



CURRENT AFFAIRS

PM Modi launches e-Gram Swaraj portal & Swamitva Scheme on Panchayati raj day

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Damodardas Modi has launched the **Swamitva Scheme** as well as an integrated **e-Gram swaraj Portal & Mobile app** for accelerating the pace of development in India's villages.

I. E-Gram swaraj Portal & Mobile app:

The E- Gram Swaraj app will provide panchayats a single interface to complete development projects. The app will help in accelerating projects in villages from planning to completion.

The information of the Gram Panchayats, their functioning will be available to the villagers. This will bring transparency and will also speed up the work of completing projects.

This app will help in reducing disputes over property.

II. Swamitva (which means Ownership) Scheme:

Swamitva Yojana will use drones in mapping of properties in villages. This will help in planning development works in the village. The portal will help in making it easier for villagers to avail loans from banks.

"With its simple mantra of Do Gaz Ki Door (maintaining distance of two yards), rural India has described social distancing in simple words, villages have showcased the best of their principles, traditional values to fight coronavirus," Modi, who had covered his face with a 'gamcha' while interacting with gram panchayat members via video conference, said.

It was launched in pilot mode in 6 states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana and Uttarakhand. After this it will be implemented in every village of the country.

Govt reconstituted National Shipping Board; to be headed by ex DG Shipping Malini Shankar

The Ministry of Shipping has given its consent for the reconstitution of the **16-member** National Shipping Board (NSB), the highest advisory body on matters related to Indian shipping and its development or other matters arising out of the **Merchant Shipping Act, 1958**.

The members of the Board include DG Shipping Amitabh Kumar, Joint Secretary Shipping Satinder Pal Singh, one representative each of the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard, not below the rank of Directors, National Union of Seafarers of India representative Abdulgani Serang, Maritime Union of India representative Amar Singh Thakur and National Ship Owners' Association representative Anil Devli.

Indian Coastal Conference Shipping Association member Aditya Suklikar, International Maritime Federation representative Capt Sanjya Prashar, Coastal Container Transporters Association representative Rahul Modi, Federation of Indian Exporters' Organisation representative Ajay Shah and Association of Multimodal Transporters of India representative Shantanu Bhadkamkar are also the members of the Board.

Uttar Pradesh becomes the 1st state with a software based in-house facility of virtual courts

Uttar Pradesh (**UP**) becomes the **1st state** with a software-based in-house facility of **virtual courts**, where a requisite infrastructure in Allahabad High Court and all district courts of Uttar Pradesh to hear cases through video conferencing as there is lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

- Uttar Pradesh “can now conduct multiple court proceedings through virtual courts within the court premises without any internet connectivity”
- A software based in-house facility of virtual courts is completely secure and the connectivity is seamless. Only the existing infrastructure was used for the purpose and no additional expenditure was incurred in providing the above facilities.

NGT directs Centre, State for scientific disposal of COVID-19 waste

The tribunal mentioned that as the BioMedical Waste Rules deal with waste generated in infectious disease, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a further challenge in the scientific disposal of waste.

NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar headed the bench and directed the Union Territories and Chief Secretary of States to closely monitor the handling, transport, scientific storage and disposal of COVID-19 waste.

National Green Tribunal, the improper handling of COVID-19 waste can pose a grave threat to the environment and to the health of the people.

As COVID-19 has affected a number of people, the disposal of COVID-19 waste in general bins to be a part of municipal waste, the unscientific way of handling sewage and other liquid waste without safeguard can also turn to be hazardous.

The bench directed that at the National level, let a high-level task team of Health, Urban Development, Ministry of Environment, Defence, Jal Shakti, and CPCB supervise the scientific disposal of COVID-19 waste.

The bench also directed the state departments of Environment and Pollution Control Board to follow Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016. It should also furnish action take reports to CPCB.

