

NEWS TODAY

FDI RISES 10% IN FY20, BUT MONEY COMING IN FROM CAYMAN ISLANDS JUMPS 305%

- According to RBI data, Foreign direct investment into India **rose 10 % to \$42.69 billion** in FY20 from \$38.74 billion in the previous year.
 - Despite a **global economic slowdown and investment concerns** due to disruptions in supply chains, India was able to sustain the pace and **was 9th largest recipient country globally** in 2019.

- Most of **FDI inflows went to services sector**, including communication, retail and wholesale trade, financial services, computer and business services and the manufacturing sector.
 - Manufacturing sector got \$ 8.15 billion, communication services \$ 6.83 billion and retail trade \$ 4.91 billion.

- FDI from Cayman Islands jumped **305% to \$3.49 billion during 2019-20**.
 - Cayman Islands is considered a **tax haven (low tax rate jurisdiction)** and thus become one of the most preferred jurisdictions for routing investments.

- **Key drivers of FDI inflow into India:** Relaxation in FDI norms, young and cheap labour force, Size of the Market, Economic performance, Technological and innovation capabilities, improving Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) environment etc.
 - An ORF study for Indian states estimates that a **one-percent increase in the EoDB score leads to a 6.32-percent increase in FDI inflow**.

FDI INFLOWS (IN \$ MILLION)

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Total	37,366	38,744	42,629
Singapore	9,273	14,632	12,612
Mauritius	13,415	6,570	7,498
The Netherlands	2,677	2,519	5,295
Cayman Islands	1,140	863	3,496
USA	1,973	2,823	3,401

Source: RBI

FIRST WORLD SOLAR TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT (WSTS) ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE (ISA)

- **Aims of WSTS** is to bring together key stakeholders (researchers, innovators etc.) to present and discuss the recent highlights of solar technologies, cost-wise; technology-wise, technology transfers, challenges and concerns in the field.

Key highlights of the summit

- **ISA signed a tripartite agreement with Ministry of new and renewable energy and World Bank** which made it the nodal agency to implement the country's 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) initiative.

- OSOWOG aims to connect 140 countries through a common grid that will be used to transfer solar power.

- **Journal on Solar Energy (I JOSE)** launched to help authors from across the globe to publish articles on solar energy.

About ISA

- ISA is a **treaty-based international intergovernmental organization** which was jointly launched by India and France during COP 21 (2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference).

- Objectives of ISA is **deployment of 1000 GW of solar capacity and mobilization of US\$ 1000 billion of investment** in solar energy sector by 2030.

- ISA Framework Agreement has been **signed by 86 countries**, with 68 having deposited instruments of ratification.

AGRICULTURE MINISTER LAUNCHES 22 BAMBOO CLUSTERS IN 9 STATES AND LOGO FOR NATIONAL BAMBOO MISSION

- 22 bamboo clusters launched in states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Assam, Odisha, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand & Karnataka.

- These clusters will be **engaged in raising nurseries and plantations**, and development of bamboo products such as furniture, agarbatti, Venetian blinds, chopsticks, toothbrush etc.

- It aims to increase **income of farmers, promote use of bamboo and its export**.

- **Applications of Bamboo:** use in building materials, agricultural implements, furniture, musical instruments, food items, handicrafts, large bamboo-based industries (paper pulp, rayon etc.), packaging, etc.

Measures to promote bamboo:

- **Indian Forest Act 1927** was amended in 2017 to **remove bamboo from the category of trees**. This allows cultivation and felling of bamboo and its products without any felling and transit permissions outside forests.

- **Restructured National Bamboo Mission, launched in 2018-19** for holistic development of complete value chain of sector.

- **Import policy has also been modified** to ensure progress of the bamboo industry in the country.

- **Capacity-building and training programmes** for artisans for making value added products from bamboo.

- India is only **second to China in bamboo reserves**, accounting for 20% of the global production.

GOVERNMENT CONFIDENT OF HALVING ROAD ACCIDENT DEATHS FROM 1.5 LAKH PER ANNUM BY 2025

- Government had signed the **Brasilia declaration in 2015**, committing to reduce road accident and fatality by half.

- As per **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, During 2019, a total of 4,37,396 cases of road accidents were reported which caused 1,54,732 deaths.

- Traffic Accidents (43.9%) were **major causes of accidental deaths**.

Key causes:

- 59.6% of road accidents were due to over-speeding.

- 25.7% due to dangerous and careless driving or overtaking.

- 16.8% were due to reasons including drunk driving, poor weather conditions and mechanical defect.

- **Some challenges:** Poor system of issuing licences, poor scientific investigation of accidents, no pedestrian crossings on highways etc.

Steps by government

- **Identification and removal of blackspots** on highways (World Bank and ADB funded project).

- **Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act, 2019** was passed with stringent penalties, recall provision for defect vehicles, recognition of good Samaritans etc.

- **National Road Safety Policy**, approved in 2010, outlining the policy initiatives for Safer Road Infrastructure, safe drivers, safe vehicles etc.

- **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Sadak Yojana** to eliminate dangerous spot from highways.

TAMIL NADU WRITES TO CENTRE ON 3 LANGUAGE FORMULA

- Tamil Nadu government said that State had already decided to **continue with the two-language policy (of Tamil and English)**.
- The **new National Education Policy (NEP)** proposes **three-language formula** that recommends that **all students will learn three languages in their school under the formula**.
 - > At least **two must be Indian languages**, with English not to be considered as one.
 - > It also says that the **freedom to choose the two Indian languages** should be left to the states, regions or students.
- Also, new NEP **further advises the use of either the mother tongue**, regional language or local language as the medium of instruction, at least until Class 5.
- The three-language formula was **first devised by the central government in 1968** and incorporated in the NEP 1968. The idea behind the scheme was to ensure that students learnt more languages.

ALSO IN NEWS

<p>Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAGE, launched in 2013, seeks to support nations in reframing economic policies and practices around sustainability to foster economic growth, create income and jobs, reduce poverty and inequality, and strengthen the ecological foundations of their economies. It seeks to help countries achieve SDGs, especially SDG 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all." PAGE brings together five UN agencies- UN Environment, International Labour Organization, UN Development Programme, UN Industrial Development Organization, and UN Institute for Training and Research.
<p>e-Kisan Mandis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First e-kisan mandi became operational in Pune. It is an initiative of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Unlike e-NAM, which focuses on APMCs, the e-kisan mandis will seek to bring farmers, agri-producers, traders and small buyers on a common platform for trading agricultural commodities. It would operate in a hub-and-spoke model, in which the NAFED -owned land will operate as a hub for FPCs in the area.
<p>KIRAN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline to provide support for issues like early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being etc. It will offer services in 13 languages. It was launched by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities under Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
<p>Thailand scraps Kra Canal Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently, Thailand stepped back from the Chinese led Kra Canal proposal. Kra Canal proposal was to construct a 120-kilometre mega canal cutting through the isthmus of Kra in Thailand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > This waterway would connect the Andaman Sea with the Gulf of Thailand, providing a maritime shortcut by rerouting shipping away from the Strait of Malacca. Through the project, China aims to end Malacca dilemma by bypassing the Strait of Malacca.
<p>Low ozone over Brahmaputra River Valley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers have found that concentration of near surface ozone in this region in North-East is low compared to the other urban locations. Tropospheric, or ground-level ozone, is created by chemical reactions between oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and volatile organic compounds. It usually increases when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, refineries and other sources chemically react in the presence of sunlight, impacting human health.
<p>Ur river, Madhya Pradesh</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens, state officials came together to rejuvenate Ur river by recharging underground water sources to ensure soil absorption and low run-off of rainwater. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > This is done by digging pits or farm ponds on every small plot of land in the area. Villagers in the area were inspired by rejuvenation of Ody river, in Uttar Pradesh by similar collaboration at ground level.
<p>White grub (Holotrichia serrata) insect larvae</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an agricultural pest that affects sugarcane crop. The pests eat at the roots of sugarcane, decreasing the moisture and nutrient supply to the plant. This leads to the yellowing and wilting of leaves and causes damage to the base of the shoot. Earlier it attacked sugarcane and groundnut crops; now it is also devouring soybean, cotton and turmeric crops. Chemical pesticides are available for controlling the white grub infestation.
<p>Jharkhand cabinet approves Mukhyamantri SHRAMIK (Shahri Rozgar Manjuri For Kamgar) Yojana</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme will guarantee 100 days of work in a financial year for urban unskilled labourers. It has provision to pay an unemployment allowance if the state fails to provide 100 days of work similar to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Workers, who are over 18 years and living in civic body-run areas are eligible to apply for the scheme.
<p>International Literacy Day 2020 (8th September)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day aims at raising awareness and reminding people of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights. UNESCO, in 14th Session of its General Conference in 1966, formally proclaimed 8 September as International Literacy Day.

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