BANKING / FINANCIAL / ECONOMICAL NEWS

Non-basmati rice exports increase to Rs 26,058 crore during April-Jan

The country's non-basmati rice exports have increased to Rs 26,058 crore during April-January 2020-21 as against Rs 11,543 crore in the same period last fiscal, the commerce ministry said on Thursday. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Chairman M Angamuthu said several measures have been taken in terms of ensuring safety and hygiene while ensuring that rice exports continue uninterrupted.

FDI inflows up 22% in April-Dec 2020

The government on Thursday said that India attracted total foreign direct investment (FDI) of $67.54 billion during April-December 2020, the highest ever for the first nine months of a financial year and 22% higher year-on-year. FDI equity inflows rose 40% in the April-December of FY21 at $51.47 billion, the commerce and industry ministry said in a release.

Kotak Mahindra Bank to handle salary account of Indian army personnel

Private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank will handle the salary account of the Indian army personnel, the bank said on Thursday. The bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army here for salary account. The MoU enables Kotak to offer its salary account proposition, combined with exclusive benefits for the Indian Army, to all army personnel - both active and retired, Kotak said in a release.

IMPORTANT DAYS

India commemorates 'Chabahar Day' on March 4

India will commemorate Chabahar Day on the margins of the Maritime India Summit-2021 on the 4th of March. In the virtually held event, Ministers from Afghanistan, Armenia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Uzbekistan are participating. The Chabahar Port is a key pillar of India's Indo-Pacific vision to connect Eurasia with the Indian Ocean Region.

National Safety Day: 4 March

National Safety Day is observed on March 4 every year to commemorate the foundation of the National Safety Council (NSC). NSC aims to raise awareness about safety measures that need to be undertaken to prevent accidents and mishaps. National Safety Day was observed for the first time in 1972, on the foundation day of the National Safety Council.

SPORTS

NO MAJOR UPDATES

APPOINTMENTS AND RETIREMENTS

Glenmark Pharma signs Rohit Sharma as brand ambassador

Drug major Glenmark Pharma on Friday said it has signed cricketer Rohit Sharma as brand ambassador for its product Candid Powder. Sharma has "officially signed on to represent Glenmark's Candid Powder, a legacy brand of the company's consumer care division" Glenmark said Candid Powder brand is a market leader in its category, with a market share of 64 per cent in the medicated powder category.

Mary Kom: Chairperson of AIBA's committee

Six-time world champion M C Mary Kom has been picked as the chairperson of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) champions and veterans committee. The panel was created in 2020 by the world body as part of its reforms.

SCHEMES AND POLICIES

NO MAJOR UPDATES

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Aam Aadmi Party wins four wards

Aam Aadmi Party has won four wards while Congress bagged the remaining one in the Delhi Municipal Corporation by-polls. The AAP registered victory in Kalyanpuri, Shalimar Bagh North, Trilokpuri, and Rohini-C wards. The Congress won Chauhan Banger seat in the East Delhi Municipal Corporation. The election for five wards was held on 28 February 2021.

CSMT: First to get IGBC Gold Certification

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station of Central Railway is the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded Gold certification as per Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings. Central Railway has implemented various green initiatives across its zone.

NATIONAL

Bengaluru, Shimla ranked 'most livable' cities in government's Ease of Living Index 2020

The ministry of housing and urban affairs on Thursday released the rankings of cities with a population of more than a million and a separate ranking for cities with population of less than a million. In the million plus cities, Bengaluru, Pune and Ahmedabad emerged as the most liveable cities of India. These were followed by Chennai, Surat, Navi Mumbai, Coimbatore, Vadodara, Indore and Greater Mumbai.

Act East: Operationalise infrastructure projects in phases

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has directed the cabinet secretary to prepare a methodology to operationalise infrastructure projects in phases as and when ready, rather than waiting for the completion of the entire work. This came amidst PM also asking Ministries to accord priority to infrastructure projects in East India, a region where BJP wants to make political inroads.

INTERNATIONAL

Indian merchants almost halt exports to Iran as its rupee reserves fall

Indian merchants have almost entirely stopped signing new export contracts with Iranian buyers for commodities such as rice, sugar and tea, due to caution about Tehran's dwindling rupee reserves with Indian banks, six industry officials told Reuters. "Exporters are avoiding dealing with Iran since payments are getting delayed for months," said a Mumbai-based dealer with a global trading house.

India proposes inclusion of Iran's Chabahar Port in International North South Transport Corridor

India has proposed the inclusion of the key Chabahar port in the mega International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) that connects Mumbai with Moscow. Chabahar is key to India's connectivity towards its west, providing routes to Afghanistan and Central Asia while North-South Transport Corridor made up of rail, shipping, and road route currently passes via cities like Bandar Abbad, Bandar Anzali, Tehran in Iran, Baku in Azerbaijan and Astrakhan in Russia.

"I will shoot whoever I see": Myanmar soldiers use TikTok to threaten protesters

Armed Myanmar soldiers and police are using TikTok to deliver death threats to protesters against last month's coup, researchers said, leading the Chinese video-sharing app to announce it was removing content that incites violence. Digital rights group Myanmar ICT for Development (MIDO) said it had found more than 800 pro-military videos that menaced protesters at a time of increasing bloodshed - with 38 protesters killed on Wednesday alone according to the United Nations.

Nepal government signs peace deal with radical Maoist group

Nepal's government on Thursday signed a peace agreement with a banned radical Maoist group, which was involved in violent attacks, extortion and bombings targeting infrastructure projects in the country. According to the three-point agreement signed between the government and the outlawed Communist Party of Nepal-Chand, the government will lift the ban, release all their party members and supporters in jail and drop all legal cases against them.

DEFENCE

Indian Army begins training of Turkmenistan Special Forces to help build their capabilities

The Indian Army on Thursday began the training of Turkmenistan Special Forces in "Combat Free Fall" to help them build their capabilities. The Indian Army shared the information of the training on Twitter and said it was building bonds of friendship with the Turkmenistani forces. "Building bonds of Friendship. Special Forces Training School Indian Army has commenced training of Turkmenistan Special Forces in Combat Free Fall as a precursor to a series of customised courses to follow and help build the capability of the Turkmenistan Special Forces," read a tweet on the official handle of Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADG PI) of the Indian Army.

Sri Lanka Air Force gets first-hand feel of India's Tejas

Sri Lanka Air Force got first hand feel of India's indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft Tejas as Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian Navy participate in their 70th anniversary in Colombo. Indian Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria also visited Colombo on Thursday to take part in Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) 70th anniversary and also to strengthen bilateral relationship and open up newer avenues of mutual interest.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Indian scientists reveal new mutations, proteins of novel coronavirus

A study from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has identified multiple mutations and unique proteins in isolates of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. The recent study, published in the 'Journal of Proteome Research', has also shown that the host produces several proteins of their own as their body launches an immunological defence in response to the viral attack, the Bengaluru-based IISc said in a statement on Thursday.

OBITUARIES

NO MAJOR UPDATES

MISCELLANEOUS

Honda unveils its new level 3 technology, but how does it work?

Honda Motor Co Ltd unveiled on Thursday a limited batch of its flagship Legend sedan this week, becoming the world's first carmaker to sell a vehicle equipped with certified level 3 self-driving technology. Lease sales of the level 3 Legend would be limited to 100 cars at a retail price of 11 million yen ($102,000). But Japan's No.2 automaker is stepping up its game in self-driving technology as global competitors aim for fully autonomous vehicles.

World's first platypus sanctuary in Australia

Australian conservationists have unveiled plans to build the world's 1st refuge for the platypus, to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the mammal faces extinction due to climate change. The Taronga Conservation Society Australia and New South Wales State govt would build the facility, mostly ponds, and burrows for the semiaquatic creatures, by 2022. It could house up to 65 platypuses

IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGIES

APEDA = Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority

FDI = foreign direct investment

MoU = memorandum of understanding

NSC = National Safety Council

AIBA = International Boxing Association's

IGBC = Indian Green Building Council

INSTC = International North-South Transport Corridor

MIDO = Myanmar ICT for Development

IAF = Indian Air Force

ADG PI = Additional Directorate General of Public Information

SLAF = Sri Lanka Air Force

IISc = Indian Institute of Science