NEWS T✓DAY

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE SET DEADLINE FOR MANDATORY IMPLEMENTATION OF GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICES (GMP)

- GMP ensures that **products are consistently produced and controlled** according to **set quality standards.**
  - ➤ World Health Organization **(WHO) has established detailed guidelines for GMP.**
- In India, **GMP system was first incorporated in 1988 in Schedule M** of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, and GMP were **revised in 2018,** bringing them **on par with WHO standards.**
  - ➤ **Schedule M** prescribes **requirements of facilities and their maintenance, personnel, manufacture, control and safety testing,** storage and transport of material, written procedures and records, traceability, etc.
- Presently, **only 2,000 of 10,500 manufacturing units** in country were **found to be compliant with WHO-GMP standards.**
- **Now,** drugmakers with an **annual turnover of over Rs 250 crore** will have to mandatorily adopt GMP **within six months** while those with **turnover of less than Rs 250 crore** will be given **a year.**
- **Significance of GMP certification:**
  - ➤ **Minimize risks** such as unexpected contamination of products, incorrect labelling, insufficient or too much active ingredient etc.
  - ➤ **India is a major exporter of medicines** to low- and middle-income (LMIC) **countries which require WHO-GMP certification.**
  - ➤ **Procurement of products under Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana** (PMBJP) from WHO-GMP certified suppliers.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (MHA) INTRODUCES A NEW CATEGORY OF AYUSH VISA FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

- Introduction of AYUSH Visa is **part of India's roadmap for Heal in India initiative,** which is intended at **promoting India as a medical value travel (MVT) destination.**
  - ➤ **AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) **based healthcare & Wellness economy** is estimated **to grow to $70 billion by 2025.**
- **Medical tourism** (also known as MVT) refers to **hosting foreign tourists visiting for maintaining, improving or restoring health through medical intervention.**
  - ➤ It is **broadly classified under 3 categories: Medical Treatment** for curative purposes; **Wellness & Rejuvenation; Alternative Cures** such as India's AYUSH.
- **Key drivers of MVT growth:** State of the art medical facilities, cost-effective healthcare services, quality diagnostic equipment and trained doctors, offering traditional therapies, no waiting time etc.
- **Challenges**
  - ➤ **Lack of regulations and nodal body** for medical travel sector.
  - ➤ **Regional Competition:** From Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore
  - ➤ **Lack of overseas medical care coverage** by insurers and **non-coverage of traditional systems of medicine.**
  - ➤ **Lack of awareness about** National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) **accreditation at international level.**

National strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism

Central Sector Scheme namely **Champion Service Sector Scheme for MVT**

Heal in India Initiative

National Medical & Wellness Tourism Board

Initiatives Taken for promoting MVT

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST) COUNCIL ANNOUNCED TO RETAIN LEVY OF UNIFORM 28% TAX ON ONLINE GAMING COMPANIES WITH A TWEAK

- **Key Highlights**
  - **Tax rate:** **28%** tax on electronic gaming, casinos, and horse racing. To be applied **on the initial amount paid upon entry,** and not on the total value of each bet placed.
  - **Covers both games based on both skill and chance:** Online gaming is defined as "an offering of a **game on the internet or an electronic network.**
    - **It** includes online money gaming (which include both games of skills and games of chance).
  - **Tax on offshore online gaming firms:** Such companies will have to **register themselves with the GST authorities** and pay the **tax to offer their services to Indian gamers.**
    - **Amendment** to the **Integrated GST Act, 2017** will be made to enforce this.
  - **Enforcement:** After the necessary **modifications to the central and state laws,** the new tax is expected to **come into effect from October 1.**
- In a related development, **Finance Ministry notified an amendment to the GST Act to exempt certain small businesses using e-commerce platforms (refer to the box)** to sell their products from **compulsory registration.**

> **Small businesses using e-commerce platform are exempted if:**
>
> - Their **turnover is less than ₹40 lakh and ₹20 lakh (** (₹20 lakh and ₹10 lakh in selected States) for goods and services, respectively and fulfilling criteria like **no inter-State supply of goods; supply goods through e-commerce operators** in more than one State or Union territory; etc.

SEVEN NEW PRODUCTS INCLUDING FOUR FROM RAJASTHAN GET GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) TAG

State	GI product and description
Rajasthan	- **Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft:** An ancient art for making **ornamental weaponry** in which whole design is produced mainly by wire - **Bikaner Kashidakari Craft: A type of stitching on cotton, silk or velvet** with **mirror-work.** Practiced by weavers of **Meghwal community.** - **Jodhpur Bandhej Craft:** A textile art **of tying** (using Cotton thread) **and dyeing of muslin, silk and voil fabrics.** - **Bikaner Usta Kala Craft: A gold nakashi art** restricted only to **camel hide, wall paintings & metal art.** Practiced by the **Dapgar community.** > It was practiced in the ancient period **on the walls of palaces, temples.**
Goa	- **Mankurad Mango: Main traditional fruit crops of Goa.** Named by Portuguese as malcorada (means **'poor coloured').** Its higher **amount of total soluble solids** makes it sweeter. - **Goan Bebinca:** Also known as **queen of Goan desserts** is a type of **pudding** and a **traditional Indo-Portuguese dessert.**
Uttar Pradesh	- **Jalesar Dhatu Shilp:** Includes **decorative metal craft** and **brassware** (like anklets, bells) practiced by **Thatheras community.** > Jalesar was the **capital of Magadha king Jarasandha.**

- **GI Tag** is issued by the **GI Registry** in Chennai under **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.**
- **GI Tag, valid for a decade, renewable for** another 10 years, **prevent its use by a third party.**

IN-SPACE RELEASED CONSULTATION PAPER ON EARTH OBSERVATION (EO) DATA FROM INDIAN SATELLITES MISSIONS

- EO refers to **use of remote sensing technologies** (including satellites, aircraft, drones, and ground-based sensors) **to monitor land, marine and atmosphere.**
- **Application of EO Data:**
  - Provides **comprehensive understanding of Earth's climate,** ocean circulation, carbon, energy and water cycle, albedo, cryosphere etc.
  - **National security** as EO satellites are crucial for **Imagery Intelligence, photo reconnaissance, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR),** and electro optical functions.
  - Provide **valuable insight and inform policy decisions** spanning many government departments such as: **agriculture, water resources, urban planning, rural development, mineral prospecting, forestry, disaster management** etc.
- **Initiatives by India**
  - **ISRO has launched** series of EO satellites including **IRS, Resourcesat, Cartosat, Oceansat, RISAT satellites.**
  - **GalaxEye, Pixxel, Dhruva Space, KaleidEO** are some of **Non-Government Private Entities (NGPEs)** that have planned **to launch their EO satellites.**
- **IN-SPACe** (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) **is a single-window, independent, nodal agency** that functions as an **autonomous agency in Department of Space** (DOS) to facilitate **participation of private players.**

"G20 PRINCIPLES FOR FINANCING CITIES OF TOMORROW: INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE" IS ENDORSED BY MEMBER COUNTRIES

- These **voluntary and non-binding principles** aim to promote **efficient use of financial resources** for **inclusive and sustainable** urbanisation.
- **Key highlights**

Need for sustainable urbanization	• **Rapidly increasing urban population** (existing 55% to over 687% by 2050) and **finite resources** • Limited capacity of governments • **Unregulated urban** sprawl including Inclusivity and inequality challenges
Way for sustainable urbanization	• Adopt **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** such as afforestation • Integrated approach for risk **reduction and increase in disaster resilience** in urban infrastructure • Enabling **spatial equity** through universally accessible spaces, **development of affordable housing,** and improve access to **education, healthcare, and cultural facilities**
Financing	• Revenue augmentation through **Own Source Revenues (OSR)** • Market-based solutions for **private investment such as PPPs.** • **Leverage land as financing solution** through initiatives like Transit Oriented Development. • Enhancing city creditworthiness for **assistance from Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).** • **Technology interventions (e.g., GIS3 & SCADA4)** to increase tax volume coverage and data-driven insights in policy development.
Capacity Building of city administration	• **City-to-city exchanges** (e.g Sister City concepts) and further **international cooperation** including at the multilateral level • **Digital transformation of urban infrastructure.**

ALSO IN NEWS

G20 EMPOWERTech-Equity Platform	• The platform is launched **by G20 Alliance for the Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation** (G20 EMPOWER). • It is developed with the support of the **Ministry of Women and Child Development and aims to bridge the gender digital divide.** • It offers women self-learning course modules for **digital skilling including Financial Literacy.** • The platform is open to **women and girls** from across G20 nations. • **It is available in 120 plus languages** and is also a**ccessible to people with Dyslexia, ADHD, and is color-blindness friendly.**
Vivad se Vishwas (VsV) II	• **Launched by:** Ministry of Finance. • **About:** One-time settlement scheme for **pending contractual disputes** with **government**/government undertaking. • **Applicablity: Court award** (passesd upto 30.04.2023) **and Arbitral orders** (passed upto 31.01.2023). • **Settlement amount offered:** upto ➢ **85% of net amount awarded by the court** ➢ **65% of net amount awarded in arbitral.** • **Implemented through:** Government e-Marketplace. • **Background: VsV** scheme was announced in Union Budget 2020-21 for reducing **litigations in the direct taxes payments.** ➢ **VsV I** was launched for provide **relief to MSMEs during COVID-19 period.**
Participatory notes (P-notes)	• P-note investments touched a **5-yr high of Rs 1.13 trn** at June-end in the country. • P-notes are are **offshore derivative instruments** with Indian shares as the underlying assets. • They are **issued by registered Foreign portfolio investment (FPIs) to overseas investors** who wish to invest in the Indian stock market **without directly registering themselves with SEBI.** ➢ The anonymity provided by the P- Notes **makes it lucrative for entities that try to use this route to round trip funds.**

Sahakar-22	• **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) had launched Sahakar-22** during FY 2017-18 **to achieve rural and farm prosperity** through Cooperatives by 2022. ➢ NCDC is a **statutory body under** administrative control of **Ministry of Cooperation.** • **It included:** ➢ **FOCUS 222:** NCDC's focused assistance for Cooperatives in 222 Districts (including 117 Aspirational Districts); ➢ **PACS HUB:** Transformation of PACS and other Coops as Apna Kisan Resource Centers; ➢ **AENEC:** Act East and North East Cooperatives; ➢ **CEMtC:** Centres of Excellence to Market through Cooperatives; ➢ **SAHAKAR PRAGYA -** Capacity Development through Laxmanrao Inamdar National Academy for Cooperative Research Development (LINAC).
Climate Change Impact upon Indian subcontinent	• **Findings of a 2020 report by Ministry of Earth Sciences** included: ➢ **India's average temperature has risen by around 0.7 deg. C** during 1901-2018. ➢ **Frequency of daily precipitation extremes** (>150 mm per day) **increased by about 75%** during 1950-2015. ➢ **Sea-level rise in North Indian Ocean** occurred at a rate of **3.3 mm per year** (1993-2017). ➢ **Frequency of Severe Cyclonic Storms over Arabian sea** has **increased during post monsoon seasons** of 1998-2018.
ZARTH (ZTF Augmented Reality Transient Hunter)	• ZARTH is an **app to allow anyone with a smartphone** to **find astronomical Transients,** using **data from Zwicky Transient Facility** (ZTF), a public-private partnership, in USA. • Transient astronomical events are **intense, bright, and short-lived phenomena that briefly light up the sky** before fading away. • Transients **can be caused by different astrophysical sources** such as ➢ **Supernovae** (Explosion of a star at end of life), ➢ **Flaring stars** (stars varying in brightness), ➢ **Active galactic nuclei** (small region at centre of some galaxies with much higher luminosity) etc.
Superconductor	• **South Korean researchers have claimed** they have **created a material** (LK-99), which functions as **a superconductor at room temperature.** • **Superconductors** are materials that **can conduct electric currents without any loss** when they are cooled **below a critical temperature.** ➢ **They also expel magnetic fields** as they transition to superconducting state **(Meissner effect).** ➢ However, they **typically need to be extremely cooled,** to around minus 195 degrees Celsius, **and subjected to extreme pressure** to work. • **Potential applications:** Generation and transmission of electric power, Medical diagnosis, Electromagnets, superfast Maglev trains etc.
Finger Minutiae Record – Finger Image Record (FMR-FIR) modality	• FMR-FIR is an **Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning based tool** that uses a **combination of both finger minutiae and finger image** to check liveness of a fingerprint and to **detect use of a cloned fingerprint.** • **UIDAI has rolled out FMR-FIR to prevent** Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS) frauds. ➢ **AePS frauds** have been undertaken **using spoofed fingerprints** during Aadhaar authentication.
UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger (WHD)	• UNESCO proposed to add the **Italian city of Venice,** threatened by mass tourism, development projects and climate change, to the list of WHD. ➢ **Kyiv in Ukraine,** the town of **Timbuktu in Mali** are also proposed to be placed under the list. • Under the **1972 World Heritage Convention,** a World Heritage property can be **inscribed on the List of WHD.** ➢ Cities in WHD list are considered to face **specific and proven imminent danger or threats** which could have deleterious effects **on their inherent characteristics.**