's most popular festival and is based around the worship of Lord Jagannath, a reincarnation of lord Vishnu. The festival is celebrated by a procession in which the idols of Lord Jagannath and his elder brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra are transported from the Jagannath Temple to the nearby Gundicha Temple. The idols are transported on towering chariots, which have been made to resemble temples, giving the festival its name of Rath Yatra - the Chariot Festival. This year, the festival was held without public participation due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Indian Community

6th International Day of Yoga (IDY): As part of celebrations of the 6th International Day of Yoga (IDY), Mission, in collaboration with some Yoga Studios, organized an event "Yoga in the Garden" on Tuesday, the 23rd June, 2020 at Embassy Residence. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the IDY celebration was well-attended by yoga lovers, including Norwegians, PIOs and NRIs. A 60-minute Yoga Session based on Common Yoga Protocol was conducted by two

professional Norwegian Yoga teachers – Ms. Jenny Vågane and Mr. Massimo Barberi. The Embassy with the help of local sponsors presented Yoga mats to all attendees.



6th International Day of Yoga

Arrival of new Ambassador: On 25th June, Ambassador-designate of India to Norway Dr. B. Bala Bhaskar arrived in Oslo. He will be presenting his Credentials to His Majesty King Harald V shortly. Earlier, Ambassador Bhaskar served in several countries including USA, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Palestine in addition to the various positions in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.



74th Independence Day of India: On the occasion of the 74th Independence Day of India, the Embassy of India will be organizing a Flag Hoisting Ceremony on 15th August at 10.00 a.m. at India House, Holmenveien 4, 0374, Oslo, where Ambassador-designate Dr. B. Bala Bhaskar will unfurl the National Flag.