

15 July 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

1. 15th India-EU (Virtual) Summit

Context:

The 15th Summit between India and the European Union (EU) was held in a virtual format on 15th July 2020.

Details:

- India was represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The EU was represented by the presidents of the European Commission and the European Council.
- The leaders decided to strengthen the EU-India Strategic Partnership, based on shared principles and values of democracy, freedom, rule of law, and respect for human rights, aiming at delivering concrete benefits for the people in the EU and India.
- The leaders deliberated on a number of topics and issued a joint statement which touched upon a number of subjects such as:
 - Promotion of effective multilateralism with the UN and the [WTO](#).
 - Bolstering cooperation in international fora to reinforce international security, strengthen preparedness and response for global health emergencies, enhance global economic stability and inclusive growth, implement the Sustainable Development Goals and protect the climate and the environment.
 - Mutual synergies in the field of healthcare.
 - Trade and investment relations.
 - Tackling climate change and environmental degradation.
 - Sustainable modernisation.
 - Harnessing human-centric digitisation – personal data protection and privacy.
 - Global peace and security, disarmament and non-proliferation and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including its financing and countering radicalization.
 - Human rights.
- The leaders adopted the “EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025” to guide cooperation between the EU and India over the next five years.
- They welcomed the signing of the Euratom-India Agreement on research and development cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- They also adopted a Joint Declaration on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy and welcomed the upcoming renewal of the EU-India Science and Technology Agreement for another five years.
- A free trade deal that India and the European Union have been planning since 2007 remained elusive at the Summit.
- The EU is also one of the largest investors in India with a cumulative investment of over \$91 billion.

For more related information, check [CNA dated July 14, 2020](#).

2. India-US CEO Forum 2020

Context:

The India-U.S. CEO Forum was held through a telephonic conference.

About the India-US CEO Forum:

- This forum has been convened since its reconstitution in 2014 by the governments of India and the USA.
- The CEO Forum 2020 is the fifth such event since 2014.
- The Forum is an effective platform to highlight key issues that affect business entities and to identify areas for closer collaboration for the mutual benefit of both economies.

3. Invalid Pension to Armed Forces Personnel

Context:

Government decides to allow Invalid Pension to Armed Forces Personnel with less than 10 years of qualifying service.

Details:

- Invalid pension is granted to the Armed Forces Personnel who is invalidated out of service on account of disability which is accepted as Neither Attributable to Nor Aggravated (NANA) by Military Service.
- The benefit of this decision will be available to those Armed Forces Personnel who were in service on or after 04.01.2019.
- Earlier, the minimum period of qualifying service actually rendered and required for invalid pension was 10 years or more. For less than 10 years of qualifying service, invalid gratuity was admissible.

4. Indo-Italian Business Mission on Food Processing

Context:

The Union Minister for Food Processing Industries addressed the opening session of the digital Indo-Italian Business Mission on Food Processing.

About the Indo-Italian Business Mission on Food Processing:

- This is a two-day event under which digital conferences, trade fair and B2B meetings are being held.
- 23 Italian companies that are part of this Digital Mission are having a virtual exhibition of their products & services and would be having Business (B2B) Meetings with the end-users and other industry players in India.
- Meetings and the webinars would be spread across the key areas – fruits & vegetables, cereals, milk & dairy processing, packaging & bottling and also there would be opportunities for technical collaborations with the units located in the [Mega Food Parks](#).

5. Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine

Context:

The first indigenously-developed vaccine in the field of pneumonia has been given market approval by the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

Details:

- The first fully indigenously developed Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine has been developed by the Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd, Pune.
- The company has concluded phase III trials in India and has also conducted clinical trials in Gambia.
- Thereafter, it had applied for approval and permission to manufacture this vaccine with the office of the DCGI.
- The company has been granted permission to manufacture this vaccine.
- This is the first indigenously developed vaccine in the field of pneumonia. Earlier the demand of such vaccine was substantially met by licensed importers in the country since the manufacturers were all vaccine companies based outside India.
- This vaccine is used for active immunization against invasive disease and pneumonia caused by “Streptococcus pneumonia” in infants. The vaccine is administered in an intramuscular manner.

6. World's Most Affordable COVID-19 Diagnostic Kit Corosure

Context:

Union HRD Minister launches ‘Corosure’.

About Corosure:

- Corosure is the name given to a COVID-19 diagnostic kit developed by IIT Delhi.
- It is claimed as the world’s most affordable COVID-19 diagnostic kit.
- The Corosure Kit has been developed indigenously and is much cheaper than other kits.
- The probe-free diagnostic kit has received approval from the DCGI and the ICMR.
- The base price of the RT-PCR assay is Rs 399.
 - Even after adding the RNA isolation and laboratory charges, the cost per test will be considerably cheaper compared to currently available kits in the market.
- IIT Delhi has given license to 10 companies to manufacture the COVID-19 diagnostic kit using the technology developed by its researchers.
- With this, IIT Delhi has become the first academic institution to obtain the ICMR’s approval for a real-time PCR-based diagnostic assay.
- It is also the first probe-free assay for COVID-19 approved by the ICMR.

7. India–US Strategic Energy Partnership

Context:

An **India Energy Modeling Forum** was launched in the joint working group meeting of the Sustainable Growth Pillar.

About the Sustainable Growth Pillar:

- The Sustainable Growth Pillar is an important pillar of the India–US Strategic Energy Partnership co-chaired by NITI Aayog and USAID.
- The SG pillar entails energy data management, energy modelling and collaboration on low carbon technologies as three key activities.

About the Energy Modeling Forum (EMF):

- The Energy Modelling Forum (EMF) in the USA was established in 1976 at the Stanford University to connect leading modelling experts and decision-makers from government, industry, universities, and other research organizations.
- The forum provides an unbiased platform to discuss the contemporary issues revolving around energy and environment.
- In India, there was no formalized and systematic process of having a modeling forum.
 - Even then, various think-tanks/research organizations like TERI, IRADe, CSTEP, CEEW, NCAER, etc., have been consistently developing scenarios and contributing through modelling studies and analyses to provide the required inputs to the Environment Ministry and other relevant ministries, including NITI Aayog.
- The **India Energy Modelling Forum** will accelerate this effort and aim to:
 - Provide a platform to examine important energy and environmental-related issues;
 - Inform decision-making process to the Indian Government;
 - Improve cooperation between modelling teams, government, and knowledge partners, funders;
 - Facilitate exchange of ideas, ensure production of high-quality studies;
 - Identify knowledge gaps at different levels and across different areas;
 - Build capacity of Indian institutions.
- The NITI Aayog will initially coordinate the activities of the forum and finalize its governing structure. The forum would include knowledge partners, data agencies and concerned government ministries.

8. Vallarpadam Terminal

Context:

The Minister of State for Shipping reviewed the development activities of the Vallarpadam Terminal of Cochin Port.

About the Vallarpadam Terminal:

- The Vallarpadam Terminal of the Cochin Port is envisaged as the first trans-shipment port of India.
- It is officially known as the Kochi International Container Trans-shipment Terminal (ICTT).
- The trans-shipment facility on an Indian port is being developed to ensure that Indian cargo trans-ship through Indian ports.
- **Trans-shipment Hub** is the terminal at the port which handles containers, stores them temporarily and transfers them to other ships for the onward destination.
- The Vallarpadam Terminal is located strategically on the Indian coastline.
- It successfully fulfils all the criteria which are needed to develop it as a trans-shipment hub which include:
 - It is the best positioned Indian port with regard to proximity to International sea routes;
 - It is located at the least average nautical distance from all Indian feeder ports;
 - It entails connectivity which has multiple weekly feeder connections to all ports on the west & east coasts of India, from Mundra to Kolkata;
 - It has proximity to key hinterland markets of India;

- It has the infrastructure to manage large ships and the capacity to scale it up as per requirement.
- The Vallarpadam Terminal of Cochin Port is proposed to be developed as the most preferred gateway for South India and the leading trans-shipment hub of South Asia.

