

Top Current Affairs of the Week (13 July- 19 July 2020)

Lee Hsien Loong becomes Prime Minister of Singapore

- Ruling People Action Party's **Lee Hsien Loong** has won the election for the post of **Singapore's Prime Minister** for his 4th term
- He won 83 votes out of 93 in the General Elections.
- It was the weakest performance of the ruling party since independence in 55 years
- **Opposition Workers' Party** won a record 10 seats and secured 2 group representation constituencies
- The General Elections of Singapore are the only elections in South-East Asia that were held amid COVID-19 pandemic

Govt launches ASEEM portal to help skilled people

- **Union Ministry of Skill Development** has launched **Aatamanirbhar Skilled Employee-Employer Mapping (ASEEM) portal** for providing sustainable livelihood opportunities to skilled people.
- It is an AI based platform that will have all the data, trends and analytics of workforce market and map demand of skilled workforce to supply across sectors
- The ASEEM portal and App will have provision for registration and data upload for workers across job roles, sectors and geographies.

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ISRO to launch Brazil's Amazonia-1 satellite

- **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** is all set to launch **Amazonia-1 satellite of Brazil** in August 2020.
- It will be launched by **Polar Satellite Launch vehicle (PSLV)**
- It will be the first satellite for Earth observation designed for observing and monitoring the deforestation of the Amazon Region and will help in the agricultural and vegetation areas.
- It will be the primary payload and will not be a hitch-hiking satellite.
- ISRO Director: **K. Sivan**
- HQs: **Bengaluru**

Loyal Textile Mills Limited launches 'VIRAL SHIELD'

- **Loyal Textile Mills**, India has launched World's first reusable PPE kit with Triple Viral Shield Technology named '**VIRAL SHIELD**'
- It has been launched in collaboration with Reliance Industries India and HeiQ from Switzerland
- It comprises of **Covid-19 Anti-Viral, Reusable Personal Protective Equipment, Masks and Protective Fashion Wear Range**
- It can be used for Viral Penetration, Synthetic Blood penetration and SBPR test.
- It is effective against **viruses, bacteria and fungi**

ADB renews pact with IEA for Energy Sector Sustainability and Resilience

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has renewed MoU with **International Energy Agency (IEA)** to scale up sustainability on energy sector resilience in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The pact is renewed till 2023 and was signed on **IEA's Clean Energy Transitions Summit in Paris**.
- It was signed for the first time in 2017
- It will enable sharing of knowledge and best practice in energy sector data and analysis, capacity building, technology and innovation among other areas
- ADB HQs: **Manilla**

Lewis Hamilton wins Styrian Grand Prix 2020

- Mercedes driver **Lewis Hamilton** (Great Britain) has won the **Styrian Grand Prix 2020** which was held in Spielberg, Austria.
- He took a lead of 1.2 seconds from other racers
- It was the second race of the 2020 Formula One World Championship and the first running of the Styrian Grand Prix.
- **Red Bull's Max Verstappen (Netherlands)** stood second while **McLaren's Carlos Sainz (Spain)** secured the third position in the race.

Kezang D Thongdok won Dada Saheb Phalke Award 2020

- **Kezang D Thongdok** (Arunachal Pradesh filmmaker) has won **Dada Saheb Phalke Award 2020** for '**Chi Lupo**' which is a short documentary on honey hunting.
- Chi Lupo depicts the tradition of **honey hunting practised in the Shertukpen community** in which Chi means honey and Lipo means hunters.
- Honey hunting is slowly declining and so to keep this tradition alive, Kezang D Thongdok documented it.
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in cinema
- 2019 winner: **Amitabh Bachchan**

Niti Aayog launches ATL App Development Module for school children

- **NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** has rolled out '**ATL App Development Module**' for school students across India
- It is launched in collaboration with **Indian startup Plezmo**.
- The Module will sharpen the skills of school students converting them from App users to App makers in various Indian languages under Atal Tinkering Labs initiative
- It is a **free online course for app learning and development** with periodic Teacher Training sessions
- CEO of NITI Aayog: **Amitabh Kant**

Chhattisgarh Government rolls out India's first e-Lok Adalat

- **Chhattisgarh govt** has unveiled **first e-Lok Adalat of India** amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to bring people relief and to reduce the pendency of cases amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Its virtual hearings were conducted along with live streaming.
- It was organized by the High Court and Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority
- It was inaugurated by **P R Ramchandra Menon** (Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court).
- Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh: **Bhupesh Baghel**

Indian Railways to become "Green Railway" by 2030 on mission mode

- **Ministry of Railways** will be transforming **Indian Railways into Green Railways by 2030** on mission mode
- It has already taken several major initiatives for net zero carbon emission
- **Railway Electrification, improving energy efficiency of locomotives & trains and fixed installations, green certification for installations/stations, fitting bio toilets in coaches and switching to renewable energy sources** are parts of its strategy of achieving the status of green railways

US remains India's top trading partner for Fiscal Year 2019-20

- Commerce Ministry has unveiled data that shows US as India's top trading partner for 2nd consecutive fiscal Year 2019-20
- Bilateral trade between US and India stood at \$88.75 billion as against \$87.96 billion in 2018-19.
- India has a trade surplus with US and trade gap has increased to \$17.42 billion in 2019-20 from \$16.86 billion in 2018-19
- US surpassed China to become India's top trading partner in 2018-19
- China was India's top trading partner since 2013 till 2018

Renowned Journalist-writer Nagindas Sanghvi passes away in Surat

- Veteran Gujarati journalist, columnist, writer, and political analyst **Nagindas Sanghvi (100 years)** passed away in Surat.
- He was conferred with **Padma Shri award in 2019**
- He was famous for his books on Mahatma Gandhi, Gujarat and other subjects.
- He started his career as a teacher at Bhavan's College Andheri from 1951 to 1980 and then, Ruparel College, Mahim and Mithibai College.
- His works include Gujarati, English and Hindi.

Ruskin Bond to release book titled 'A Song of India'

- Famous novelist **Ruskin Bond** is all set to release book titled '**A Song of India**' on July 20.
- The release will mark 70th year of Ruskin Bond's literary career
- It has been published by **Puffin Books**, an imprint of **Penguin Random House India**.
- It is the 4th book in his memoir series after **Looking for the Rainbow, Till the Clouds Roll By (2017), Coming Round the Mountain (2019)**.
- It depicts the story of Ruskin Bond's life when he was 16 year old and started his journey of writing

K Palaniswami awarded with Paul Harris Fellow Recognition

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **Edappadi K Palaniswami** has been honoured with **Paul Harris Fellow Recognition**
- It is conferred by Rotary Foundation for providing efficient services to people.
- In this recognition, \$1,000 gift is being made in the name of honoured person to the Rotary International Foundation providing money for health, education, peace initiatives projects in over 200 countries where Rotary has members.
- Rotary Foundation of Rotary International HQs: **Chicago**

K Sivan named for 2020 Von Karman Award

- ISRO's chief **Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan** has been named for the **2020 Von Karman Award** of the International Academy of Astronautics.
- The award will be given in March 2021 in Paris
- **Charles Elachi was the recipient of the award in 2019**

- The award is named after Theodore von Karman who was an aerospace engineer and notably known for his key advances in aerodynamics.
- It was established in 1982 and is given annually to recognize outstanding lifetime achievements in science.

Chhattisgarh CM Drapan awarded with Elites Excellence Awards-2020

- Chhattisgarh govt's **Mukhyamantri (CM) Drapan and mobile App** has been awarded with '**Elites Excellence Awards-2020**' at the national level.
- It is being given by the country's prestigious IT institution **Elites Technomedia under the 'Digital India initiative'**.
- CM Drapan and app contains the details of all the flagship schemes of state including the ambitious 'Suraji Gaon Yojna' and have been developed by **Chhattisgarh Infotech Promotion Society (CHIPS)**
- CM: **Bhupesh Baghel**

Iran drops India from Chabahar rail project due to fund delay

- **India has been dropped from Chabahar rail project** by Iran citing delays from the Indian side in funding and starting the project
- The project comprises rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan.
- Iranian Railways will utilize around \$400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund without India's assistance
- India and Iran signed Chabahar rail project agreement in 2016.
- Iran capital: **Tehran**
- Currency: **Rial**

Hemang Amin appointed as interim CEO of BCCI

- **Hemang Amin** has been appointed as the **interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**
- He will replace Rahul Johri who recently resigned from the position
- **Hemang Amin** is presently serving as the Chief Operating Officer of the Indian Premier League since 2015 and joined IPL operations team in June 2010
- BCCI will appoint new CEO in the next two months.
- BCCI President: **Sourav Ganguly**

Gurbux Singh & Palash Nandy to be conferred with Mohun Bagan Ratna 2020

- Hockey legend **Gurbux Singh** and former first-class cricketer **Palash Nandy** has been named for the **Mohun Bagan Ratna Award 2020**
- The award is conferred every year by **Mohun Bagan Club** on Mohun Bagan Athletic Club foundation day on 29 July.
- Other awards include: Lifetime Achievement to **Ashok Kumar (Hockey), Pranab Ganguly (Football), Monoranjan Porel (Athletics)**; Best Football Player (Senior): **Joseba Beitia (Spain)** and Best Youth Player: **Sajal Bag**.

IIT Kanpur develops Ultraviolet (UV) sanitizing product 'SHUDH'

- IIT Kanpur has developed an **Ultraviolet (UV) sanitizing product** title '**SHUDH**'.
- **SHUDH** stands for **Smartphone operated Handy Ultraviolet Disinfection Helper**

- It has six UV lights of 15 Watts each that can be individually monitored from a distance and can disinfect a 10x10 sq ft room in 15 min
- It's on/off, speed, and location can be controlled remotely using available android application.
- It will be helpful in places such as **hospitals, hotels, malls, offices, and schools.**

Ashok Lavasa appointed as Vice-President of ADB

- India's Election Commissioner **Ashok Lavasa (1980-batch IAS officer)** has been appointed as the **Vice-President of Asian Development Bank (ADB)**
- He will succeed **Diwakar Gupta** whose term will end on August 31, 2020
- He is currently serving as one of the two Election Commissioners of India since 2018. The other EC being Sushil Chandra
- **Asian Development Bank** is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966
- ADB HQs: **Manila, Philippines**
- President: **Masatsugu Asakawa**

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State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report released

- **State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report** has been released.
- The report is released by **FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, UN World Food Programme and WHO.**
- It forecasts global increase of 10 million undernourished people from 2018 increasing the number to 690 million undernourished (or hungry) people in 2019.
- Prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years declined from 47.8% in 2012 to 34.7% in 2019 in India.
- **Africa is the hardest hit region in Food security.**

China launches communications satellite APSTAR-6D

- **China** successfully launched **APSTAR-6D** satellite by **Long March 3B carrier rocket** from **Xichang Satellite Launch Centre.**
- It is a high-power broadband communications geostationary satellite into orbit to provide broadband internet service.
- It is designed and manufactured by **China Academy of Space Technology (CAST)**
- It will work similarly GPS system
- It will be operated by the **APT Mobile SatCom Ltd** for airborne, shipborne, vehicle-borne, and other mobile communication app.

Sachin Awasthi honoured with Global Humanitarian Award 2020

- **Sachin Awasthi** has been honoured with '**Top Publicist**' honour under **Global Humanitarian Award 2020**
- The award was given through a webinar during '**Honoring The Honorable**' initiative by the **London-based World Humanitarian Drive (WHD).**
- He is the President of National Media Club and founder of Shri Ram Seva Mission
- He has been honoured for organizing a 5-days Clean Ganga Awareness Yatra under the name '**Vande Gange Swachhata Jan Jagran Yatra**' from Haridwar to Varanasi.

5th edition Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Technologies inaugurated

- Minister of State for Defence **Shripad Yesso Naik** has inaugurated **5th edition Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Technologies conference** in Delhi.
- Theme of the conference: '**Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Mission**'.
- It was organised by **Tamil Nadu Technology Development & Promotion Centre (TNTDPC), Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers** and **CII**.
- The conference focused on growth and development of defence and Indian civil Aviation MRO market to reach 70 billion Dollar by 2030.

HRD Minister launches COVID-19 Diagnostic Kit 'Corosure'

- HRD Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** has launched world's most affordable RT-PCR based COVID-19 Diagnostic Kit '**Corosure**'.
- The kit has been developed by **Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi** and has received the approval from **ICMR** and **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)**
- It is cost-effective and is manufactured by **Delhi based Newtech Medical Devices**
- IIT Delhi has become 1st academic institution to obtain the approval from ICMR for real-time PCR-based diagnostic assay

India's First indigenous Pneumonia vaccine approved by DCGI

- **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)** has approved India's first fully indigenously developed **Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine (Pneumonia vaccine)**
- It has been developed by **Serum Institute of India, Pune**
- It will work for active immunization against invasive disease and pneumonia caused by '**Streptococcus pneumonia**' among infants.
- With the DCGI's approval, Serum Institute of India has been granted permission to manufacture the vaccine domestically.

Poba Reserve to be upgraded as wildlife sanctuary

- Assam CM **Sarbananda Sonowal** announced the upgradation of **Poba Reserve Forest into wildlife sanctuary**.
- **Poba Reserved Forest is situated in Dhemaji District of Assam established in the year 1924.**
- It is one of the richest rain forests of North-East India in terms of flora and fauna with an area of 10,522 hectares.
- The step is taken to address serious threats from anthropogenic activities and natural calamities (erosion by the Siang river) of the Forest.