

19 July 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. National Logistics Excellence Awards

Context:

Government launched National Logistics Excellence Awards.

About the National Logistics Excellence Awards:

- The awards have been launched with a view to draw focus towards the logistics sector.
- The awards are in two categories, the first group includes logistics infrastructure/service providers and second one is for various user industries.
- The awards will highlight best practices including consolidation, process standardisation, technological upgrade, digital transformations, and sustainable practices.
- For user industries, the awards will showcase efforts towards supply chain transformation, supplier ecosystem development, skill development, automation, and other similar endeavours.
- The awards will also be an opportunity to laud the extraordinary measures organisations have taken to address the deficiencies exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic including last-mile delivery start-ups, development of cold storage facilities, effective transportation of oxygen, and uninterrupted supply of essential goods and services to the needy.
- Organisations will be invited to submit entries via the Ministry of Commerce and Industry website.
 - Shortlisted entrants will present their case to a National Jury panel, which will decide the winners.
 - The panel will be chaired by the Special Secretary, Logistics Division, and will comprise senior representatives from line ministries, logistics and supply chain experts from leading academic and research institutions, and CXO-level professionals from user-industries and service providers.
 - Winners will be announced in October 2021.

Background:

- While the Indian logistics sector has been growing at a CAGR of 10.5%, reaching approximately USD 215 billion in value in 2020, there are systemic, interconnected problems that must be addressed to enhance its efficiency.
 - Comprehensive logistics costs amount to almost 14% of India's GDP.
 - Closing India's competitiveness gap vis-à-vis the global average of 8 percent would make the Indian logistics sector advanced, organised and efficient, on par with global peers.
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2. Startup India Showcase Platform

Context:

104 startups from different sectors have currently on-boarded on the Startup India Showcase Platform.

About the Startup India Showcase Platform:

- Startup India Showcase is an online discovery platform for the most promising startups of the country.
 - It is an online platform to exhibit the finest startups of the country that have been handpicked through various [DPIIT](#) and Startup India programs.
 - All DPIIT-recognized startups under Startup India are eligible to apply for the Showcase. Startups can apply on the [Startup India](#) website by filling a form, uploading their pitch deck, and catalogue.
 - An apex committee constituted by the DPIIT selects the startups for showcase on the portal.
 - **Features of the portal:**
 - **Visibility:** Each startup has a profile page with detailed pitch about their product, innovation, and USP in forms of Videos and PDF links.
 - **Networking:** It can act as a networking portal offering various social and digital connect opportunities.
 - **Discovery:** It can act as an online discovery platform for startups.
 - **Star Repository:** It is an all-star repository as the platform contains startups that have already proved their capabilities via different means (winning competitions, selling on GeM, etc.), they will also be a potential priority choice for government and corporate buyers, facilitating their business growth.
 - Showcased startups get various benefits such as potential investments, potential customers/businesses, get more visibility and recognition, get access to government projects and fundraising opportunities from relevant investors.
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3. Bad Bank launched

Context:

Bad Bank launched for stressed assets as a measure to clean up bank books.

Details:

- The bad bank was announced in the [Union Budget](#). It has been named the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL).
- The new entity was created in collaboration with both public and private sector banks.
- NARCL will take over identified bad loans of lenders.

To know more about [bad banks](#), click on the link.

4. Forex reserves

Context:

India emerges as 5th largest forex reserves holder in the world as of June 25, 2021.

Details:

- With India's forex reserves at \$608.99 billion as of June 25, 2021 stood, India has emerged as the fifth largest foreign exchange reserves holder in the world after China, Japan, Switzerland and Russia.
 - India's foreign exchange reserves position is comfortable in terms of import cover of more than 18 months and provides cushion against unforeseen external shocks.
 - The RBI takes regular steps for diversification of [forex reserves](#) by scaling up operations in forex swap and repo markets, acquisition of gold and exploring new markets/products, while adhering to safety and liquidity standards.
 - Variation in India's forex reserves is primarily the outcome of:
 - RBI's intervention in the foreign exchange market to smoothen exchange rate volatility
 - Valuation changes due to the movement of US dollar against other international currencies in the reserve basket
 - Movement in gold prices
 - Interest earnings from deployment of foreign currency assets
 - Inflow of aid receipts
 - In 2020-21, India's [balance of payments](#) recorded surplus in both current account and capital account which contributed to the increase in foreign exchange reserves during the year.
 - Besides exports and imports of goods and services, the overall stability of the external sector depends on other components of balance of payments including remittances (transfers), income in the current account, the size of net capital flows and external debt.
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5. Tax exemption to ameliorate stress due to COVID-19

Context:

The Government has decided to provide income tax exemption to the amount received by a taxpayer for medical treatment from an employer or from any person for treatment of COVID-19 during the financial year 2019-20 and subsequent years.

Details:

- The aim of this exemption is to provide relief to taxpayers who suffered on account of COVID-19 and had to incur sum for medical treatment of COVID-19 after taking help from employer or any person.
 - In order to provide relief to the family members of taxpayers who have lost their lives due to COVID-19, the Government has decided that income-tax exemption shall be provided to ex-gratia payment received by family members of a person from the employer of such person or from other person on the death of the person on account of COVID-19 during FY 2019-20 and subsequent years.
 - The exemption shall be allowed without any limit for the amount received from the employer and the exemption shall be limited to Rs. 10 lakh in aggregate for the amount received from any other persons.
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6. Dairy Investment Accelerator

Context:

Government sets up Dairy Investment Accelerator.

About the Dairy Investment Accelerator:

- The Dairy Investment Accelerator has been set up by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), Government of India under its Investment Facilitation Cell.
- The aim is to provide dedicated focus towards promoting & facilitating investments in the Indian dairy sector.
- This Investment Accelerator is a cross functional team constituted to serve as the interface with investors. It shall provide support across the investment cycle:
 - Offering specific inputs for evaluation of investment opportunities
 - Addressing queries about application to govt. schemes
 - Connecting with strategic partners
 - Providing on-ground assistance with state departments & relevant authorities
- The Dairy Investment Accelerator will also work with DAHD to organize a series of events with global & local industry participants and one-on-one discussions with the investors to understand their perspectives, facilitate direct interactions with government officials and connect with other players in the industry.

- Dairy Investment Accelerator is also generating awareness among investors about the **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)**.
 - AHIDF is one of the flagship schemes by DAHD whereby a Rs. 15,000 crore fund has been setup for offering financial support to entrepreneurs, private companies, MSME, Farmers Producers Organizations (FPOs), and Section 8 companies.
 - Eligible entities can avail the benefits of the scheme to set up new units or expand existing units in areas of dairy processing, meat processing & Animal Feed Plant.
 - The benefits available are:
 - 3% interest subvention on loans
 - 2-year moratorium with 6-year repayment period
 - INR 750 Cr credit guarantee

Related Information:

- India is the largest milk producer contributing 23% of global milk production.
- It is the single largest agricultural commodity contributing 5% of the national economy and employing 80 million+ farmers directly.

7. Green National Highway Corridor Project

Context:

The Government had signed loan agreement with the World Bank to develop Green National Highway Corridors (GNHCP).

Details:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had launched a National Green Highways Mission (NGHM) following the promulgation of 'Green Highways Policy' in September 2015.
- The Green National Highways Corridor Projects (GNHCP) supports the implementation of the NGHM and the provision of green and safe transport.
- The development objective of Green National Highways Corridor Project is to demonstrate safe and green National Highway corridors in selected States and enhance the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in mainstreaming safety and green technologies.
- The National Highways of India carry about 40% of road traffic. However, several sections of these highways have inadequate capacity, weak drainage structures and black spots prone to accidents.

8. E-100 Pilot Project

Context:

E-100 Pilot Project launched.

About the E-100 Pilot Project:

- The E-100 Pilot Project was launched in Pune on the occasion of [World Environment Day](#) (5 June).
- The project aims to set up a network for production and distribution of ethanol across the nation.

Read more on [Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme](#) in the linked article.

