

February - 05

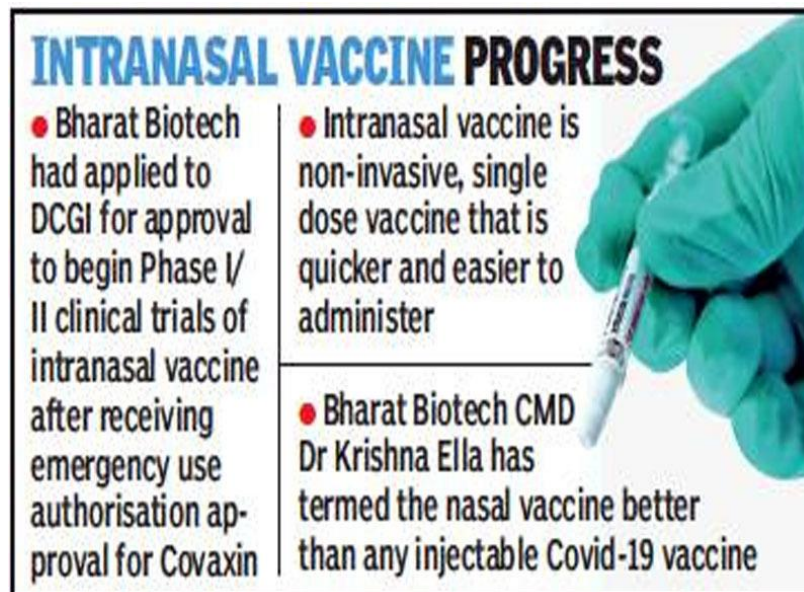
TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The 5th joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum was held recently in New Delhi.
- ❖ Reliance Jio has been ranked the fifth strongest brand globally behind the likes of Ferrari and Coca-Cola.
- ❖ Janet Yellen has been appointed as finance secretary of USA.
 - She is the first woman in American history to hold this position.

NATIONAL

Bharat Biotech's BBV154 vaccine

- ❖ Bharat Biotech's BBV154 is the first publicized attempt at getting an intranasal Covid-19 vaccine.
- ❖ Vaccines are most commonly administered as injectable shots into the muscles or the tissue just between the skin and the muscles.
- ❖ But intranasal vaccines are the solution squirted or sprayed into the nostrils.
- ❖ It is inhaled instead of injecting it.
- ❖ It isn't the most common route of administering a vaccine.
- ❖ So far, only some flu shots are given this way.



INTRANASAL VACCINE PROGRESS

- Bharat Biotech had applied to DCGI for approval to begin Phase I/ II clinical trials of intranasal vaccine after receiving emergency use authorisation approval for Covaxin
- Intranasal vaccine is non-invasive, single dose vaccine that is quicker and easier to administer
- Bharat Biotech CMD Dr Krishna Ella has termed the nasal vaccine better than any injectable Covid-19 vaccine

India's Agreement with IEA

- ❖ Framework for Strategic Partnership between the International Energy Agency (IEA) members and the Government of India was signed recently.
- ❖ This framework aims to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.
- ❖ It will enhance global energy security, stability and sustainability.
- ❖ It would be a stepping stone towards India becoming a full member of the IEA.
- ❖ IEA is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation
- ❖ It is established in 1974 as per the framework of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Vaccine Maitri Initiative

- ❖ This initiative was launched by India
- ❖ It aims to gift COVID-19 vaccines to neighbouring countries.
- ❖ Recently, Sri Lanka and Bahrain have received the COVID-19 vaccines from India under this initiative.
- ❖ India has already delivered over 5 million doses to seven countries in the neighbourhood under this initiative.
- ❖ The 7 countries are Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mauritius and Seychelles.
- ❖ Commercial supplies of Covishield have also been sent to Morocco, Brazil and Bangladesh.



National Marine Turtle Action Plan

- ❖ It was released by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Ministry also released the 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' along with the Marine Turtle Action Plan.
- ❖ Both these documents include the ways and measures to promote inter-sectoral action for conservation.

INTERNATIONAL

World Neglected Tropical Diseases

- ❖ The second annual World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day was celebrated on January 30, 2021.
- ❖ The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the 2012 London Declaration on NTDs.
- ❖ India also joined the world to combat the Neglected Tropical Diseases.
- ❖ Neglected Tropical Diseases are the tropical infections caused by viruses, protozoa, bacteria, and parasitic worms.
- ❖ These are the diseases that get less importance and treatment as compared to the major diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.
- ❖ NTDs affect over 1.7 billion people living in the poorest countries.
- ❖ Some of the NTDs are Buruli ulcer, Lymphatic filariasis, Rabies, Dengue and Chikungunya etc.

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) cause devastating health and economic problems for the world's poorest people, maintaining a cycle of poverty and disease. CDC's Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria translates science into action.



Researching better **laboratory surveillance tools** and making them ready for use by country programs where these diseases are being eliminated



Assisting countries with implementing their programs and using new tools



Providing global scientific leadership on NTD elimination through collaborations with World Health Organization (WHO) and others

#BeatNTDs

COVID-19 Performance Index

- ❖ Lowy Institute, an Australian think-tank, has recently released a COVID-19 “performance index”.
- ❖ As per the index, New Zealand is the best-performing country against COVID-19.
- ❖ Vietnam has been ranked 2nd.
- ❖ Vietnam is followed by Taiwan, Thailand, and Cyprus on the 3rd, 4th and 5th rank respectively.
- ❖ The index assessed the relative COVID-19 performance of 98 countries.
- ❖ India has been ranked 86th on the index while the United States has been placed at 94th position.
- ❖ The neighbouring countries of India, Sri Lanka has been ranked 10th, the Maldives at 25th, Nepal at 70th, Pakistan at 69th, and Bangladesh at 84th.
- ❖ Brazil has been placed at the bottom of this index.

RANK	COUNTRY	AVERAGE
1	 New Zealand	94.4
2	 Vietnam	90.8
3	 Taiwan	86.4
4	 Thailand	84.2
5	 Cyprus	83.3
6	 Rwanda	80.8
7	 Iceland	80.1

Startup India Seed Fund Scheme

- ❖ The government has notified the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) with a corpus of Rs 945 crore.
- ❖ It was released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

- ❖ SISFS is a scheme aimed at providing financial assistance to startups for product trials, proof of concept, market-entry, prototype development, and commercialization.

ECONOMY

Debt Overhaul Under G20 Common Framework

- ❖ Chad has become the first country to officially request a debt restructuring under a new common framework.
- ❖ It is also known as “G20 Common Framework” or “Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI).
- ❖ It was introduced by China and other Group of 20 countries last year with the help of the Paris Club.
- ❖ Paris Club is a group of officials from major creditor countries
- ❖ This Club was established in 1956.

STATES

First Young Readers’ Boat Library

- ❖ The West Bengal Transport Corporation has launched the First Young Readers’ Boat Library.
- ❖ The library has been launched in collaboration with a heritage book store.
- ❖ It has been launched on a boat
- ❖ It is making it the first of its kind initiative.
- ❖ The boat library will cruise on the Hooghly river.



5th state to complete Urban Local Bodies Reforms

- ❖ Rajasthan has become the 5th state in the country to successfully complete the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) reforms.
- ❖ This was specified by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- ❖ Rajasthan now become eligible for additional reform linked borrowing.
- ❖ Other states that have completed the Urban Local Bodies Reforms include - Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana.

First Gender Park

- ❖ The country's first "Gender Park" in Kerala will become functional soon.
- ❖ The three-tower "Gender Park" is a step of the state towards gender equality.
- ❖ It will become operational on February 11 coinciding with the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II).
- ❖ On that day, the foundation of the International Women's Trade and Research Centre (IWTRC) will also be laid down.

