

## Maharashtra Current Affairs 2020

### Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Maharashtra

The Maharashtra state government is working towards achieving the goal of housing for all by the year 2022 under the central government's Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

According to the state government, housing for all in the state will be met by the end of 2021-22 year only.

This PM Awas Yojana in Maharashtra will ensure that everyone in the state would have his/her own home by the end of year 2022.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, aimed at providing affordable housing to the poor in the country has set a target of providing 2 Crore homes in the urban areas by the year 2022.

Under the Housing for All by 2022, the central government provides financial assistance to Urban Poor to build houses and home loans at subsidized interest rates.

Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) is the implementing agency for PMAY Housing Scheme in the state.

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### Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

Maharashtra has launched Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana 2020. Under Mukhyamantri Solar Krushi Pump Yojana Maharashtra, the state govt. has decided to provide 1,00,000 solar water pumps to farmers.

These off grid solar powered agricultural pumps would be deployed in phase wise manner under Mukhyamantri Solar Pump Yojana Maharashtra.

The target of distributing solar water pumps to farmers under the scheme is 1 lakh for the next 3 years starting from January 2020.

The complete procedure to apply online for solar water pumps by filling Atal Saur Krushi Pump Yojana application form in Maharashtra has been described in the previous section.

#### **The objectives of this Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Yojana:**

- Availability of electricity to agricultural pumps during the day.
- Separation of agricultural irrigation from electricity subsidy.
- Minimizing cross subsidy burden on commercial, industrial and household electricity consumers.
- Zero circulation cost compared to diesel pump.
- Exemption from electricity bill.
- Replacement of diesel pumps in order to reduce pollution.
- Environmental complementary circulation.

### Physically Handicapped Pension Scheme

Maharashtra state government has launched Physically Handicapped (Viklang) Pension Scheme. In Maharashtra Handicap Pension Scheme, a disabled person in the age group of 18 to 65 years and having 80% disability is eligible.

Under Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme, specially abled people in Maharashtra state gets Rs. 600 per month as pension.

All the apang people can now apply online and differently abled people can also download Disability Pension Scheme application form PDF.

Under Viklang Pension Scheme of Maharashtra, a physically handicapped person gets Rs. 600 per month.

Person with disability either male or female is entitled to get Rs. 200 per month under Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS).

Moreover the disabled person with more than 80% disability will also get Rs. 400 per month under state sponsored Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Anudan Yojana.



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### **Maharashtra Balasaheb Thackeray Accidental Insurance Scheme**

Maharashtra state government has launched Balasaheb Thackeray Accidental Insurance Scheme on 16 September 2020. In this scheme, the Uddhav Thakre govt. will provide Rs. 30,000 to road accident victims.

The new Balasaheb Thackeray Road Accident Insurance Scheme will prove beneficial in saving the lives of the people.

This scheme aims to provide timely treatment to road accident victims. State Health Assurance Society will implement the accidental insurance scheme in the state.

The state govt. is now coming to the rescue of accident victims through a scheme named Maharashtra Balasaheb Thackeray Accidental Insurance Scheme 2020.

All the road accident victims will be entitled to maximum aid of Rs. 30k by the state government. The scheme will cost around Rs. 120 crore which will be given by the health dept. to SHA Society.

### Magel Tyala Shettale Farm Pond Subsidy Scheme

Maharashtra state government has launched Magel Tyala Shettale or Farm Ponds on Demand to provide a source of water to farm land. The objective of the scheme is that each and every farmer in the state gets a permanent source of water.

The state government has allocated Rs. 204 crore in its budget to implement the scheme.

The benefit of the Magel Tyala Shettale scheme will be transferred directly in the bank accounts of farmers for 51,369 farm ponds.

According to the notification, the eligible farmer will get Rs. 50,000 directly in their bank accounts to construct a pond in their farm land.

Under Magel Tyala Shettale pond subsidy scheme, the state government has made a provision under which every farm pond project will be geo-tagged to monitor the progress of work.

So far, government has received 2,83,620 applications till date for farm ponds from farmers.

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### 600-acre Aarey land near national park earmarked as forest in Maharashtra

The Maharashtra government has decided to reserve 600-acre Aarey land near the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) in suburban Mumbai as a forest and conserve the same.

The Aarey Milk Colony, spread over 3,162 acres, was established in 1949 as a centre for processing and marketing milk for Mumbai and adjoining areas.

Over the last 70 years, this sprawling green area has been steadily eaten away at its edges – and 1,282 acres were acquired by the state for projects such as Film City.

Once located on the edge of the city, it is now part of the sprawling western suburb known as Goregaon. The land falls under the eco-sensitive zone of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park.

Now the Maharashtra CM announced that he planned to earmark the Aarey forest land as a reserve forest. However, of the 1,800-plus acres of open space available, only 600 acres will be earmarked as forest.

Under Section 4 of The Indian Forest Act, 1927, the state government can “constitute any land a reserved forest” by issuing a notification in the Official Gazette.

Under the law, the government must also appoint a Forest Settlement Officer (FSO) “to determine the rights alleged to exist in favour of any person in or over any land comprised within such limits or in or over any forest-produce, and to deal with the same”.

### Reservation for Marathas in govt jobs & educational institutions in Maharashtra

The Supreme Court has stayed reservation for Maratha community in government jobs and educational institutions in Maharashtra. A three-judge bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao referred the case to a larger bench to consider the constitutional validity of 2018 Maharashtra government law providing reservation to Marathas in the State.

Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Act originally provided 16 per cent reservation for Maratha community in educational institutions and government jobs.

The law was challenged before Bombay High Court which in June 2019 upheld its validity but reduced the quota to 12 per cent in educational institutions and 13 per cent in jobs.

Appeals were filed before Supreme Court stating that the reservation would lead to breach of the 50 per cent cap laid down by the Apex Court in its 1992 judgment of Indra Sawhney versus Union of India.

Maharashtra government had on August 26th asked the Court to place the matter before a larger bench considering the fact that it involves determination of substantial legal questions.

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### **Scientists detect India's 1st case of infection of H9N2 virus in Maharashtra**

Scientists of the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, Maharashtra have detected the 1st case of H9N2 virus, a rare subtype of influenza virus A, in a 17-month-old boy in Maharashtra.

The discovery has been published in the December 2019 issue of journal 'Emerging Infectious Diseases' of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It is a rare variant of the virus, which causes human influenza as well as bird flu. These viruses, found exclusively in wild birds, could potentially play a major role in the worldwide emergence of influenza.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the avian influenza virus is spreading rapidly in poultry farms, exposure to infected poultry or contaminated environments poses a risk to human groups as well.

H9N2 virus infections in humans are rare, although cases of the infection do not come to light due to unclear symptoms. In humans, the first case of H9N2 virus infection occurred in Hong Kong in 1998.

In India, the virus was spotted during a community-based surveillance study in 93 villages of the Korku tribe of Melghat district in Maharashtra in February 2019. Globally, the 1st case of H9N2 virus infection occurred in humans in Hong Kong in 1998.

### **First-ever Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival to be held in Mumbai**

The first ever 'Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival' will be held in the capital of Maharashtra this week to showcase the special links between the two cities and to promote ties between India and Israel.

The two-day festival starting on February 15 will seek to promote artistic cooperation in the diverse fields of culture, such as culinary art, music and dance.

The Festival will showcase the special links between the two cities and demonstrate their unique cultural traditions.

It will provide a platform to promote collaborations between Jerusalem and Maharashtra in the cultural domain and inspire artists from Jerusalem and Mumbai to work together.

It will deepen the growing partnership between the two countries. The festival will witness two collaborating chefs Ilan Garusi from Jerusalem and Amninder Sandhu from Mumbai. They will demonstrate special fusion meals.

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### **Maharashtra govt launched “Cyber Safe Initiative”**

Maharashtra Government has launched the Cyber Safe Initiative commemorating the birth anniversary of Indian Social Reformer Savitribai Phule, the first female teacher of India.

The aim of the initiative is to spread awareness against atrocities committed against children and women. It will also create awareness about laws on cybercrime.

The campaign is to be implemented all over the state by the State Government in collaboration with state police, public relations department and cyber cell.

The campaign is to be launched in all districts of Maharashtra creating awareness about laws existing in cybercrimes. It will also create awareness against crimes such as bank frauds, child pornography, photo shuffling, online gaming, cyber defamation information and false information sites.

At central level, the Ministry of Home Affairs runs a twitter handle called “Cyber Dost” that creates pertinent posts on prevention and protection against cybercrimes.

The Home Affairs Ministry had also launched the Cyber Crime Prevention against women and children Scheme in January 2019. The scheme had a total outlay of Rs 223.198 crores. The main features of the scheme include online cybercrime reporting platform, research and development, cybercrime awareness activities.

According to Crime Report-2017, released by NCRB (National Crime Record Bureau) in 2019, the number of cyber crimes in the country have been increasing constantly.

In 2014, the number of cyber crimes were 9,622, in 2015, it increased to 11,592 and in 2016 the number of cybercrimes were 12,317.

The legal framework of cyber crimes is provided by the Information Technology Act, 2000.

### **Maharashtra Government orders to destroy “Thai Mangur” fish breeding centres**

Maharashtra Government ordered to destroy the Thai Mangur fish breeding centres. This is mainly because the fish is cultivated in unhygienic conditions.

The fish whose breeding is to be stopped in Maharashtra is commonly called Thai Mangur or foreign Mangur or African Mangur. As they are being cultivated in unhygienic conditions and have enough potential to make people sick, their breeding centres are being destroyed.

The National Green Tribunal in 2000 banned the cultivation of the Thai Mangur. So far, the State Government has destroyed 32 tonnes of Thai Mangur

The Mangur Fish was banned in India as the fish poses threats to other fishes in an ecosystem. A study in Mumbai says that the Mangur fish is responsible for 70% decline in native fish species of the country

In spite of several drawbacks, cultivation of Mangur and their sales is popular for its surviving capabilities. The fish grows 3 feet to 5 feet.

They can survive even in mud waters between rains. Other factors such as omnivorous diet, burrowing capabilities, ability to survive on land and ability to hide in vegetation make the species easy and economical for farming.

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### **RCF started its Methanol Plant at Trombay Unit**

Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd, a PSU under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has started its Methanol Plant at Trombay Unit, Mumbai from 8th September 2020. This is a step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

RCF has the capacity to produce 242 MT of Methanol per day. Till now, RCF has been importing Methanol for its internal consumption and also for trading purposes.

With Methanol production of its own, RCF shall no longer be dependent on imports for its own requirement and will also be in a position to satisfy the needs of other Methanol dependent industries.

With this, RCF has entered the select list of Methanol producers in the country, providing alternate to import and thus contributing towards Government's ambitious 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' Abhiyaan.

Methanol is widely being used in the production of pharmaceuticals, pesticides, dyestuff etc. With very limited domestic production, the requirement was being met till now with imports.

### **Government inaugurated "Bharat Air Fibre Services" at Akola in Maharashtra**

Government of India, inaugurated "Bharat Air Fibre Services" at Akola in Maharashtra. With inauguration of Bharat Air Fibre services, residents of Akola & Washim district will get Wireless Internet Connections on demand.

The Bharat Air Fibre services are introduced by BSNL as part of digital India initiatives by the Government of India and it aims of providing Wireless Connectivity in the range of 20 KMs from the BSNL Locations and thus customers at remote places also will be benefitted as BSNL comes with cheapest services with support of Telecom Infrastructure Partners (TIPs).

BSNL is providing the "Bharat Air Fibre Services" through local business partners of BSNL from Akola & Washim District and these services will give fastest internet connectivity in quick time.

When BSNL will be increasing its customer base with this high Technology services, at the same time BSNL is giving a great opportunity to local residents of Akola and Washim District to join hands with BSNL as Telecom Infrastructure Partners.

They will earn regular monthly income of about one lakh per month thereby becoming self-reliable under "Atma Nirbhar Bharat" initiatives of Govt of India.

These Bharat Air Fibre services opens new way of fastest Wireless internet connectivity as well Voice services in reasonable cost.

BSNL is successfully providing Landline/ Broadband & Fibre FTTH connections. In Month July 20, BSNL has provided 15000 FTTH connections in Maharashtra Circle and 162000 FTTH connections throughout India.



With launch of Wireless Bharat Air Fibre, more connections will be provided on demand in very quick time. BSNL appeals to all residents of Akola & Washim District to avail these quality & most affordable services.

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### **Centre Approved Funds for Implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in Maharashtra**

The Central Govt has approved funding of 1,829 crore rupees for the effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in Maharashtra for 2020-21 on the basis of the Annual Action Plan (AAP) for 2020-21 presented by Maharashtra to the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

State has planned to provide 100% tap connections to all the households in the State by 2023-24. Maharashtra plans to provide tap connections to 31.30 lakh households in 2020-21. Out of 1.42 Crore rural households in Maharashtra, 53.11 lakh households have already got tap connections.

The state has an unspent balance of Rs 285.35 crore. It adds that along with Central allocation and a matching state share, the total fund available will be Rs 3,908 crore.

Further, the 15th Commission has allocated grants worth Rs 5,827 crore that has to be compulsorily spent on supply of drinking water, rainwater harvesting and water recycling besides sanitation and maintenance of open defecation-free (ODF) status.

### **Pune-based defence institute developed microwave steriliser Atulya to kill COVID-19**

Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune developed a microwave steriliser 'Atulya' that can disintegrate the novel Coronavirus within 30 seconds by differential heating in the range of 56 degrees to 60 degrees celsius temperatures.

The steriliser was tested for human/operator safety and has been found to be safe depending upon the size and shape of various objects.

Atulya is a cost-effective solution that can be operated in portable or fixed installations and weighs around 3 kilograms (Kg). It can be used for sterilisation of non-metallic objects only.

The DIAT is a deemed university under the ministry's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

DRDO has developed several products including ventilators, personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, large area sanitisation solutions and Covid-19 sample collection kiosks to fight against Coronavirus.

DRDO has also stepped forward to provide medical oxygen plants to hospitals in far-flung areas to generate their own oxygen supply.

The armed forces have also come up with a raft of innovations to combat the pandemic from modifying quadcopters to spray disinfectants over large areas to ultraviolet light sanitisers, assisted respiratory systems and 3-D printed masks.

The different wings of the defence ministry including the armed forces, the DRDO and the Ordnance Factory Board have designed and developed a wide range of products to control the spread of pandemic.

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### **Mee Annapurna initiative launched for farmers welfare across Maharashtra**

Maharashtra state government has announced a 3 year empanelment of insurance companies and intermediaries for implementation of crop insurance scheme 'Mee Annapurna' for farmers welfare across Maharashtra.

It is an initiative that integrates three critical aspects of livelihood and comprehensive engagement for farmers welfare across Maharashtra. It revolves around the three commandments – Expertise, Engagement and Entitlement

As more small and marginal farmers are forced to take daily wage labor on large lands for survival, the state government is likely to face a major challenge to bring them back into the institutional credit system after the lockdown is eliminated. Farmers should be given adequate loans to cover the input expenditure for farming.

Without concrete measures, 40 to 45% farmers will be forced to take up daily wage work on bigger farmlands or explore alternative jobs.

In view of this, Maharashtra announced a 3 year empanelment of insurance companies and intermediaries. The tender was issued on the guidelines of Revamped Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. Post-launch of the guidelines, the insurance company announced this initiative.

It is an Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India licensed insurance intermediary since 2004 & is one of the India's leading distributors of diversified insurance products and services and specialize in Risk Management, Claim consultancy, Insurance Placement & Government Business.

### **Maharashtra signed MOUs worth Rs 16,100 crore with 12 global corporations**

The Maharashtra government has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with 12 global corporations from China, US, South Korea, Singapore and Indian companies with investment worth Rs 16,100 crore on June 15, 2020.

The Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 was launched on 15 June, 2020 in the presence of Thackeray, Industries Minister Subhash Desai, and senior bureaucrats of the government with global business leaders and representatives of bilateral investment agencies.

The Memorandum of Understanding worth Rs 16,100 crore were signed for various developmental projects in information technology, I-T enabled services, automobile, oil and petroleum, chemicals, logistics and food processing sectors. Around 40,000-acre land has been earmarked for these projects.

The Indian companies that signed the MoUs, include United Phosphorus of Rs 5,000 crore for a chemical plant in Raigad, Isambe Logistics of Rs 1,500 crore in Raigad, Varun Beverages of Rs 820 crore for food processing in Ahmednagar and Hiranandai Group of Rs 150 crore for logistics in Pune and Thane.

Some of the prominent companies investing in Maharashtra include ExxonMobil, Great Wall Motors Company, API Motors and United Phosphorus.

### **Mumbai Central station to be renamed as Nana Shankarsheth Mumbai Central railway station**



Maharashtra Government has approved to rename the Mumbai Central Station as Nana Shankarsheth Mumbai Central Railway Station.

The Mumbai Central Station has been re-named to Nana Shankarsheth Central Railway Station as his involvement in the formation of Indian Railway association was pivotal to the country.

The Bombay Central is designed by British architect Claude Batley. The first railway in India ran over 21 miles from Bombay to Thane.

Jagannath (Nana) Shankarsheth is a Maharashtrian philanthropist and educationist (1803-1865), he contributed a lot for the development of Mumbai. He is the First Indian to be nominated in the Legislative Council of Bombay.

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### **ARI scientists developed biofortified high-protein wheat variety**

Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) in Pune, Maharashtra, have developed 'MACS 4028', a biofortified wheat variety, which shows high-protein content of around 14.7% good nutritional quality having zinc 40.3 ppm, and iron content of 40.3ppm and 46.1ppm (parts per million) respectively.

The development done by the scientist has been published in the Indian Journal of Genetics and Plant Breeding.

MACS 4028, a semi-dwarf variety, matures in a period of 102 days and has a very good yielding ability of 19.3 quintals per hectare. This variety also shows a better resistance to crop disease like stem rust, leaf rust and common pests of dryland wheat including foliar aphids, root aphids, brown wheat mite.

It has been included under the Biofortified category by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) during the year 2019.

The MACS 4028 variety is also included by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) programme for United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to alleviate malnutrition in a sustainable way and can boost the Vision 2022 "Kuposhan Mukh Bharat", the National Nutrition Strategy.

### **IIT Alumni Council Launches India's first COVID-19 test bus in Mumbai**

Indian Institute of Technology Alumni Council has launched a "COVID-19 test bus" in Mumbai, Maharashtra and inaugurated by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Health Minister Rajesh Tope and Praveen Pardeshi.

The COVID-19 Testing bus will reduce 80% of the testing cost without compromising on the testing capacity.

According to the IIT alumni council, a global alumni body for all the 23 IITs this will increase the testing capacity within 100 days and support the health department in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic.

The IIT C19 bus is based on the Kodoy architecture model that is made to support the affordable and rapid testing which involves e-vehicles for contactless sample collections and Telemedicine, AI-based teleradiology and algorithm based on pooled genetic testing and mega-labs capable of conducting

upto 5 million tests per month per lab. A digital Chest X-ray will be carried out and sent to the doctors online and the healthcare staff will use AI to see the probability of the person having coronavirus.

Swab from mouth and throat done across a glass screen to protect the technician from any kind of contact with the patient and the samples are sent to the diagnostic centers.

The bus has the capacity to collect 10-15 samples per hour.

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### **ADB & India signed loan agreement for road improvements in Maharashtra**

Asian Development Bank signed a USD 177 million loan with Government of India to upgrade 11 state highways & 2 major district roads with a combined length of 450 km, to 2-lane standard across seven districts of Maharashtra.

The project will enhance the connectivity between rural areas and urban centers in the state to enable rural communities to better access markets, employment opportunities and services.

The project will improve connectivity to national highways, interstate roads, seaports, airports, rail hubs, district headquarters, industrial areas, enterprise clusters and agricultural areas.

Improved mobility will expand growth and livelihood opportunities outside the major urban centers of the state to second-tier cities and towns thus reducing income disparities.

It will strengthen road safety measures by developing a road safety audit framework that will protect vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women, and children, following the international best practice.

One of the features of the project is to update the road maintenance system by encouraging 5-year performance-based maintenance obligations to contractors to sustain asset quality and service levels.

Focus- The project will focus on training the Maharashtra Public Works Department project staff to develop their capacity in climate change adaptation and disaster resilient features in road design, road maintenance planning and road safety.

### **Maharashtra donated the highest number of organs in 2019**

Maharashtra has donated the highest number of organs which resulted beneficial for 449 patients. The state overtook Tamil Nadu and Telangana in the field of organ donation.

Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation-State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (ROTO-SOTTO) along with four Zonal Transplant Coordination Centre (ZTCC) of Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, and Aurangabad in Maharashtra were the top performers.

On the occasion of the **10th Indian Organ Donation Day** on 30th November 2019, the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) presented the best state award to Maharashtra in the field of deceased organ donation.

The ZTCC's of Maharashtra in association with local Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) conducted 387 awareness driven activities including rallies, talks, padayatras, marathons, stalls at religious festivals, competitions on organ donation to programmes for societies, corporates, security forces and police.

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### **India loses 750 tigers during 2012-2019; Madhya Pradesh topped**

National Tiger Conservation Authority as a reply to RTI query, 750 tigers have died in the country in the last eight years i.e. between 2012 and 2019 due to poaching and other causes.

The state of Madhya Pradesh has topped these figures with highest casualties at 173. 38 were due to poaching, 94 natural deaths, 19 under scrutiny, six due to the unnatural causes and 16 seizures.

Notably, Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of 526 tigers in the country.

Of the total tiger mortalities, 369 were due to natural causes, 168 due to poaching, 70 deaths are under scrutiny and 42 due to unnatural reasons, including accident or conflicts events.

There was also seizure of 101 big cats during the eight year period between 2012 and 2019 by different authorities across the country.

Maharashtra has reported second highest deaths, as it lost 125 big cats during this period followed by 111 in Karnataka, 88 in Uttarakhand, 54 each in Tamil Nadu and Assam, 35 each in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, 17 in Rajasthan, 11 in Bihar and West Bengal and 10 in Chhattisgarh.

7 each such deaths were reported in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, 5 in Telangana, 2 each in Delhi and Nagaland, and one each in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat.

### **Maharashtra launched Shiv Bhojan Tali Scheme**

Maharashtra Government launched the Shiv Bhojan Scheme at the 71st celebrations of Republic Day. The scheme will offer meals at Rs 10 to the poor

On the eve of Republic Day, at least one Shiv Bhojan canteen was started at the district head quarters all over the state. The scheme aims at providing meals to the poor at designated centres during stipulated time.

The scheme aims at providing affordable, quality food to all. The State Government has estimated that the scheme would cost Rs 6.4 crores and is expected to run for three months.

Also, the centres of the scheme are to opened at places where the below poverty line citizens live. Also, it is to be opened in areas like district hospitals, markets, railway stations. Initially the Government has planned to set up 50 such centres. The numbers are to be increased based on the feedback.

### **Nagpur Oranges Exported to Dubai first Time**

The first Consignment of Nagpur Oranges were sent to Dubai from Navi Mumbai in refrigerated containers. In the state of Maharashtra, around 40 hectares of land is under cultivation of Nagpur oranges.

The APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) selected Nagpur district as a cluster for oranges under Agriculture Export Policy.

The production of the fruit is increasing in central and western India. The Mrig crop that matures between February and March has great potential for export. This is because arrival of these fruits are less in the international market during this period.

The International trade of oranges in the year 2018 was 10,183 million USD. In 2018-19, India produced 8,781 thousand tonnes of oranges.

The monsoon flowering, that is during June is called Mrig. These crops are available for harvest between November and March.

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### **'Cyber Safe Women' campaign launched by state cyber police in Maharashtra**

The cyber police launched 'Cyber Safe Women' campaign to mark the birth anniversary of a social reformer, Savitribai Phule in Maharashtra. It is a joint initiative of the Maharashtra state government, Maharashtra Cyber and Maharashtra police.

The main aim of this initiative is to reduce the cyber crimes against women and children.

This campaign will be launched in 34 districts and 90 places at once across the state.

To create awareness among women and children, cybercrime police will conduct presentations and lectures across the state.

These cyber crimes include stalking, picture morphing, online abuse and defamation, sextortion, pornography and child pornography, matrimonial and dating apps fraud.

### **5th edition of 'The pulses conclave 2020' hold in Maharashtra**

India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA) hosted the 5th edition of its biennial conference, 'The Pulses Conclave 2020' from February 12 - 14, 2020 at the Aamby Valley City in Lonavala, Maharashtra.

The Conclave aimed at increasing domestic production and consumption & other areas of the trade like improving processing efficiencies, increasing consumption, exports, value addition, post-harvest crop management, etc.

About 1000 delegates are expected to participate in the Conclave with trade delegations from all major pulses producing countries like Canada, USA, Australia, Myanmar, Russia, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, etc.

The Conference will help in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to double the farmer's income by 2022.

India is the largest producer & consumer of pulses in the world accounting for around 25 % of global production, 27 % of global consumption.

### **Mumbai to get India's largest air quality monitoring network**

Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will develop an air quality monitoring network across 90 locations in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It will be the largest network in India.

The new project is led by Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Conservation Action Trust (CAT) & partnered by pan-India air pollution research groups Respirer Living Sciences Private Limited (UrbanSciences) and Urban Emissions.

The project will be completed within next 5 years, funded by BMC and private organisations.

BMC is planning to invest Rs.9.5 crores to install 80 real-time air monitoring stations and the new project overtakes Delhi, which has 38 air quality networks at present.

At present, Mumbai has 30 air quality monitoring stations: 15 stations come under Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), 10 under System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) and 5 under BMC.

According to the survey from CSE (Center of Science & Environment) Mumbai ranked first among 24 peninsular cities with the dangerous concentration of PM10 (Particulate Matter 10- solid and liquid particles less than 10 microns suspended in air).

The air in Mumbai had PM10 concentrations of 166 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (microgrammes per cubic meter), which is highly toxic & up to 3 times the safe standard of 60 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

### **Marathi language compulsory across all schools in Maharashtra**

Maharashtra state government assembly has unanimously approved a law, compulsory “ Maharashtra Compulsory Teaching and Learning of Marathi Language in Schools Bill, 2020 ” to make Marathi Language as a mandatory subject in all schools of the state. As per the bill, schools which fails to implement the new rule have to pay a penalty of Rs. 1 lakh.

Marathi will become a compulsory subject in all schools from Class I to Class X in the academic year 2020-2021. Initially Marathi language will Introduced from class I to VI and shall be Extended to further classes in subsequent years.

In 2024 Marathi subject will be taught from Class I to Class X and the schools will follow a curriculum prescribed by the government.

This law will be applicable to all boards like CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), CISCE (Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations), IB (International Baccalaureate) board, IGSC (International General Certificate of Secondary Education), NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling).

Maharashtra state Government Minister for Marathi Language Subhash Desai introduced the Bill in the Lower House and the development came on Marathi Bhasha Din (Marathi language day) which is celebrated on February 27, the birth anniversary of poet and Jnanpith award winner late Vishnu Vaman Shirwadkar.

Marathi teaching and assessment of students in Marathi will be a mandatory condition for granting the government’s no-objection certificate for schools and The Bill was initially introduced in the Legislative Assembly and then in the Legislative Council.

### **IIT Bombay developed two apps “Corontine” and “Safe” to track violations by those in quarantine**

Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay developed 2 mobile applications called “Corontine” and “Safe”, that can track violations by people supposed to be in quarantine.

The app has been developed by Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) Department students, teachers along with some professionals and an alumnus.

The app helps authorities by checking the suspected carriers are confined in their quarantine zones. It uses geo-fencing & automatically generates alerts if suspected people move out of the quarantine zone.

The app can be installed on the mobile phones of asymptomatic carriers (AC) by an authorised agency (AA). It will send GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates of the mobiles periodically to the server under the supervision of AA & automatically detect when the user moves a specified quarantine zone marked by geo-fence.

The quarantined individual will take a selfie, say for 4 times a day & the authorities check whether they are in the desired location. The violations can be checked on the authenticated user interface.

The safe app was used by several students of IIT-Bombay to mark their attendance in class or exams.

### **Maharashtra launched world's Largest Plasma Therapy Trial under Project 'Platina'**

Maharashtra government has launched the World's largest Convalescent Plasma Therapy Trial project was launch on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The name of the project is Platina. The project was virtually launched by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddhav Thackeray.

For this trial project, the Indian Council of Medical Research has given the approval to conduct plasma therapy in COVID-19 positive patients admitted in the 21 COVID-19 hospitals of the Maharashtra State Government.

In the absence of a definite treatment or drugs for the COVID-19 positive patients, Convalescent Plasma Therapy has shown encouraging results on patients across the world.

As Maharashtra has been the worst-hit state in India by the COVID-19 pandemic, trial under project Platina will help in creating a robust data for the use of Convalescent Plasma Therapy. The project will also help in establishing an infrastructure for plasma treatment in the state.

Costs of Plasma Therapy trials under the project will be borne by the State Government of Maharashtra. From Chief Minister's Relief Fund, Rs 16.85 crores have been sanctioned for the project.

Under the trial project, two doses of 200 ml of convalescent plasma will be given to all critical patients in 21 State Government-run COVID-19 Hospitals of Maharashtra.

### **Maharashtra Announced "Maha Parwana" to Attract Fresh Industrial Investment**

Maharashtra announced the "Maha Parwana" to attract fresh investment in industries, for project execution, this plan will offer incentives and a single window clearance system.

The companies with investment proposals for Rs.50 crore or more will get relaxation on getting clearances from multiple departments with assurance letters (Maha Parwana).

These companies should apply at the Maharashtra Industry, Trade and Investment Facilitation Cell (MAITRI), single window system and get an online permission within 48 hours.

The industries enrolled under the Maha Parwana will get the 25 odd statutory permissions and clearances from the other state departments within 30 days.

If the clearance is not provided within 30 days it will be automatically deemed as cleared.



For the existing and new industries the state government has proposed to provide “plug and play” infrastructure to support the investors and reduce the capital investment.

The acceleration system is announced for the non-polluting industries under the Orange and Green criteria of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.

The non-polluting units under the Orange and Green criteria of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board can take advantage of the proposal.

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### **IIT Bombay Researchers Developed Chip ‘Dhruva’ to Navigate Locations**

Indian Institute of Technology Bombay led by Rajesh Zele from the Department of Electrical Engineering have created a chip named ‘Dhruva’ that can be mounted in smartphones and navigation devices to find places and routes within the country.

To locate the accurate position of the device, Dhruva sends and receives radio signals to India’s NAVIC (NAVigation with Indian Constellation) group of navigation satellites as well as US Global Positioning System(GPS)-based satellites to accurately determine these under all weather conditions.

Developed in just 18 months, the chip can receive in multiple frequency bands viz. 1.176 GHz (NAVIC L5 band), 1.227 GHz (GPS L2 band), 1.575 GHz (GPS L1 band), and 2.492 GHz (NAVIC S band) and handle weak signals. In addition, it can be converted into digital bits and processed by any standard digital signal processor (DSP) to accurately determine any location.

The Dhruva project was funded by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), with SAMEER (Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research) & Space Applications Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Worldwide navigation: Different countries have their own navigation satellite systems, including the Global Positioning System (GPS) of the US, the Russian Federation Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS), Galileo in Europe, Baidu and China Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS). In such a situation, Dhruva can be an effective navigation option in India.

### **Maharashtra Chief Minister launched Maha Jobs Portal**

Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray launched ‘Maha Jobs’, a portal on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 that will bridge the gap between the Industrial Units/Employers and the Workers. Anyone can access the portal by visiting- ‘mahajobs.maharashtra.gov.in’. For registration in the Maha Jobs portal, a domicile certificate of the state of Maharashtra is compulsory for the workers.

Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) will be the nodal agency for the successful functioning of the Maha Jobs portal. The portal is a joint venture between 3 Departments of the Maharashtra State Government. The departments are the Department of Labour, Department of Industries, and the Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department.

The aim of the Maha Jobs portal is to address the rising unemployment and layoffs that the state has witnessed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Jobs from a total of 17 sectors will be available under the portal, such as the Healthcare sector, IT, Logistics, Engineering, textile, etc.

The portal will help in the resumption of business and industries in the state of Maharashtra, which will further help in recreating the economic cycle in the state that was disrupted due to the nationwide lockdown imposed against the COVID-19 pandemic.

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