

18 June 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

Commercial coal mining

Context:

Prime Minister launched the auction process of 41 coal blocks for commercial mining through video conference.

Details:

- The Coal Ministry in association with FICCI launched the process for auction of these coal mines.
- A two stage electronic auction process is being adopted for allocation of the coal mines.

For more on commercial coal mining, check [PIB dated June 11, 2020](#).

Note:

- India has the world's fourth largest coal reserves.
 - India is the second largest producer of coal.
 - India is also the second largest importer of coal.
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Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan

Context:

PM to launch Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan in June to boost livelihood opportunities in rural India.

About Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan:

- It is a rural public works scheme to empower and provide livelihood opportunities to the returnee migrant workers and rural citizens.
 - Under this scheme, within 125 days, for 116 districts, nearly 25 schemes of the government will be brought together.
 - Villages across 116 districts in the six states will join the programme through the Common Service Centres and Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
 - The scheme entails creating infrastructure in the rural areas, apart from providing employment opportunities.
 - Funds to the tune of Rs.50000 crore has been allocated for this scheme.
 - The central and state governments have mapped the skill sets of migrant workers who have returned to the 116 districts.
 - According to the government, at least 25000 migrant workers have returned to each of the 116 districts.
 - Some of the works included under this are provision of gas pipelines, works under District Mineral Fund, waste management works, rural roads, Anganwadi centres, rural housing, railway works, RURBAN mission in rural areas, solar pump sets, laying of fibre optic cables, Jal Jeeven, etc.
 - The programme will be launched from village Telihar in Khagaria district of Bihar.
 - Coordinating ministries/departments: Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Road Transport & Highways, Mines, Drinking Water & Sanitation, Environment, Railways, Petroleum & Natural Gas, New & Renewable Energy, Border Roads, Agriculture and Telecom.
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I-Lab

Context:

The Union Health Minister launched I-Lab, the DBT – AMTZ Mobile Diagnostic Unit for COVID Testing.

About I-Lab:

- This is India's first **I-Lab (infectious disease diagnostic laboratory)** for COVID testing in rural and inaccessible areas of India.
- This mobile testing facility will be deployed through the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) testing hubs to remote regions of the country for COVID testing.

- **Who developed it?**
 - The I-Lab has been created in a record time of 8 days by the Andhra Pradesh Med-tech Zone (AMTZ) team with the support of DBT under the National Biopharma Mission being implemented by the Public Sector BIRAC.
 - The I-Lab has been built under the DBT-AMTZ COMManD [COVID Medtech Manufacturing Development] Consortia.
 - The consortia was formed by the DBT and the AMTZ to address the shortage of critical healthcare technologies in India and move progressively towards a stage of self-sufficiency.
 - **Specifications:** The I-Lab is a BSL-2 facility with on-site ELISA, RT-PCR, Bio chemistry analysers. It can run 50 RT-PCR reactions and about 200 ELISA in a day. Double set of machines can help increase the capacity to about 500 per day in 8 hours shifts.
 - It can be deployed in remote areas and can be lifted from Automotive Chassis, and can be put on goods train for sending to any location in the country.
 - The BSL-2 Lab is as per NABL specifications and is being attached to DBT's certified testing centres.
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Umifenovir

Context:

CSIR-CDRI's candidate drug Umifenovir secures DCGI approval for Phase III Clinical Trial against COVID-19.

Details:

- CSIR constituent lab CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) Lucknow, has received permission for carrying out Phase III randomised, Double blind, Placebo controlled trial of efficacy, safety and tolerability of antiviral drug Umifenovir.
 - This drug has a good safety profile and acts by preventing the entry of virus into human cells and also by priming the immune system.
 - Umifenovir is mainly used for treatment of influenza and is available in China and Russia, and has recently come into prominence due to its potential use for COVID-19 patients.
 - To evaluate its efficacy in Indian patients, CSIR-CDRI has taken up the clinical trial.
 - Further, it has developed the process technology for Umifenovir in record time and licensed the economical process technology for manufacturing and marketing the drug to a private company based in Goa, who have already received test license from DCGI.
 - Notably, all the raw materials for the drug are indigenously available.
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