

1. International flights to resume from mid June if the situation improves and the virus behaves in a predictable manner.
2. 6724 cases reported on Saturday. It is the highest single day increase. India must gear up for at least two more months of COVID19, a summary of a meeting on Saturday involving top officials from the Health Ministry suggests. Maharashtra's tally crosses 47, 000. Latin America is the new epicentre of COVID, says WHO. Blood clot in the lungs considered to be the reason for death in COVID.
3. Corona fee collected on liquor helps Delhi fill its coffers by ₹ 600 crore in 22 days.
4. Assam reeling under Dengue and Japanese Encephalitis cases.
5. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said banks had been asked to extend loans automatically to eligible borrowers without 'fear of 3Cs — CBI, CVC and CAG'
6. A team of scientists of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have reported the discovery of three new plant species in the evergreen forest patches of the southern end of the Western Ghats in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The three species — Eugenia sphaerocarpa of the Myrtaceae or Rose apple family, Goniothalamus sericeus of the Annonaceae family of custard apple and Memecylon nervosum of the Melastomataceae (Kayambo or Kaasavu in local parlance) family — were discovered during a recent exploration led by BSI scientist K.A. Sujana.

## **What is OBOR**

**One Belt One Road (OBOR) is an ambitious project that focuses on connectivity and cooperation among multiple countries spread across the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. OBOR spans about 78 countries.**

**Initially announced in the year 2013, the project involves building networks of roadways, railways, maritime ports, power grids, oil and gas pipelines and associated infrastructure projects.**

**The project covers two parts.**

**Silk Road Economic Belt: It is land-based and is expected to connect China with Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Western Europe.**

**21st Century Maritime Silk Road: It is sea-based and is expected to connect China's southern coast to the Mediterranean, Africa, South-East Asia and Central Asia.**

### **Stated Official Benefits**

**China continues to pitch OBOR as project for regional development involving Infrastructure development to enhance transnational and cross-regional connectivity as a priority area for cooperation.**

**Economic and trade cooperation among OBOR countries.**

**Expansion of production capacity and investment cooperation among the OBOR countries.**

**Cooperation and exchanges in cultural, social and other fields.**

### **Advantages of OBOR for China**

**It will help China in developing its western region, ensuring safe navigation over sea and improving strategic and economic relations with neighbouring and far-west countries.**

**It will help China secure access to energy and mineral supplies allowing China to overcome the "Malacca Dilemma" through access to maritime facilities in the Indian Ocean, granting it an important strategic advantage**

**OBOR will strengthen China's presence in the Eurasian region and puts it in a commanding position over Asia's heartland.**

### **Potential Advantages to India**

**It will help India's border and outlying areas to develop infrastructure that it presently lacks.**

**Funds from financial institutions may be more easily available and support from China and its infrastructure construction companies may also then be readily available.**

**This project will help Improve connectivity with India's neighbours improving economic, diplomatic and strategic relationship.**

## **Issues with OBOR**

**Implementation of this project will take many years to complete and also carries risks of failure. OBOR's financing is through loans extended to member countries. Chinese Loans for infrastructure projects are made with understanding that the developing countries award construction contracts to Chinese companies.**

**China benefits from both financing and construction of infrastructure projects, while developing countries will bear the financial risk.**

**The Centre for Global Development in Washington reckons that eight belt-and-road countries are at risk of debt distress; among them are Laos, Mongolia and Pakistan.**

**China will acquire controlling interests in the ports if member countries fail to repay the loans. This situation can prove strategically disadvantageous to member countries.**

**Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order, 2020.**

**On 5th August 2019, the Centre revoked J&K's special status under Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution and bifurcated it into the UTs of J&K and Ladakh.**

**The two revoked constitutional provisions let the state legislature decide the 'permanent residents', prohibiting a non-J&K resident from buying property there and ensuring job reservation for its residents.**

**There are 12 States, including Himachal Pradesh, where provisions of special status under Article 371 apply.**

**The provisions pertain to regulation of ownership and transfer of land in order to conserve the limited resources available for development and to ensure that the State preserves its unique identity.**

#### **Key Highlights of Order**

**It amended 109 laws and repealed 29 laws of the erstwhile State and inserted the 'domicile' clause in the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Decentralisation and Recruitment) Act, 2010.**

**The clause for 'permanent resident of the State' under the 2010 Act, has been substituted by 'Domicile' of the UT.**

**The Act pertained to employment in the civil services comprising "district, divisional and State" cadre posts.**

**Only permanent residents of J&K were eligible to apply for the gazetted and non-gazetted posts but now non-domiciles can also apply for these posts.**

**The domiciles will be eligible for the purposes of appointment to any post carrying a pay scale of not more than Level 4.**

**The Level 4 post comprises positions such as gardeners, barbers, office peons and waterman and the highest rank in the category is that of a junior assistant.**

**The reservation for domiciles would not apply to Group A and Group B posts, and like other UTs, recruitment would be done by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).**

#### **Criteria for Domiciles**

**Someone who has resided for a period of 15 years in the UT of J&K or**

**Someone who has studied for a period of seven years and appeared in Class 10th/12th examination in an educational institution located in the UT of J&K or**

**Someone who is registered as a migrant by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants).**

**Children of Central government officials, All India Services, PSUs, autonomous body of Centre, Public Sector Banks, officials of statutory bodies, Central Universities, recognised research institutes of Centre who have served in J&K for a total period of 10 years.**

**Children of such residents of J&K who reside outside J&K in connection with their employment or business or other professional or vocational reasons but their parents fulfil any of the conditions provided.**

**The order also amended the Jammu and Kashmir State Legislature Members' Pension Act, 1984 which fixes the pension for former legislators and councillors.**

**The notification scraps all pension benefits such as car, driver, accommodation, phones, electricity, medical facilities and rent-free accommodation to former J&K Chief Ministers.**

**The order has also made amendments to the Public Safety Act (PSA) 1978 by removing a clause that prohibited J&K residents booked under the Act to be lodged in jails outside.**

**It changes the criteria for appointing the PSA advisory board on the recommendation of a search committee headed by the Chief Secretary instead of the Chief Justice of the J&K High Court.**

**The advisory board has a crucial role to play in release of detenus under the PSA.**

**It also bars sitting High Court judges to be made part of the board without the Chief Justice's consultation.**

**The order also scraps a clause that deals with the power to regulate place and conditions of detention.**