

15 Sep 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

1. Engineers' Day

Context:

PM greets engineers on Engineers' Day.

About Engineers' Day:

- September 15 is observed as Engineers' Day in India to mark the birth anniversary of Sir M. Visvesvaraya, Indian civil engineer and statesman.
- He was the Diwan of Mysore State from 1912 to 1919. He was the Chief Engineer of the Krishna Raja Sagara Dam in Mandya district, Karnataka.
- He also designed a flood protection system for the city of Hyderabad.
- He received the Bharat Ratna for his contributions in 1955.
- Engineers' Day is also observed in Sri Lanka and Tanzania in Visvesvaraya's honour.

2. Development Council for Footwear and Leather Industry

Context:

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade ([DPIIT](#)) has issued a notification, constituting the Development Council for Footwear & Leather Industry (DCFLI).

About DCFLI:

- The 25-member Council has been constituted for a period of two years.
- The Council has been established for:
 - The formulation and implementation of promotional and developmental measures for the growth of labour-intensive footwear and leather sectors in India.
 - To boost domestic production and encourage exports.
- The Council is expected to play a very proactive role in preparing a futuristic vision for the development, designing and manufacturing of high-quality world-class footwear and leather products in India.

3. Consumer Welfare Fund

Context:

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 came into effect from July 2020 in the country replacing the 1986 Act.

About the Consumer Welfare Fund:

- The Consumer Welfare Fund was created in 1992 with the objective of providing financial assistance to promote and protect the welfare of the consumers, create consumer awareness and strengthen consumer movement in the country.
- Financial assistance is provided to Voluntary Consumer Organisations/Institutions for undertaking consumer advocacy/awareness and to State Government/Union Territories for setting up State Consumer Welfare Fund.
- The Fund has been set up by the Department of Revenue and, is being operated by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

4. Food inflation

Context:

The provisional food inflation in July 2020 was 9.62%.

Details:

- Food inflation in India slowed to 9.05 percent in August of 2020 from 9.27 percent in July. Prices of vegetables went up 11.41 percent, pulses 14.44 percent, cereals 5.92 percent, meat and fish 16.5 percent and sugar 3.93 percent.

What is food inflation?

- The condition of an increase in the wholesale price index of a necessary food item relative to the general index or the [consumer price index \(CPI\)](#) is referred to as food inflation.
- It is basically the rise in the cost of an essential food item relative to the previous price.
- Food inflation is quite volatile. The volatility actually depends on agricultural prices as the change in the weather, supply, and demand in the agricultural sector tends to vary.

Causes of food inflation:

- There are several causes of food inflation. Some of the major ones are:
 - Climate change – Climate change leads to extreme and unpredictable weather conditions which in turn, affects agriculture adversely. Hence, food prices rise.
 - Transportation – An increase in the oil prices will lead to increased transportation costs, and will eventually lead to hiked food prices.
 - A rise in global food prices can also cause food inflation in a country. This is particularly true for tradables like sugar, oil and meat and not so much for staples such as dairy products and cereals.
 - Diversification of diet towards high-value food products can cause a rise in the prices because of increased demand of such food products like meat, eggs, pulses, fruits, etc.
 - Rising input costs in agriculture also lead to increased food prices.

5. A-SAT

Context:

Postage Stamp released on A-SAT: India's First Anti Satellite Missile.

To know more about A-SAT, please check [CNA dated March 28, 2019](#).

6. AICTE-SPICES (Scheme for Promoting Interests, Creativity and Ethics among Students)

Context:

AICTE-SPICES (Scheme for Promoting Interests, Creativity and Ethics among Students) launched by the Union Education Minister.

About AICTE-SPICES:

- The idea behind this scheme is to promote healthy co-curricular activity amongst the students for their all-round development.
- The Scheme provides financial support to institutions for developing students club for the well-rounded development of students by promoting their interests, creativity and ethics.
- This club should serve as a model for other clubs in the institution and also those in other institutions.
- Eligibility for financial support:
 - AICTE approved institutes which have been in existence for at least five years.
 - Only one proposal per institute for a club (with minimum student members 50) will be admissible. The institute may choose its best performing club for applying under the scheme for the grant.

7. National Highway Excellence Awards 2020

Context:

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has invited proposals for the National Highways Excellence Awards for the year 2020.

About the National Highways Excellence Awards:

- Instituted in 2018, the aim of the awards is to recognise companies that are performing exceptionally well in the construction, operations, maintenance and tolling stages of highway development as well as in the arena of road safety.
- The motive behind starting an annual awards program is to create a spirit of healthy competitiveness amongst all stakeholders involved in the development of highway infrastructure in the country and to contribute to the larger goal of expanding the road network in the country.
- The awards are given every year in seven categories:
 - Excellence in Project Management
 - Excellence in Operation and Maintenance
 - Green Highway
 - Innovation
 - Excellence in Highway Safety
 - Excellence in Toll Management

- Outstanding Work in Challenging Conditions

8. r-VSV vaccine manufacturing platform

Context:

DBT-BIRAC is supporting COVID-19 vaccine development by facilitating the establishment of r-VSV vaccine manufacturing platform for the first time in India.

Details:

- Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), set up under the Dept. of Biotechnology (DBT), is supporting the vaccine manufacturing platform establishment under the [National Biopharma Mission](#).
- This support to establishing r-VSV vaccine manufacturing platform is being extended to Aurobindo Pharma Limited which is developing a vaccine for SARS COV-2 (COVID-19).