

## 11 June 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

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### National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs)

#### Context:

The Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers held a meeting with the directors of NIPERs.

#### About NIPERs:

- NIPERs are institutes of national importance under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, GOI.
- They are institutes involved in higher education, research and development in the pharmaceutical sciences.
- The first NIPER was established in Mohali in 1998.
- Currently, there are seen such NIPERs in Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Hajipur, Guwahati and Rae Bareilly. The six were established in 2007.

To know more about Institutes of National Importance, check [PIB dated Jan 8, 2020](#).

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### Commercial coal mining

#### Context:

Government of India to launch auction for commercial coal mining on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

#### Details:

- The commercialisation of coal mining was announced in tranche 4 of the [Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan](#).
  - The government had announced that it would remove the government monopoly on coal mining by introducing commercial mining on a revenue sharing basis.
  - The private sector would be allowed to bid for 50 coal blocks. Private players would also be allowed to undertake exploration activities.
  - The commercial coal mining auctions are completely different from the earlier regime of restricted sectors, use and price. Now there are no such restrictions at all.
  - The proposed auctions have terms and conditions which are very liberal allowing new companies to participate in the bidding process, reduced upfront amount, adjustment of upfront amount against royalty, liberal efficiency parameters to encourage flexibility to operationalize the coal mines, transparent bidding process, 100% FDI through automatic route allowed and reasonable financial terms and revenue sharing model based on **National Coal Index**.
    - The Coal Ministry is developing a National Coal Index to fix the price of coal for commercial mining, which would include a weighted combination of monthly prices of coal in various channels of transaction.
  - The successful bidders also will have flexibility in coal production unlike in the past and have provision for incentives for early production and coal gasification.
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### India Rankings 2020

#### Context:

Union HRD Minister virtually releases “India Rankings 2020” for Higher Educational Institutions.

#### Details:

- The rankings are released annually based on the [National Institutional Ranking Framework](#) (NIRF).
- This framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country.

- The methodology draws from the overall recommendations and broad understanding arrived at by a Core Committee set up by MHRD, to identify the broad parameters for ranking various universities and institutions.
  - The parameters broadly cover “Teaching, Learning and Resources,” “Research and Professional Practices,” “Graduation Outcomes,” “Outreach and Inclusivity,” and “Perception”.
  - Ranks are assigned based on total sum of marks assigned for each of these five broad groups of parameters.
  - Besides sourcing data on various parameters from applicant institutions, third party sources of data have also been used, wherever possible.
  - In 2020, the Indian Institute of Technology Madras has been ranked the number 1 institute in the ‘overall’ category.
  - The top ranked university is the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.
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## Indian Railways

### Context:

Railways sets world record by running first Double Stack Container Train in electrified territory.

### Details:

- The Indian Railways created a new world benchmark by commissioning the first high rise Over Head Equipment (OHE), which has contact wire height of 7.57 metre and successfully ran double stack containers in electrified territory on Western Railway.
  - With this remarkable development, Indian Railways has proudly become the first Railway to run Double Stack Container train with high reach pantograph in high rise OHE territory.
  - The operations successfully commenced on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 from Palanpur & Botad stations in Gujarat.
  - This is also a part of the latest green initiative by the Railways.
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## New low-cost novel coronavirus test developed

### Context:

Researchers at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) have developed a new low-cost and low-tech required test for SARS-CoV-2 testing known as **reverse transcription nested PCR (RT-nPCR) test**.

### Details:

- This test does not require real-time quantitative RT-qPCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction).
  - This test has shown comparable performance to the standard RT-qPCR test.
  - The nested PCR (RT-nPCR) approach does not depend on RT-qPCR but uses standard RT-PCR as part of an endpoint assay.
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## Nature Index

### Context:

3 DST institutes among top 30 Indian Institutions in Nature Index 2020.

### About Nature Index:

- The Nature Index is a database of author affiliation information collated from research articles published in an independently selected group of 82 high-quality science journals.
  - The database is compiled by Nature Research (journal).
  - The Nature Index provides a close to real-time proxy of high-quality research output and collaboration at the institutional, national and regional level.
  - The Nature Index also provides institutions with an easy means to identify and highlight some of their best scientific research.
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