



CURRENT AFFAIRS

16 September 2020

Today's Important News

India becomes member of UN's ECOSOC body; China fails to secure seat.



1. LokSabha passes bill to cut salaries of MPs by 30%

- The LokSabha passed a bill to cut salaries of all MPs by 30 per cent for a year, to meet the exigencies arising out COVID-19 pandemic. The Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 was unanimously passed by the members of the Lower House.
- The bill was introduced in the Lower House on September 14. Earlier this year, the government had brought the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, which provided a 30 per cent cut in sumptuary allowance payable to each minister for a period of one year commencing from April 1, 2020.



Foot Notes:

About LokSabha:

Seats: 543

Founded: 17 April 1952

Speaker: Om Birla

Leader of the House: Narendra Modi

Secretary General: Snehlata Shrivastava;

2. India becomes member of UN's ECOSOC body; China fails to secure seat

- India has been elected as a member of the United Nation's Commission on Status of Women, a body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- India will be a member of United Nation's Commission on Status of Women for four years, 2021 to 2025.
- India, Afghanistan and China had contested the elections to the Commission on Status of Women. Even as India and Afghanistan won the ballot among the 54 members, China could not cross the half-way mark.
- The Economic and Social Council is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.
- It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals.
- It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits.



Foot Notes:

About ECOSOC:

Founded: 1945.

President: Munir Akram.

Headquarters: New York, United States.

3. TikTok chooses Oracle as U.S. 'technology partner'

- TikTok has chosen Oracle to be its technology partner for its American operations.
- Microsoft was also in a bid to acquire TikTok in the United States but the Chinese owner of the video-sharing platform "TikTok" chose Oracle over Microsoft to be its technology partner for its American operations.
- The partnership was signed by the two entities as in an executive order signed last month, President of the United States, Donald Trump stated that TikTok would be blocked in the US if it did not sell its US operations to an American company by 20th of September 2020.



Foot Notes:

About Oracle Corporation:

Founded: 16 June 1977, Santa Clara, California, United States

Founders: Larry Ellison, Bob Miner, Ed Oates

Headquarters: Redwood City, California, United States

Executive Chairman: Larry Ellison

4. PMGKP Insurance Scheme Extended for another Six Months

- Six months extension have been made to the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package Insurance Scheme. The Scheme was announced for Health Workers Fighting COVID-19 on 30th March 2020 under the flagship scheme Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 2016.
- The scheme provides health insurance to the staff working in Government Hospitals and Health Care Centres. The scheme covers ward boys, safai karamcharis, ASHA workers, nurses, technicians, paramedics, doctors and specialists and other health workers. Any health professional who meet with some accident while treating Covid-19 patients then he/she would be given a compensatory amount of Rs 50 lakh under the scheme. Approximately 22 lakh health workers would be provided insurance cover.
- PMGKY scheme was launched by the Narendra Modi led Government in December 2016. The scheme was launched on the lines of the Income declaration scheme, 2016. PMGKY is a part of the Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 2016. It provides an opportunity to declare unaccounted wealth and black money. It also avoids prosecution after paying a fine of 50% on the undisclosed income.



5. Government plans to introduce law to ban crypto currency trading

- The Central Government has been planning to introduce a new law that will ban the trade in crypto currencies, placing it out of step with other economies of Asia who have chosen to regulate the fledgling market.
- The bill has been expected to be discussed by the federal cabinet before it is sent to the Parliament for approval. Under the law, the federal government will be encouraging the blockchain, the technology underlying crypto currencies, but is not keen on crypto currency trading.



- In 2018, the Indian Central Bank had banned the crypto transactions after a series of frauds. These frauds took place in the months following PM Modi's decision to ban 80% of the nation's currency. Crypto currency Exchanges had responded with a lawsuit in Supreme Court in September and had won respite in March 2020.



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6. Cabinet Approves establishment of new AIIMS at Bihar's Darbhanga ahead of Assembly Polls

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar.
- This will be established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY). The approved AIIMS would be established at a total cost of Rs. 1264 crore and is likely to be completed within a period of 4 years from the date of the approval of Government of India.
- The new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar will have 15-20 Super Specialty Departments.
- The proposed institution shall have a hospital with capacity of 750 beds which will include Emergency / Trauma beds, ICU beds, AYUSH beds, Private beds and Specialty & Super Specialty beds.



Foot Notes:

About Bihar:

Chief Minister: Nitish Kumar

Governor: Phagu Chauhan.

Capital: Patna

7. U.K. hands over three recovered Indian antiquities

- Antique bronze idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, which were reportedly stolen from Nagapattinam in the 1970s, are set to return home due to efforts taken by art enthusiasts, officers of Idol Wing CID, and the High Commission of India (HCI), London.
- It was conveyed to HCI that the idol of Rama was suspected to be in the possession of an individual collector in London.
- “Once the idol was verified by comparison with relevant records, the matter was taken up with the Art and Antique Unit of the London Metropolitan Police as well as the Idol Wing of Tamil Nadu police,” said Rahul Nangare, First Secretary, HCI, London.



Foot Notes:

About UK:

Capital: London

Prime Minister: Boris Johnson

Currency: Pound Sterling

8. Chhattisgarh to set up specialised police unit to counter Maoists in Bastar

- A specialised unit of Chhattisgarh Police's 'Bastar Special Force' may soon be introduced for Maoist-affected districts which will comprise of local youths from the interiors of insurgency-hit Bastar division.
- Chief minister Bhupesh Baghel directed the senior officers of the police department to raise 'Bastar Special Force' by recruiting local boys from sensitive areas.
- The Bastar division comprises seven districts - Bastar, Kanker, Kondagaon, Dantewada, Narayanpur, Sukma and Bijapur and each one of them has been facing Maoist problems since the 1980s.



- Earlier in 2016, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) raised the Bastariya Battalion, to counter insurgency in which local tribals were recruited.

Foot Notes:

About Chhattisgarh:

Governor: Anusuiya Uikey

Chief minister: Bhupesh Baghel

Capitals: Raipur (Executive Branch), Bilaspur

9. Aditya Puri conferred Lifetime Achievement Award by Euromoney Awards of Excellence 2020

- Managing Director of HDFC Bank, Aditya Puri has been conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award by Euromoney Awards of Excellence 2020.
- He has been awarded for his skills in building a world-class bank in India at a time where there were no similar institutions in existence.
- Euromoney's Awards for Excellence are the awards that matter to the banks and bankers who matter. They were established in 1992 and were the first of their kind in the global banking industry.



Foot Notes:

About HDFC Bank:

The tagline: We Understand Your World.

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

10. 'My Life in Design': Gauri Khan announces her debut book

- Interior designer, Gauri Khan has authored her first book titled "My Life In Design", which will be published by Penguin Random House India in 2021.
- It is a coffee-table book, in which Gauri has written about her journey as a designer.
- The book will feature unseen pictures of her interior design projects, family and residence. She will also talk about her design philosophy and style.



- The book will be very visually appealing with exclusive pictures and information that guide aspiring designers or those who are just generally interested in the art of design.

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