

## Editor's Desk

### Policy Times

#### A Monthly Newsletter of GPA Policy Cell

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October, the month of festivities in India, has been somewhat low-key this year, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Policy interventions this month focused on simplifying logistics, especially, Ports, the introduction of Natural Gas reforms and changes in India's digital payment systems.

The Ministry of Defence launched a new defence procurement manual. The Centre has also taken the very Welcome step of delaying new emission norms for Tractors, till October 2021. This bodes well for our Farm Equipment Business.

As far as the States are concerned, the Punjab and Chhattisgarh Assemblies, invalidated the centre's farmer bills, which brought to the fore the strained relationships between the Centre and Non BJP ruled States. These are testing times for Co-operative Federalism. Gujarat saw Prime Minister Modi launch new initiatives, including providing daytime power for irrigation. Tamil Nadu's Guidance (nodal investment promotion agency) and the World Economic Forum have collaborated to create India's first Advanced Manufacturing Hub.

Meanwhile, the Bihar elections are in full swing. This is the first election in Bihar in over three decades, without the stalwarts of yesteryears like Lalu Prasad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan in the fray. The incumbent Chief Minister of 15 years, Nitish Kumar is facing a serious challenge from GenNext- Chirag Paswan and Tejaswi Yadav.

On the International Relations front, U.S Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to the Region in the midst of their Election Season, reaffirmed US commitment to a "Free and Open" Indo-Pacific. India and the U.S signed The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement on Geospatial Cooperation (BECA) during the Annual "2+2" talks, taking the military relationship to the next level.

Exciting times await India as it focuses on being rooted in self-reliance whilst keeping it's doors open, to help achieve our vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

As the world's major powers collaborate to create a vaccine against COVID-19, we hope that the festival of lights will bring great tidings and cheer.

The Group Public Affairs Team Wishes everyone a Joyous, Safe, Healthy and Happy Diwali!

Enjoy!