

RAJASTHAN CURRENT AFFAIRS SEPTEMBER 2020

Rajasthan gets 9% more rainfall than 2019

- Till 13th September 2020, Rajasthan has received almost 9 per cent more rainfall than last year from the South-west monsoon. The state had received an average rainfall of 430 mm, which is 9 per cent higher compared to what it received in the same period in 2019.
- As per an official, Jaisalmer has received abnormal rainfall, eight districts have received excess rainfall, 16 districts have received normal rainfall while eight districts have received deficit rainfall.

Public services should be provided online by March 2021

- On 21st September 2020, Rajasthan chief minister directed officials to provide 221 public services by various government departments online by March 2021. He asked that the chief secretary of the state coordinate with the respective departments and ensure good governance.
- As per government officials said, all processes related to Right to Information (RTI), from application to information, will be soon made online. The administrative reform department of the Rajasthan government in presence of the CM signed MoU with department of information and technology' to conduct all the work of providing RTI applications and information.
- According to a government release, to get any information under the RTI, applications and appeals can be now made online on the RTI portal (www.rti.rajasthan.gov.in)

SIDBI signs MoU with Industries Department to help MSMEs

- In September 2020, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) entered into an MoU with Industries Department, Rajasthan for setting up a Project Management Unit (PMU) to facilitate need- based intervention, increase access to financial products, and work to create a conducive environment for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the state.
- The PMU will be developed by SIDBI taking inputs from the state government to design schemes, programmes in the areas of equity support, interest subvention,

resolution of stressed MSMEs, supporting MSME entrepreneurs, and facilitate other need-based intervention.

Rajasthan has 98% of India's Silver Reserves

- As per Niti Aayog estimates, India has about 30,000 tonnes of reserves of Silver and about 98% of which is in Rajasthan. This was stated by Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant at a webinar organized by Vedanta Resources and Hindustan Zinc where Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot also participated. The chief minister said Rajasthan is committed to improve the mining ecosystem in the state through the recently formed **Rajasthan State Mineral Exploration Trust**.

Govt adds tourism under thrust sector

- State finance department has brought in tourism industry under the **Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme - 2019** extending the benefits offered under the scheme.
- Tourism projects having an investment of Rs 5 crore or above will be granted benefits like capital subsidy equivalent to 20% of investment made in plant, machinery and equipment, subject to maximum Rs 25 lakh or 5% interest subsidy on term loan taken by enterprise from financial institutions for a period of five years subject to a maximum of Rs 25 lakh annually.

NCRB release Road Accident Statistics Report

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has released report on road accidents in 2019. According to report:

- Rajasthan stood fourth in terms of number of deaths in all forms of accidents, including road accidents in 2019.
- State's share in deaths was 6.8%, while its share in the country's population is 5.9%.
- 50% of the road accidents are taking place on the national highways which constitute about 3-4% of the total roads in the state.

Committees to increase effectiveness of schemes

- The State government has formed four state-level committees to find ways to make various schemes more effective. In the 2020-21 budget CM Shri Ashok Gehlot had announced to set up a group of officers to rationalise various schemes operated in the state and prioritize them.
- These committees will give suggestions regarding agriculture and allied services, rural development and panchayati raj, medical and health services, education, training and employment services and state schemes operated under welfare and social security for the marginalised sections of society.

Water resource dept bags national innovation award

- The Jal Shakti ministry has awarded the state water resource department and Indira Gandhi Canal department, the national water innovation award, increasing the efficiency of the water bodies and making projects cost-effective by technological advancement.

Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index-2020

- Rajasthan has been ranked at 4th place after Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index-2020. The state emerged as a top performer among 11 landlocked states.

What is Export Preparedness Index 2020 ?

- India's vision of becoming a USD5 trillion economy by 2024 is intricately linked with an oriented approach. So NITI Aayog has taken an initiative of developing the first-ever Preparedness Index for Indian states. The Index ranks states and union territories on parameters required for promoting the country's exports.

Results:

- Gujarat (75.2) emerged as the top-performing state in the 'Coastal States' category, followed by Maharashtra (75.1) and Tamil Nadu (64.9).
- In the category of 'Landlocked States', Rajasthan (62.6) was the best-performing state.
- Among 'Himalayan States' and 'City-States', Uttarakhand and Delhi are the top performing states respectively.

Rajasthan Pillar-Wise Performance:

- Policy - Rank 5
- Business Ecosystem - Rank 7
- Export Ecosystem - Rank 3
- Export Performance - Rank 15

Chhota Bheem for Corona awareness in Ajmer

- Chhota Bheem will spread awareness on Covid and social distancing in addition to distributing masks to people moving in crowded places. The district administration recently launched Chhota Bheem, a popular cartoon character, who will move around the city. The aim behind the move is that children should learn that they have to maintain social distancing and also wear masks.

Use of Cow cess for epidemics

- Facing cash issues, the state government through a recent amendment to the Rajasthan Stamp (Amendment) Act 2020 legalised the surcharge imposed on stamp duty for cow protection be used for purposes of mitigating natural or man-made calamities like drought, flood, epidemic and public health exigencies.
- The state government promulgated the Rajasthan Stamp (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 to amend the Rajasthan Stamp Act, 1998. While Section 3B of the Act had the phrase "surcharge for conservation and propagation of cow and its progeny," it has now been amended to include "and for mitigating natural or man-made calamities".
- However, facing protest from goshalas, the state government later decided to earmark 50% of the cow cess collected from stamp duty for conservation of cows and gaushalas.
- Rajasthan is the first in the country to have a **separate gopalan department**. The government had imposed 10% surcharge on registration of property (raised to 20%) to find money for the department. Later in 2018, a 20 per cent cess was imposed on liquor for cow protection.
- The state had 2,727 registered gaushalas in the state with about 9.5 lakh cows. The government provides financial assistance of Rs 20 per day for calves less than three years old and Rs 40 per day to grown cows in gaushalas. However, this grant is given only to goshalas which have more than 200 cows and have a registration of more than two years. Thus about 35% of the gaushalas are not reaving the funds.

District collectors in Rajasthan empowered to acquire private hospitals for Covid-19

- Alarmed over increasing number of Covid-19 cases in Rajasthan, the health department empowered the district collectors to acquire any private hospitals fully or partially for the treatment of patients. District Collectors would be able to order for acquiring these hospitals by using special powers of Rajasthan epidemic ordinance, 2020 and will bear the cost of the treatment. Besides, the government will provide disinfectants, surgical masks and other things to the acquired hospitals.

Two new butterfly species in Ranthambore reserve

- During recent surveys, experts have discovered two new species of butterflies — the Dakhan Tricolour Pied Flat (*Coladenia Indrani Indra*) and the Desert Spotted Small Flat (*Sarangesa purendra sati*) — on the outskirts of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in Sawai Madhopur.

State's first underground Metro train inaugurated

- Chief minister Ashok Gehlot inaugurated Metro Phase 1-B, the state's first underground Metro train, which will run in the Walled City covering a distance of 2.12 km from Chandpole to Badi Chaupar.

Vastra 2020

- The international textile and apparel fair, Vastra, that provides marketing opportunities in global markets to textile and garments manufacturers in Rajasthan is being organised in September 2020 on a virtual platform.
- For the 5-day virtual edition, the organiser of the event along with RIICO has enlisted over 500 buyers and over 80 exhibitors. About 80% of the exhibitors are from Rajasthan and the rest are from other states.

Efforts begin to get international recognition for yellow stone of Jaisalmer

- Efforts have started on various levels to get international recognition for the famous yellow stone of Jaisalmer. The peculiar yellow stone found in Jaisalmer is world famous for its art, cultural and historical heritage. The stone is available only in

Jaisalmer in the entire world and has been used in the Sonar fort and many other historical monuments. This yellow stone is related to 160-million-year-old marine rock.