



CURRENT AFFAIRS

11 JULY, 2020

Today's Important News

Indian-American scientist
Dr. Parag Chitnis appointed as acting
director of top US agriculture firm NIFA

1. Indian-American scientist Dr. Parag Chitnis appointed as Acting Director of top US agriculture firm NIFA

- Indian American scientist, Dr Parag Chitnis has been appointed as the Acting Director of top US agriculture research firm, the prestigious National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The NIFA is the main driver of all federally funded agricultural research in the United States.
- Parag Chitnis was named Associate Director for Programmes earlier this year. He leads the implementation of many of NIFA's approximately USD 1.7 billion worth research projects.
- In his new position, Parag Chitnis will replace Dr Scott Angle, who has accepted the position of Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Florida in Gainesville.



Foot Notes:

About NIFA:

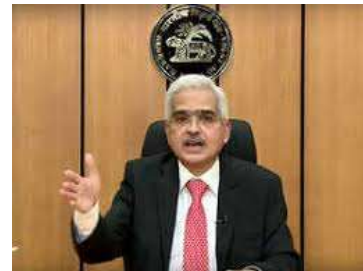
Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States

Founder: Rajiv Shah

Founded: 2008

2. RBI cut repo rate by 250 basis points till onset of COVID-19: RBI Governor

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cut the repo rate by 135 basis points since February 2019 till the onset of COVID-19. This was shared RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das while delivering his keynote address at the 7th SBI Banking & Economics Conclave on July 11, 2020.
- The RBI Governor said that repo rate was cut overall by 250 basis points since February 2019 to alleviate liquidity stress and provide financial stability in the economy. The main aim behind the move was to tackle the slowdown in economic growth.
- Das stated that they had elaborately touched upon issues concerning economic growth during the meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). The MPC has decided to cumulatively, cut the policy repo rate by 115 basis points.



Foot Notes:

About RBI:

Governor: Shaktikanta Das

Founded: 01 Apr 1935

Headquarters: Mumbai, India

3. Ivory Coast's Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly dies

- Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Ivory Coast's Prime Minister and the governing party's candidate for an October presidential election, died.
- He died just days after returning from two months of medical treatment in France.
- The 61-year-old, who had heart surgery in 2012, became unwell during a weekly cabinet meeting and was taken to a hospital where he passed away.
- Coulibaly's death creates huge uncertainty over the election in Ivory Coast, the world's top cocoa grower, which has returned to normalcy after years of political turbulence and a brief civil war that killed 3,000 people.



Foot Notes:

Ivory Coast:

Capital: Yamoussoukro

Currency: West African CFA franc

President: Alassane Ouattara

4. Archaeologists found Some more burial urns at Adichanallur

- Archaeologists involved in excavation of ancient burial sites of Adichanallur have found a few more burial urns while one of them has been closed.
- The sixth phase of excavation began at Adichanallur near here, known as the 'Cradle of ancient Tamil civilization,' on May 25.
- Adichanallur is an archaeological site in Thoothukudi district in Tamil Nadu.
- Carbon dating of samples excavated in 2004 from this site has revealed that they belonged to the period between 1000 BC and 600 BC.



5. Skill India launches AI-based ASEEM digital platform for skilled workforce across sectors

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) launched 'Aatma nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping' (ASEEM) portal to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- It has been launched to improve the information flow and bridge the demand-supply gap in the skilled workforce market.
- Apart from recruiting a skilled workforce that spurs business competitiveness and economic growth, the Artificial Intelligence-based platform has been envisioned to strengthen their career pathways by hand holding them through their journeys to attain industry-relevant skills and explore emerging job opportunities especially in the post COVID era.



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6. India to invite Australia to Malabar naval exercise

- India plans to invite Australia to join the annual Malabar naval exercise that has so far included just Japan and the U.S.
- The exercise will bring together the navies of India, Japan, Australia and the U.S. in the Bay of Bengal at the end of the year.
- Malabar is an annual exercise between the navies of India, Japan, and the U.S. held alternately in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
- It began in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the U.S.
- Then it got permanently expanded into a trilateral format with the inclusion of Japan in 2015.



Foot Notes:

About Australia:

Capital: Canberra

Prime Minister: Scott Morrison

Currency: Australian dollar

7. Average Global Temperature could rise by 1.5° Celsius in 5 years: WMO

- The United Nations (UN) weather Agency, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in its “Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update for 2020-2024” has forecasted that the annual mean global temperature is likely to be at least 1° Celsius above pre-industrial levels (1850-1900) in each of the coming five years (2020-2024) and there is a 20% chance that it will exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) in at least one year. Overall, it is very likely to be within the range 0.91 – 1.59°C.
- The 1.5°C mark is the level to which countries have agreed to try to limit global warming as per 2015 Paris accord. The agreement sets a goal of keeping global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit), ideally no more than 1.5°C.



Foot Notes:

WMO(World Meteorological Organization):

Headquarters location: Geneva, Switzerland

Founded: 23 March 1950

Secretary general: Petteri Taalas

8. Google relaunches Google Plus as Currents due to low usage and security bugs

- Internet search giant Google has relaunched its social networking platform Google+ as Currents.
- The company has rebranded the app to Google Currents on both Google Play Store and Apple App Store. The Google Play Store listing describes the app as a place where people can connect with their colleagues, exchange documents, interact with like-minded people who have similar interests.
- In April 2019, a Google spokesperson announced that the official process for the shutdown of Google+ has started. The reason stated was low usage and some security bugs that were recently discovered.



Foot Notes:

About Google:

CEO: Sundar Pichai

Founded: 4 September 1998, California, United States

Headquarters: California, United States

Founders: Larry Page, Sergey Brin

9. World Population Day is an annual event observed every year on July 11 every year.

- The day is observed in order to spread and raise awareness of the rising global population issues. The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989.
- This Day aims to increase people's awareness on various population issues such as the importance of family planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health and human rights.
- As per reports, there were an estimated 7.8 billion people living on Earth as of March 2020.



10. Fourth Cycle of All India Tiger Estimation 2018 enters Guinness Book of World Records

- For being the World's Largest Camera Trapping Wildlife Survey, the Fourth Cycle of the All India Tiger Estimation 2018 has made it to the Guinness Book of World Records.
- Every four year since 2006, All India Tiger Estimation has been conducted in India. The 2018 Estimation was the fourth cycle in overall. Earlier from the first, second, and third cycles were conducted in the years 2006, 2010 and 2014 respectively.

