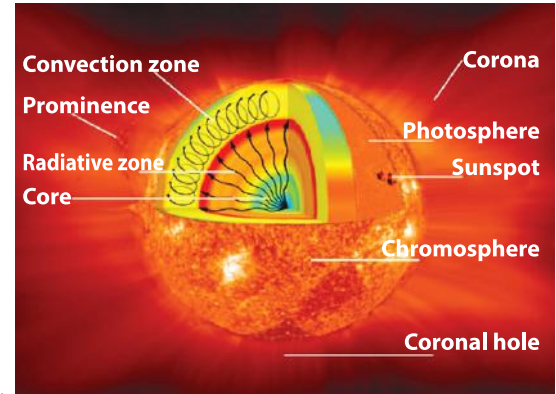


NEWS TODAY

GLOBAL MAGNETIC FIELD OF SUN'S CORONA MEASURED FOR THE FIRST TIME

- Corona is the **outermost layer of the Sun's atmosphere**, consisting of hot, diffuse, and highly ionized plasma. **Sun's magnetic field governs many aspects of the Sun's behavior** such as 11-year solar cycle, solar eruptions etc.
- Till now, **solar magnetic fields were measured only at Sun's surface** (photosphere).
 - > Magnetic field information of whole atmosphere of sun is required to understand the interplay between solar plasma and magnetic field.
- Researchers used a technique known as **coronal seismology or magneto seismology** to measure the coronal magnetic field.
 - > This **method uses magnetic waves, known as Alfvén waves**, that are observed to travel along with the magnetic fields.
 - > This study is first time that a **global map of the coronal magnetic field** has been obtained.
- **Study will help in understanding**
 - > **Reasons which causes corona to heat up**, though the photosphere is cooler than the interior.
 - Core of the Sun is at about 15 million degrees, photosphere is a mere 5700 degrees hot and corona is at one million degrees or more.
 - > **Mechanisms of eruptions of the Sun**, such as solar flares and coronal mass ejections.



PM LAUNCHES FINANCING FACILITY UNDER AGRICULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (AIF)

- AIF is a Central Sector Scheme (Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare) to provide **medium - long term debt financing facility for post-harvest management Infrastructure and community farming assets** through interest subvention and credit guarantee.
 - > These assets **will enable farmers to get higher price for their crops** as they will be able to store and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage, and increase processing and value addition.
- Under AIF, **Rs. 1 Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans** with interest subvention of 3% per annum on loans upto Rs. 2 crore.
- **Beneficiaries include** farmers, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Farmer Producers Organizations, Agri-entrepreneurs, Startups, Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public-Private Partnership Projects etc.
- **Credit guarantee coverage will be provided** under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises scheme for loans up to Rs. 2 Crore.
- Duration: **FY2020 to FY2029**.
- Also, **PM released 6th installment under PM-KISAN scheme** to nearly 8.5 Crore farmers.
 - > PM- KISAN **provides income support, by a cash benefit of Rs.6000/- per year**, to eligible beneficiary farmers in three equal installments.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE'S (MoD) BIG PUSH TO ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT INITIATIVE

- **MoD has announced a list of 101 items**, including weapons, platforms and equipments, for which **there would be an embargo on import**. It will be progressively implemented between 2020 to 2024.
- Aim is **to apprise Indian defence industry about the anticipated requirements** of Armed Forces so as to prepare them for realising the goal of indigenization.
 - > India has for years been **among the world's top 3 importers** of defence equipment.
- **Intended benefits for domestic industry:**
 - > Expected to get contracts worth Rs 4 lakh crore in next 5 to 7 years.
 - > Improving design and development capabilities.
 - > Handholding and a commitment from armed forces on procurement will step up overall defence manufacturing capacity.
- **Recent steps to boost domestic defence production**
 - > **Bifurcation of capital procurement budget** for 2020-21 between domestic and foreign capital procurement routes.
 - > **Draft Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020** hiked Indigenous Content (IC) ratio in procurement and propose a ban on specific kinds of weapon and platforms.
 - > **Draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy** also provides a thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE TAKES VARIOUS INITIATIVES FOR AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION

- Agricultural Mechanization is one of the key drivers **for sustainable development of agriculture sector**. It helps in:
 - > **Increasing land productivity** by facilitating timeliness and quality of cultivation.
 - > **Reducing the cost of operations** by ensuring better management of costly inputs.
 - > **Reducing drudgery** associated with various farm operations and address issue of labour shortage.
- **Farm mechanization level in India stands at about 40-45%** compared to U. S. (95 %), Brazil (75%) and China (57%).
 - > States like **Punjab, UP, Haryana have very high mechanization** while north-eastern states have negligible mechanization.
- **Reasons for lower mechanisation:** economies of operation due to small holdings, access to power, credit cost and procedures, uninsured markets and low awareness.
- **Steps taken to increase farm mechanisation**
 - > **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization:** To increase reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers, setting up of Custom Hiring Centre (CHC), Creating awareness through demonstration and capacity building activities etc.
 - > **FARMS-app (Farm Machinery Solutions-app)-** Multi- lingual Mobile App to connect farmers with CHCs situated in their locality.
 - > **Crop Residue Management scheme** for distributing machinery among farmers and cooperative societies for effective in-situ management of the paddy straw.

INDIA, PAKISTAN SPAR OVER INDUS WATER TALKS AMID PANDEMIC

- India **refused a request by Pakistan to hold a physical meeting** on issues around the Indus Water Treaty (IWT). Earlier India suggested a virtual conference in light of COVID-19 pandemic.
 - As per IWT, **Indus commissioners of the two countries need to meet at least once every year**, alternately in India and Pakistan.
- Currently, one of the pending issues between the two sides is the **disagreement over Kishenganga (on Jhelum river) and Ratle hydroelectricity projects (on Chenab river)** in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Earlier, **Pakistan had made a request to World Bank (WB)** for the appointment of a Court of Arbitration while India had sought a neutral expert **to resolve the dispute on two hydroelectric projects**.
 - On this, **WB has expressed its inability** to take an independent decision saying IWT has no such provision.
- IWT was signed between **India and Pakistan in 1960**.
 - Under this, waters of **three eastern rivers namely Ravi, Beas and Sutlej**, have been allocated exclusively to India.
 - **Western rivers, namely Indus, Chenab and Jhelum, are for Pakistan** with India given some rights like agriculture, navigation, domestic use and also the unrestricted rights to develop hydroelectric power projects.



ALSO IN NEWS

<p>Girish Chandra Murmu takes charge as CAG of India</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is established under Article 148. • CAG audits all receipts and expenditure of Union and the state governments, including those of bodies and authorities substantially financed by government. • Constitution enables the independent and unbiased nature of audit by the CAG by providing for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Appointment by the President of India ➢ Special procedure for removal (like a Supreme Court Judge) ➢ Salary and expenses Charged (not Voted) to the Consolidated Fund of India ➢ Disallowing his holding any other Government office after his term expires
<p>EnviStats India 2020 Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is released by National Statistical Office (under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation). • Key highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Average number of heat wave days increased 82.6% year-on-year to 157 in 2019, with the highest number recorded in Rajasthan (20 days). ➢ Number of average cold wave days reported an increase by 55.2% in 2018. ➢ PM less than or equal to 10 was highest in Delhi amongst metro cities. ➢ Acute respiratory infection led to 3,740 deaths in 2018. ➢ Tube well/hand pump remained the primary source of drinking water in rural India, piped water was the primary source in urban areas.
<p>Government e Marketplace (GeM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government has called upon more and more buyers and sellers to join the GeM. • GeM is a one stop portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ It operates under Ministry of Commerce and Industry. • It aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement. It provides the tools of e-bidding, reverse e-auction and demand aggregation to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.
<p>First Silk Training cum Production Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will open this centre in tribal village of Chullyu in Arunachal Pradesh. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ It will create local employment and sustainable development in the region. • Centre will help in training of artisans and supporting the production of Eri Silk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Eri Silk is indigenous to the North Eastern states and is traditionally worn by local tribes. • KVIC aims to connect the center with Ziro tourist spot and thus providing an assured market to the local artisans for their products.
<p>First-ever online Lok Adalat in Delhi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was organised by Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA) as a creative solution of justice delivery during COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka have also successfully held e-Lok Adalats. • Lok Adalat is one of the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled/ compromised amicably. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ It has been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

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