

Current Affairs Today – 17.06.2020

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS

International Day of Family Remittances



- The **International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR)** is a universally-recognized observance adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and celebrated **every year** on **16 June**.
- This year International Day of Family Remittances is celebrated under the theme: “**remittances are a lifeline**”.
- In March 2020, the UN Secretary-General called for global solidarity in responding to the coronavirus crisis stating “remittances are a lifeline in the developing world – especially now”.

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought



- The **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought** is a **United Nations** observance each on **June 17**.
- Its purpose is to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.
- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2020 Theme is “**Food. Feed. Fibre**”

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING AND FINANCE

AIIB approves \$750 million loan for India's COVID-19 response



- Beijing-based **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** stated it has approved a **USD 750 million (around Rs 5,714 crore)** loan to India to help the government strengthen its battle against the adverse impact of COVID-19 on **poor and vulnerable households**.
- Cofinanced with the Asian Development Bank, the budgetary support will go toward bolstering economic aid for businesses, including for the informal sector, expanding social safety nets for the needy, and strengthening the country's health care systems, the multilateral agency stated.
- The disruption in economic activities threatens to impact poor households disproportionately, especially women, many of whom are employed in the informal sector, stated AIIB.

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- AIIB's total sovereign loans to India that have already been approved amount to **USD 3.06 billion**, including a recent USD 500 million COVID-19 emergency response.
- The current loan will be the second for India under AIIB's COVID-19 Crisis Recovery Facility (CRF).
- While AIIB does not have a regular instrument for policy-based financing, the Bank is extending such financing on an exceptional basis under the CRF to support its members through projects cofinanced with the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank.
- As per the statement, AIIB is currently reviewing projects from its members.

About AIIB:

- Headquarters: Beijing, China
- President: Jin Liqun

EPFO launches multi location claim settlement facility



- The **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** stated it has launched a **multi-location claim settlement facility** towards ensuring **uniform standards of service delivery** across the country and optimum utilisation of its workforce during COVID-19 pandemic.
- The facility will bring a paradigm shift by allowing its offices to settle online claims from any of its regional offices, across the country. All types of online claims i.e. provident fund, pension, partial withdrawal and claims and transfer claims can be processed under this novel initiative, EPFO stated.
- The EPF organization stated to reduce the delays by uniformly distributing the claim settlement related workload nationwide, the organization has moved away from the existing system of geographical jurisdiction for claim processing by rolling out **multi-location claim settlement facility**.
- This facility will allow offices with lesser workload to share the burden of offices that have accumulated a higher level of pendency, due to COVID-19 restrictions. It enables fast-tracking of settlement process through most appropriate engagement of EPFO's workforce in all its regional offices across the country.
- The EPFO stated, despite its functioning being adversely impacted due to COVID-19 restrictions, the organization is settling more than 80,000 claims amounting to Rs.270 crore per working day since 1 April 2020. With multi-location claim facility the organization is set to achieve higher benchmarks in service delivery ensuring social security for its more than 6 crore subscribers during the time of crisis.

About EPFO:

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Sunil Barthwal: Central Provident Fund Commissioner

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Vivendi partners My Earth Concert for Kids initiative in cooperation with UNICEF



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- **Vivendi**, the French integrated content, media and communications group, has partnered with Grammy winner **Ricky Kej**, an Indo-American composer, music producer and environmentalist **for My Earth Concert for Kids**.
- The event will be live streamed and broadcast globally on **World Music Day, June 21 at 8 pm** across MyEarthSongs.com, Dailymotion, Facebook and Instagram, as well as on Dish TV, Tata Sky, TikTok, Zee5, MX Player, Vodafone Play, Hungama Music, Idea and on T-Series' YouTube page.
- Vivendi brings forth this event with the support **UNICEF** and other International Bodies like WWF, UN Climate Change, Earth Day Org, 50 Years Earth Day 2020.

India's foreign exchange reserves cross \$500 bn for the first time



- The country's **foreign exchange reserves** crossed the **\$500 billion** mark for the first time as the central bank absorbed inflows at a time when there was not enough demand for foreign currencies from the oil marketing companies amid a lockdown and collapse in oil prices.
- India had forex reserves of \$501.7 billion as of June 5, a rise of \$8 billion in a week. This is the highest weekly increase since September 28, 2007. Most of the rise is owing to foreign currency assets.
- Currency dealers say there was dollar inflow on account of Reliance Jio and Airtel deals, which the central bank absorbed. If the flows were not absorbed, rupee would have appreciated substantially, which is detrimental to exports.
- Besides, the increased forex reserve means the country's import cover is also improving. As of May 22, when the RBI announced its monetary policy, the reserves — at \$486 billion — were enough to cover one year's import. The import cover has improved with accumulation of reserves.
- The forex reserve comprised of foreign currency assets (\$463.63 billion), gold (\$32.35 billion), Special Drawing Rights of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of Rs \$1.44 billion, and reserve position in the IMF of \$4.28 billion, showed data released

Maruti Suzuki partners with Karur Vysya Bank for flexible financing schemes



- Car market leader **Maruti Suzuki India (MSI)** stated it has partnered with **Karur Vysya Bank** to offer simpler and flexible **financing schemes for new customers**.
- Through the partnership with the bank, the company is seeking to offer prospective buyers special scheme of up to 100 per cent on road funding with six months holiday period on all models, except van EECO), loans for both salaried and self-employed customers and repayment period up to 84 months, Maruti Suzuki India stated in a statement.
- Karur Vysya Bank offers customers in-principle loan sanction in 15 minutes and existing customer of the bank can get their loans disbursed on the same day with the entire process from application to disbursement of the loan being digitalised with no manual intervention.

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About Maruti Suzuki:

- CEO: Kenichi Ayukawa
- Headquarters: New Delhi

About Karur Vysya Bank:

- Headquarters: Karur
- CEO: P. R. Seshadri

CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATES

Students in West Bengal Have Built 'Ayurvedic Sanitisation Tunnel' for Their School



- Students of a private school in East Burdwan district of **West Bengal** have built an "**ayurvedic sanitisation tunnel**" to disinfect people entering the educational institute.
- Twelve people can be disinfected inside the tunnel at a time.
- The "ayurvedic sanitiser" contains camphor oil, menthol and thyme oil, he said, adding that the tunnel was built at the Technology Club workshop in the school by students under the supervision of teachers.
- An ayurvedic sanitisation tunnel was earlier installed at the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in Kolkata.

About West Bengal

- Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar
- CM: Mamata Banerjee
- Capital: Kolkata

Odisha's unique festival Raja Parba begins



- **Raja Parba, Odisha's three-day unique festival** celebrating the onset of monsoon and the earth's womanhood has begun.
- As a mark of respect towards the earth during her menstruation days, all agricultural works, like ploughing, sowing are suspended for the three days.
- The festival is essentially the celebration of the earth's womanhood. It is believed that during this time the Mother Earth or Bhudevi undergoes menstruation. The fourth day is the day of the 'purification bath'.
- As it is a celebration of womanhood, a lot of the focus is on young women, who wear new clothes, apply 'Alata' on their feet and enjoy folk songs while swinging on decorated rope swings.

About Odisha

- Capital: Bhubaneswar

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- Governor: Ganeshi Lal
- Chief minister: Naveen Patnaik

UP cabinet gives nod to set up workers welfare commission



- In Uttar Pradesh, a **special commission** has been set up for the **employment generation and safeguarding the interests of workers**. State Cabinet gave its nod to set up Uttar Pradesh workers welfare commission.
- Named as the **UP Kamgar Shramik Sevayojan Avam Rozgar Aayog**, the commission will have an executive board in which many ministers and representatives of different worker's organizations will be members.
- The **Chief Minister or a cabinet minister** nominated by him will be its chairman and the minister for labour its convener. Issue of safeguarding the interests of workers and labourers of the state was also discussed.

About Uttar Pradesh:

- Capital: Lucknow
- Governor: Anandiben Patel
- Chief minister: Yogi Adityanath

Andhra Pradesh: Rs 6,885.60 cr allocated for 'Rytu Bharosa-PM Kisan' scheme in agriculture Budget



- **Andhra Pradesh** Agriculture Minister **Kurasala Kannababu** introduced agriculture budget for 2020-21 in the State Assembly. The budget has allocated **Rs 6,885.60 crore** for the '**Rytu Bharosa-PM Kisan**' scheme.
- In the Budget Rs 3,000 crore is allocated for Market stabilisation Fund, Rs 100 crore for 'Rytu Bharosa Kendras' - (RBKs) (Farmer Support Centers), Rs 500 crore for 'Dr YSR Free Crop Insurance Scheme', Rs 65 crore for YSR agriculture laboratories.
- Further, **Rs 1,100 crore** is allocated for '**YSR Interest-Free Crop Loans**', Rs 20 crore is allocated for payment of ex gratia of Rs 7 Lakhs for the families of farmers who committed suicides, Rs 2.61 crore is allocated for State Agriculture Mission (AP SAM), Rs 200 crore for the supply of seeds under subsidy to the farmers.
- Also Rs 207.83 crore is allocated for the agricultural mechanisation scheme and Rs 141.73 crore is allocated for the integrated agricultural program, under the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) scheme.
- While, Rs 2,000 crore is allocated for Natural Calamities Relief Fund
- The minister announced that Rs 29,159.97 crore has been allocated for agriculture and allied sectors in the 2020-21 budget.

About Andhra Pradesh:

- Governor: Biswabhusan Harichandan
- Chief minister: Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy

- Capital City: Amravati

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATION

Kevin Roberts steps down, Nick Hockley appointed interim Cricket Australia CEO



- **Cricket Australia (CA)** appointed **Nick Hockley** as its **interim Chief Executive** following the resignation of **Kevin Roberts**.
- Hockley is currently the Chief Executive of the ICC T20 World Cup and also oversaw the conduct of the women's edition of the tournament earlier this year.

PayU appoints Shantanu Preetam as CTO



- **PayU**, an online payment solutions provider, has appointed **Shantanu Preetam** to the India leadership team as **chief technology officer**.
- Preetam has an experience of over 23 years in building software products and driving digital transformation strategy and his last stint was at **Walmart** where he helped in building core e-commerce systems.

D K Jain gets one year extension as BCCI ethics officer and ombudsman



- Former Supreme Court judge **D K Jain** will continue as **BCCI's ethics officer and ombudsman** after getting a **one-year extension** from the cricket Board.
- Jain was appointed by the Supreme Court in February 2019 as BCCI's first ever ombudsman. He was later given the additional role of ethics officer.

About BCCI

- President: Sourav Ganguly
- Secretary: Jay Shah
- Headquarters: Mumbai

CURRENT AFFAIRS: AWARDS AND HONOURS

DDS wins Monaco Foundation Award



- The **Deccan Development Society (DDS)**, a non-governmental organisation working with women farmers, has won the **Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Award**.
- A prestigious award, it is given to organisations with a “deep commitment to preserving the planet”. Contributions can be in the areas of limiting the effects of climate change, preserving biodiversity, managing water resources and fighting against desertification.
- The award, which carries a cash prize of €40,000 (about Rs.35 lakh), has been given to the DDS for its help in promoting biodiversity and support farming in degraded lands.
- **Olivier Wenden**, Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, announced the winner of the award.
- The DDS organises a network of small and marginal farmers and helps them in growing millets in the rainfed areas of Telangana. The women runs seed banks, protecting biodiversity. It also helps in providing market linkages by connecting them with the urban consumer and bulk buyers of millets.

About DDS:

- Director– PV Satheesh
- Headquarters– Hyderabad, Telangana

ZestMoney awarded as technology pioneer by World Economic Forum



- India's first and largest AI-driven digital financing platform **ZestMoney** has been selected as one of the **World Economic Forum's (WEF's)** technology pioneers.
- Founded by Lizzie Chapman, Priya Sharma and Ashish Anantharaman in 2015, ZestMoney is built as a platform that can meaningfully improve the lives of more than 300 million households in the country, who currently have no access to credit cards or any other formal financing options because of insufficient credit history.
- The WEF's technology pioneers are early to growth-stage companies from around the world that are involved in the design, development and deployment of new technologies and innovations, and are poised to have a significant impact on business and society.
- The technology pioneers community is an integral part of the larger global innovators community of start-ups at the WEF.

About World Economic Forum:

- Founder: Klaus Schwab
- Headquarters: Cologny, Switzerland

CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India sets up first mobile Covid-testing lab

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- **India** has set up its **first mobile testing laboratory** in a bid to meet the growing demand to conduct **coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tests**.
- The mobile laboratory belongs to the **biosafety level 2 (BSL-II) category**, which was created **within eight days** by a team from **Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone Limited**.
- BSLs are ranked from one to four and are categorised on the basis of the organisms that the researchers are dealing with.
- BSL-I is considered to be the least hazardous, while BSL-IV poses the maximum safety risk. Each level builds on the previous category, adding more layers of constraints and barriers.
- SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, belongs to the BSL-II category.
- The facility aims to put India on the global map of high-end medical equipment production and make healthcare products affordable and accessible not only in the country, but also the world at large.
- It also has set a target for reducing the cost of manufacturing up to 40% and also minimising the import dependency for the country, which is currently pegged at around 75%.

Recent News

- India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab. This rapid response mobile labrotary is part of government **Aatmnirbhar Bharat**. This labrotary was built in a record time of eight days from the date of receipt of Automotive Chassis, from **Bharat Benz**.

Germany Launches Coronavirus App as EU Eyes Travel Revival



- **Germany** launched an app to help break the chain of **coronavirus infections**, one of several such apps that European governments hope will revive travel and tourism safely.
- The **Corona-Warn-App**, now available for Apple and Android devices, uses Bluetooth short-range radio to measure close contacts between people and issues a warning should one of them later test positive for COVID-19.
- Germany joins Italy, Poland, and Latvia in launching apps based on technology from Apple and Alphabet's Google that preserves privacy by logging Bluetooth contacts securely on devices.

About Germany

- Capital: Berlin
- Currency: Euro
- President: Frank-Walter Steinmeier

New fish species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh



- A new species of fish has been discovered in **Arunachal Pradesh**. Dr. Keshav Kumar Jha, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Zoology, Jawaharlal Nehru College, Pasighat discovered a new fish species from genus **Schizothorax**.
- The fish species is named as **Schizothorax sikusirumensis**. The name of this fish species has been derived from the name of the rivers where it was found.
- This fish was collected from the junction of River Siku and Sirum near Gakang area under Mebo circle of East Siang District. The fish inhabits the water logged area of torrential river drainage.

About Arunachal Pradesh:

- Governor: Brig. (Dr.) B.D. Mishra
- Chief Minister: Pema Khandu
- Capital: Itanagar

500-year-old Odisha Temple Submerged in Mahanadi River Resurfaces



- An ancient temple that remained submerged in **Mahanadi** in **Odisha** has been found, stated experts who are leading a documentation project of heritage sites in the river valley.
- The **60-feet temple**, believed to be around **500 years old**, was located recently during an exercise as part of the project, stated Anil Dhir, project coordinator of the Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in Odisha.
- The temple was found in the **mid-river near Baideswar** in the **Padmavati area** in Cuttack, he stated.
- The temple dates back to the late 15th or early 16th century, considering the construction style of the Mastaka and the materials used for the construction, Dhir stated, adding that INTACH would approach the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to take steps for relocating and restoring the temple.
- INTACH has so far located as many as 65 ancient temples in the Mahanadi river during its documentation project, Dhir stated many of the temples in the Hirakud reservoir too can be dismantled and reconstructed.
- The temple was dedicated to Gopinath Dev, he stated. The region used to be known as "Satapatana" in the early days. However, with the river changing its course due to catastrophic floodings, the entire village was submerged, Nayak stated.
- In the mid 19th century, the deities of the vulnerable temple were shifted and installed in a safer and higher place, which is presently the Gopinath Dev temple of Padmavati village, he stated.
- Dhir stated INTACH Odisha had launched its project on the documentation of the heritage of the Mahanadi valley early last year.

About Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage:

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Founded: 27 January 1984

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CURRENT AFFAIRS: RANKING

UP becomes top state in country to provide employment to workers under MGNREGA



- **Uttar Pradesh** has become the **top state** in the country to provide employment to the workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme **MGNREGA**.
- Uttar Pradesh provided employment to more than **57 lakh workers** under MGNREGA.
- According to the data released by officials, 57 lakh 12975 workers got employment in around 57 thousand village panchayat of the state which is **18%** of the total work generated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the country.

India's data consumption may touch 25 GB per month per user by 2025: Ericsson



- According to telecom gear maker **Ericsson**, Indians used about **12 GB data per month** on an average in **2019**, the highest consumption globally, and this is expected to rise even further to about **25 GB (gigabytes) per month by 2025**, driven by affordable mobile broadband services and changing video viewing habits.
- India's data traffic growth continued its upward trajectory and it remains the region with the highest usage per smartphone and per month.
- Given that only 4% of households have fixed broadband, smartphones are the only way to access the internet in many cases.
- Total traffic is projected to triple, reaching **21 EB (exabytes) per month in 2025**.
- Ericsson expects the global number of 5G subscriptions to top 190 million by the end of 2020, and 2.8 billion by the end of 2025.

India ranked 43rd on IMD's World Competitiveness Index; Singapore on top



- **India** continues to remain **ranked 43rd** on an annual **World Competitiveness Index** compiled by **Institute for Management Development (IMD)**.
- **Singapore** has retained its **top position** on the 63-nation list.
- Denmark has moved up to the second position (from 8th last year), Switzerland has gained one place to rank 3rd, the Netherlands has retained its 4th place and Hong Kong has slipped to the fifth place (from 2nd in 2019).
- India has recorded improvements in areas like long-term employment growth, current account balance, high-tech exports, foreign currency reserves, public expenditure on education, political stability and overall productivity.

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India, China increased nuclear weapons since last year: SIPRI

World nuclear forces, January 2020

Country	Deployed warheads*	Other warheads**	Total 2020	Total 2019
USA	3 750	4 000	7 750	7 185
Russia	4 570	4 805	9 375	8 500
UK***	220	95	315	240
France	290	10	300	300
China	320	10	330	290
India	150	10	160	130-140
Pakistan	160	10	170	150-160
Israel	90	0	90	80-90
North Korea	10-40	0-40	20-80	20-30
Total	3 720	9 680	13 400	13 985

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 2020 * Deployed warheads refers to warheads placed on missiles or located on bases with operational forces. ** Other warheads refers to stored or reserve warheads and retired warheads awaiting dismantlement. *** The British Government has stated that the numbers to

- **India and China** have increased their **nuclear arsenal** over the last year, according to the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.
- According to the **SIPRI Yearbook 2020**, India has 150 nuclear warheads, while China and Pakistan have 320 and 160. The figures are until January. Last year, India had 130-140 warheads, while China had 290 and Pakistan 150-160.
- The nine nuclear-armed states—the US, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea—together possessed an estimated 13,400 nuclear weapons at the start of 2020.

About SIPRI

- Chair: Ambassador Jan Eliasson
- Director: Dan Smith
- Headquarter: Stockholm, Sweden

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARY

Veteran journalist, freedom fighter Dinu Randive passes away



- **Veteran journalist and freedom fighter Dinu Ranadive** passed away. He was 95.
- Ranadive started his career as the founder-editor of Samyukta Maharashtra Patrika in the 1950s.
- He then did exemplary reporting on the Goa Freedom Struggle in 1961.
- He was recently conferred with Mumbai Press Club's Red Ink award for Lifetime Achievement.

Former Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen RM Vohra passed away



- Former **GOC-in-C Eastern Command** and a gallantry awardee of 1971 Indo-Pak war, **Lt Gen RM Vohra** (retd) passed away. He was 88.
- He was later awarded a Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) and his regiment the Basantar battle honour.

Former BJP MP Haribhau Jawale passed away

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- BJP's former two-time MP and MLA from Jalgaon district **Haribhau Jawale** passed away. He was 67.
- He is the first senior politician in the state to have **succumbed to Covid-19**.
- Jawale was a two-time MP, having been elected from Jalgaon in a byelection in 2007 and then from Raver in 2009. He was also a two-time MLA, having been elected from Yawal in 1999 and then from Raver in 2014. He was presently the BJP's district chief for Jalgaon Rural.

DAILY CA 16th JUNE

- 40th GST Council Meeting Highlights 2020
- India launches maiden gas exchange
- CBIC launches e-Office application in CGST, customs offices across India
- India becomes founding member of Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence
- India, with 12 nations, leads initiative at UN to counter misinformation on COVID-19
- HDFC Ergo launches country's first drone cover
- Mother Dairy ties up with Zomato to deliver fruits, vegetables in Delhi-NCR
- Wipro launches digital inspection solution to improve workplace safety
- Exim Bank extends \$215 million line of credit to Malawi
- Manipur CM inaugurates three projects undertaken by PHED
- Maharashtra govt inks MOUs worth Rs. 16,100 crore with 12 global corporations for various developmental projects
- Tata Power Renewable Energy to develop 120 MW solar project in Gujarat
- Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray launches Mumbai's new flood warning system
- Imtaiyazur Rahman is appointed as the CEO of UTI Mutual Fund
- Attorney General of India KK Venugopal to get 1-year extension
- Actor Pankaj Tripathi becomes brand ambassador of Bihar
- Devendra Kumar Singh appointed as the new Director of SIDBI
- Santosh Jha appointed as next Ambassador of India to Belgium
- Dadabhai Naoroji Biography By Dinyar Patel Released
- India 9th largest recipient of FDI in 2019, will continue to attract investments: UN
- Minister Kishan Reddy launches GerminBAN in Hyderabad
- Uddhav Thackeray's father-in-law Madhav Patankar passes away
- Leading Mumbai diamondaire Arunkumar R Mehta passes away
- Lyricist, painter Padmaja Radhakrishnan passes away

DAILY CA 17th JUNE

- International Day of Family Remittances- 16th june
- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought- 17th june

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