

# INDIA BULLETIN

APRIL 2020



सत्यमेव जयते

CONSULATE GENERAL OF INDIA

PERTH

ISSUE - 4

## #IndiaFightsCorona:

### Life in the era of COVID-19



Today, the world is in pursuit of new business models. India, a youthful nation known for its innovative zeal can take the lead in providing a new work culture. I envision this new business and work culture being redefined on the following vowels. I call them- vowels of the new normal- because like vowels in the English language, these would become essential ingredients of any business model in the post-COVID world: Adaptability, Efficiency, Inclusivity, Opportunity, Universalism.

Read More:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/life-era-covid-19-narendra-modi>

### India is now the modern day Dhanvantari to the world



*By May, we will have the capacity to supply 55 crore hydroxychloroquine tablets.*

In the present crisis, India has the capacity to heal the world without financially overburdening the neighbours and friends. By May, they will have the capacity to supply 55 crore hydroxychloroquine tablets. India is shipping out much-needed hydroxy chloroquine tablets to 55 countries severely hit by COVID-19, and for this they have earned rich praise from the US, Israel and Brazil among others.

Read More:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/view-india-is-now-the-modern-day-dhanvantari-to-the-world/articleshow/75110353.cms>

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## Government launches Covid-19 tracking app Aarogya Setu



The Government of India has launched Aarogya Setu, its first truly comprehensive COVID-19 tracking app that's aimed to connect health services with the people to fight the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Read More:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/government-of-india-launches-official-covid-19-tracking-app/articleshow/74946627.cms>

## Production capacity of coveralls required by medical personnel treating COVID-19 cases in the country has been ramped up to more than 1 lakh per day; cumulative production till date is approximately one million coverall units

Nearly fifty percent of the Coverall production in the country is from Bengaluru. As of now, there are four laboratories in the country which have the Synthetic Blood Penetration Resistance Test facilities as well as necessary approvals for conducting tests and certification for Body Coveralls (PPE) required for COVID-19.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/production-capacity-of-coveralls-required-by-medical-personnel-treating-covid19-cases-in-the-country-has-been-ramped-up-to-more-than-1-lakh-per-day-cumulative-production-till-date-is-approximately-one-million-coverall-units>

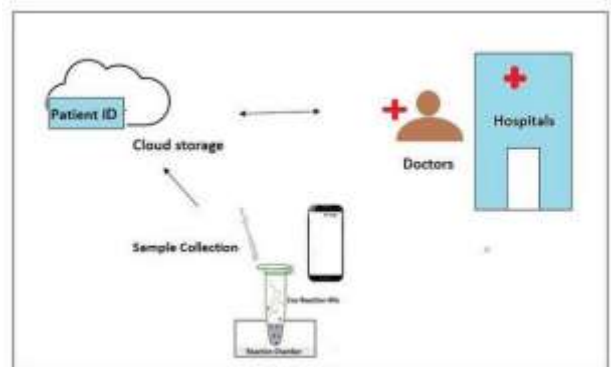
## Coronavirus: How India will play a major role in a Covid-19 vaccine

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said India and the US were working together to develop vaccines against the coronavirus. India is among the largest manufacturer of generic drugs and vaccines in the world. It is home to half a dozen major vaccine makers and a host of smaller ones, making doses against polio, meningitis, pneumonia, rotavirus, BCG, measles, mumps and rubella, among other diseases. Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine maker in collaboration with Codagenix, an American biotech company, to develop a "live attenuated" vaccine.

Read More:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52363791>

## Rapid diagnostic kit being developed by Pune based startup for COVID 19 screening



The company plans to roll out two products, a modified polymerase chain reaction-based detection kit for confirmatory analysis in less time as compared to existing detection methods, and a portable chip-based module for rapid screening of the target population based on chip sensing technology that would provide results in less than 15 minutes per sample.

Read More:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/pune-startup-developing-rapid-diagnostic-kits-for-fast-screening/article31304047.ece>





## GEARING UP OUR EFFORTS IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

- Govt sanctions **Rs.15000 crore** for COVID-19 Emergency Response & Health System Preparedness Package
- Rs. 4113 crore** disbursed to States/UTs for dealing with emergency COVID-19 response
- 223 labs (157 govt & 66 private)** now operational & conducting rigorous screening
- Out of 1.3 lakh samples, 5734 tested positive; **Positivity rate ranges between 3-5% so far**





## Unique COVID-19 Phone Booth Sample Collection Unit!

An Initiative of West Singhbhum District, Jharkhand

-  Safer, faster & more efficient collection of **COVID-19 test samples**
-  Ensure physical **safety of patients & sample collectors**; requires less no. of sample collectors
-  Reduces requirement of **PPEs, masks and gloves** and **reduces overall cost**
-  Can be made **mobile by mounting on vehicle**





## Corona Warrior DRDO Innovates to fight COVID-19



**COVID Sample Collection Kiosk (COVSACK)**

A Kiosk that protect healthcare workers from transmission while taking sample reducing PPE requirement.



**Automatic Mist based Sanitiser Dispensing Unit**

A contactless hand sanitiser dispenser; useful for entry/ exit points of hospitals, quarantine centres etc.



**UV Sanitisation Box and Hand-held UV device**

UV-C Light based sanitisation box can disinfect personal belongings, like mobile phone, tablets, etc. the handheld UV device can disinfect office & house objects like chairs, files, food packets, etc.

(Created: 16 April, 2020)





## India Post is Keeping India Posted amidst COVID-19

-  **Essential drugs, ventilators & test kits** are being transported across India by cargo airlines & its own mail road network
-  Post Offices are **providing basic postal & financial services** across remote corners of the country
-  **Facility of withdrawal & deposit** under PO Savings Bank and IPFB made available
-  **ATM & Aadhar Enabled Payment System facility** in Post Offices operational for withdrawal of cash




## RECORD TRANSPORTATION OF FOOD GRAINS BY FCI AMIDST COVID-19

-  Average movement of **1.41 Lakh MT food grain per day**
-  **16.94 Lakh MT food grains** transported across the country during Lockdown
-  **55.47 Million Metric Tonnes** food grains currently in stock





## Tapping into Age-old Wisdom of AYURVEDA DURING COVID-19

While there is no medicine for COVID-19, **taking measures to boost our immunity** is important

Ayurveda's preventive care derives from concepts of **Dinacharya - daily regimes & Ritucharya - seasonal regimes** for maintaining a healthy lifestyle

**GENERAL MEASURES TO ENHANCE IMMUNITY**

-  **Drink warm water** throughout the day
-  **Daily practice of Yoga, Pranayama & meditation** for at least 30 minutes
-  Use **Turmeric, Cumin, Coriander & Garlic** in cooking



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## RBI Boosting Liquidity amidst COVID-19

Targeted Long Term Operations (TLTRO) 2.0 Announced

**₹50,000 crore to All India Financial Institutions** to enable them to meet sectoral credit needs

<b>₹25,000 crore</b>	<b>₹15,000 crore</b>	<b>₹10,000 crore</b>
		
<b>NABARD</b> National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development	<b>SIDBI</b> Small Industries Development Bank of India	<b>NHB</b> National Housing Bank

Amounts to these financial institutions will be stepped up if necessary

 Help us to help you 

## Relief to Taxpayers to Tide Over COVID-19 Pandemic

	
Central Board of Direct Taxes issued over <b>10.2 lakh IT refunds worth ₹4,250 crore as on 14th April 2020</b>	<b>2.50 crore IT refunds amounting to ₹1.84 lakh crore</b> already issued in FY 19-20 till 31st March 2020

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## RBI Easing Financial Stress amidst COVID-19

-  Reverse repo rate reduced by 25 basis points from 4% to 3.75%; will boost investments & loans
-  90-day NPA norm not to apply on moratorium granted on existing loans by Banks; will provide relief to borrowers
-  Ways & Means Advances Limit of States increased from 30% to 60%; will strengthen state govt's fight against COVID-19
-  Liquidity Coverage Ratio requirement for Scheduled Commercial Banks brought down from 100% to 80%

 Help us to help you 

## TAX EXEMPTION FOR COVID-19 MEDICAL EQUIPMENT



Govt has granted exemption from Basic Customs Duty & Health cess on import of Ventilators, Face masks, surgical Masks, Personal protection equipment & Covid-19 test kits upto 30th September

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## COST EFFECTIVE PROTECTIVE GEAR HITS TO COMBAT COVID-19

AN INITIATIVE BY RANCHI DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

-  Local made protective kits to safeguard frontline healthcare workers
-  Reusable Tarpuin protective gear kit at a cost of **Rs.300/kit**
-  Single use LDPE protective gear at a cost of **Rs.150/unit**
-  Reusable Visor (Face Cover) at a cost of **Rs.7/ unit**



## Companies / Investments:

### Facebook bets on India with \$5.7 billion Reliance deal



Facebook is set to spend \$5.7 billion to buy a 9.99% stake in Reliance Industries' digital arm, as it looks to roll out services for India's grocers and small businesses by capitalizing on WhatsApp's extensive reach in the country. The deal announced is Facebook's biggest since its \$22 billion buyout of WhatsApp in 2014 and will give the Menlo Park, California-based firm a stake in Jio Platforms - the digital services entity that houses Reliance's telecoms arm Jio Infocomm, as well as its news, movie and music apps, along with other businesses. The transaction is also the eighth largest deal in Asia this year based on deal value, according to Refinitiv data.

Read more:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-facebook-reliance-jio/facebook-bets-on-india-with-57-billion-reliance-deal-idUSKCN22404>

### Compaq TV licensee Ossify Industries acquires Haryana plant for US\$ 32.19 million

Ossify Industries, the brand licensee for Compaq smart televisions in India, has acquired a manufacturing facility in Kundli, Haryana, for about ₹225 crore. The company said it will make additional investments of ₹210 crore to upgrade the facility over the next 48 months. The plant will begin production by the end of 2022.

Read More:

<https://www.newsonprojects.com/news/compaq-tv-licensee-ossify-industries-acquires-haryana-plant-for-rs225-crore>

### Alibaba invests \$50 million in BigBasket's bridge round



E-grocer BigBasket have picked up \$50 million from its existing investor Alibaba as part of a bridge round. The company already has infrastructure in place to cater to 300,000 orders a day from its normal of 150,000 orders prior to the lockdown.

Read More:

<https://tech.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/internet/alibaba-invests-50-million-in-bigbaskets-bridge-round/75046791>

### TVS acquires Britain's most iconic sporting motorcycle brand 'Norton'

TVS Motor Company announced the acquisition of the United Kingdom's most iconic sporting motorcycle 'Norton' in an all-cash deal, for £16 million, by acquiring certain assets of Norton Motorcycles (UK) (in administration), through one of TVS Motor's overseas arms.

Read More:

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/tvs-acquires-britain-s-most-iconic-sporting-motorcycle-brand-norton-120041701647\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/tvs-acquires-britain-s-most-iconic-sporting-motorcycle-brand-norton-120041701647_1.html)

### Hindalco closes \$2.8 billion deal to acquire Aleris

The Aditya Birla group's flagship company Hindalco the buyout of Aleris Corp, Novelis Inc at an enterprise value of \$2.8 billion (Rs 21,295 crores). The deal marks Novelis' potential entry into the high-end aerospace segment.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/hindalco-closes-us-28-billion-acquisition-of-usbased-aleris-corp>



## Renewables / Oil & Gas:

### NHPC wins bid for solar project

NHPC Ltd has concluded an e-reverse auction for developing a 2,000-MW Grid Connected Solar photo voltaic project. The e-reverse auction was conducted amongst 7 bidders with bids coming for an aggregate capacity of 3,140 MW. "Against the total allocated capacity of 2,000 MW, lowest tariff of ₹2.55 a unit to ₹2.56 a unit was achieved against the initial quoted tariff of ₹2.71 a unit to ₹2.78 a unit. Despite complete lockdown in India due to Covid-19, NHPC successfully completed the e-reverse auction.

Read More:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/nhpc-wins-bid-for-solar-project/article31368771.ece>

### Vikram Solar bags US\$ 250.39 million project from NTPC



Kolkata-based module manufacturer and EPC solutions provider Vikram Solar has bagged a 300-MW solar plant project for Rs 1750 crore (US\$ 250.39 million) from National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd (NTPC) under CPSU – II scheme in a reverse bidding auction. The solar plant will be spread across 1,500 acres in Rajasthan and is estimated to be complete in the next 18 months.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/vikram-solar-bags-rs-1750cr-project-from-ntpc>

### NTPC Vindhyachal becomes India's largest power plant to achieve 100 per cent Plant Load Factor



NTPC Vindhyachal has become the largest power plant of the country to achieve a plant load factor (PLF) of 100 per cent. The 100 per cent PLF means that the power plant was run at its full capacity of 3760 MW for a certain period.

Read More:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/ntpc-vindhyachal-becomes-indias-largest-power-plant-to-achieve-100-per-cent-plant-load-factor/article31433024.ece>

### French energy major TOTAL completes US\$ 530.40 million deal with Adani group



French energy major TOTAL Gas & Power Business Services has announced the closure of its deal with Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) for ₹3,707 crore. The deal was first announced in February, wherein TOTAL through its step-down subsidiary will invest in this joint venture. AGEL and TOTAL will each own 50 per cent in the JV. Further, the JV houses 2.148 GW operating solar projects operating across 11 States in India.

Read More:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/french-energy-major-total-completes-3707-crore-deal-with-adani-group/article31280811.ece>

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## Automobile:

### Electric vehicle sales in India up 20 per cent in 2019-20

Electric vehicles sales, excluding e-rickshaws, in India grew by 20 per cent at 1.56 lakh units in 2019-20 driven by two-wheelers, Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV) said. In 2018-19, total EV sales in India stood at 1.3 lakh units, SMEV said in a statement. Out of the total sales in FY20, 1.52 lakh units were two-wheelers, 3,400 cars and 600 buses.

Read More:

<https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/electric-vehicle-sales-in-india-up-20-in-2019-20-11587370389230.html>

### Growing Demand for Electric Vehicles Driving Indian Electric Vehicle Battery Swapping Market according to a new research report



The Indian electric vehicle (EV) battery swapping market is projected to reach \$6.1 million by 2030, registering a growth of 31.3% during 2020–2030. The sales for electric vehicles in India reached 280,000 units till November 2019, as per the Economic Survey 2019–20. Most of three wheelers sold in India are three-wheeler and two-wheelers.

Read More:

<https://www.whatech.com/market-research/energy/646955-growing-demand-for-electric-vehicles-driving-indian-electric-vehicle-battery-swapping-market-according-to-a-new-research-report>

### Tritium to work with TATA AutoComp to supply DC fast chargers for electric vehicles



TATA Group has selected Australian industry leader Tritium for its DC fast-charging expertise. Tritium Pty Ltd is a technology company specialising in the design and manufacture of direct current (DC) fast-charging solutions for electric vehicles (EV). It was established in 2001 and is one of Australia's fastest growing technology companies, with significant operations and commercial success in leading international EV markets.

Read More:

<https://www.miragenews.com/tritium-to-work-with-tata-autocomp-to-supply-dc-fast-chargers-for-electric-vehicles/>

## Agriculture:

### Govt sets food grain production target at 298 million tonnes for 2020-21 crop year

The target for rice and wheat for the coming year has been set at estimated production of 117.47 mt and 106.21 mt respectively while for coarse cereals and pulses target has been increased by nearly 3.5 mt and 2.5 mt, respectively, to 48.7 mt and 25.6 mt. Meanwhile, there has also been increase in targets for oilseeds and cotton to 36.64 mt (as against the production estimate of 34.19 mt this year) and 36 million bales (one bale is 170 kg) as against 34.89 million bales in 2019-20.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/govt-sets-foodgrain-production-target-at-298-million-tonnes-for-202021-crop-year>

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## IT / Start up:

### Tech Mahindra, IBM tie up to set up innovation centres



The centres will showcase IBM's digital transformation solutions built with Cloud Paks running on Red Hat OpenShift. (Photo: Reuters)

To boost digital transformation and encourage adoption of more cloud-based technologies among its global customers, Tech Mahindra has decided to set up innovation centres in collaboration with IBM. The centres will showcase IBM's digital transformation solutions built with Cloud Paks running on Red Hat OpenShift, which could come handy for solving complex business problems for various industries, including healthcare, telecommunication, financial services, manufacturing, insurance and retail. The first such innovation centre will open in Bengaluru sometime in 2020.

Read More:

<https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/tech-mahindra-ibm-tie-up-to-set-up-innovation-centres-11587455899341.html>

### COVID-19: We'll come out stronger from this situation, says Infosys CEO

Infosys is confident of coming out "stronger" in the post-COVID-19 world on the back of strong operating metrics and client focus, even as the situation remains uncertain in the near-term, its CEO Salil Parekh said. Last year, we had 9.8 per cent growth and the year before 9 per cent growth. We had a extremely successful business over the last couple of years, a very strong operating margin and expansion in earnings per share, USD 9 billion in large deals.

Read More:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/ites/covid-19-well-come-out-stronger-from-this-situation-says-infosys-ceo/articleshow/75327345.cms>

### Indian IT firms to benefit from large US banks bet on technology spend in 2020

Indian IT services providers including Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Wipro may benefit as global banks such as JP Morgan, Bank of America and Citigroup are set to increase technology spends in the year ahead, analysts said, even as they face a short-term blip in discretionary spending due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak.

Read More:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/ites/indian-it-firms-to-benefit-from-large-us-banks-bet-on-technology-spend-in-2020/articleshow/75429891.cms>

### Ola opens its tech platform to Indian government to combat coronavirus crisis



Ola has made its technology platform, which is capable of, among other things, conducting real-time tracking and navigation and managing crowds available to the federal and state governments at no cost. In the Indian state of Punjab, Ola said the government is using the firm's technology to track and manage over 1.7 million farmers' produce and their vehicle movement in vegetable markets to ensure they followed the social distance protocol.

Read More:

<https://techcrunch.com/2020/04/17/ola-connects-technology-platform-india-government/>





## Indian startups attract funding worth USD 2.5 billion in Q1 2020: Report



Indian tech-led startups attracted funding worth \$2.5 billion in the first quarter of 2020, a 14 per cent rise compared to the same period last year, a report by research and consulting firm HexGn said.

Read More:

<https://telanganatoday.com/indian-startups-attract-2-5-bn-in-q1-2020>

## Investors, startup founders in India pool \$13M to fund projects that fight coronavirus



More than 150 investors and entrepreneurs in India are funding dozens of projects in a bid to help millions better combat the COVID-19 epidemic and help the nation's booming startup ecosystem withstand the economic devastation the pandemic has caused. The investors said they have contributed 1 billion Indian rupees of their own money to the ACT Grants initiative, which was unveiled late last month.

Read More:

<https://techcrunch.com/2020/04/28/investors-startup-founders-in-india-pool-13m-to-fund-projects-that-fight-coronavirus/>

## Data consumption in rural India jumped nearly 100% during lockdown: CSC CEO



Data consumption in rural India on the network of CSC SPV jumped nearly 100 per cent within a month - especially during the lockdown period. CSC e-Governance Services India, which holds the license for providing internet services, recorded an increase in data consumption to 4.7 terabyte (TB) as on March 30 from 2.7 TB on March 10.

Read More:

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/data-consumption-in-rural-india-jumped-nearly-100-during-lockdown-csc-ceo-120040500737\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/data-consumption-in-rural-india-jumped-nearly-100-during-lockdown-csc-ceo-120040500737_1.html)

### Retail:

## Government starts e-retail chain for rural India



The ambitious plan is being led by the Common Service Centres, the rural digital outreach vehicle of the government that reaches over 60 crore people through its nearly 3.8 lakhs outlets. The outlets are set up and run by private individuals but under the aegis of ministry of electronics and IT.

Read More:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/govt-starts-e-retail-chain-for-rural-india/articleshow/75439974.cms>



## Science & Technology:

### ARI researchers develop bug sniffer to rapidly detect bacteria

Researchers at the Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, have developed a sensitive and low-cost sensor to rapidly detect bacteria. The portable device can detect as low as ten bacterial cells from a sample size of one milliliter in just 30 minutes. At present, they are working on a method for simultaneous separation and detection of Escherichia coli and Salmonella typhimurium.

Read More:

<https://www.fresherslive.com/current-affairs/articles/ari-researchers-develop-bug-sniffer-to-rapidly-detect-bacteria-25487>

### Team led by IIT Bombay student develops low-cost mechanical ventilator Ruhdaar



A team of engineering students from IIT Bombay, NIT Srinagar and Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST), Awantipora, Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir has come up with a low-cost ventilator using locally available materials. Ruhdaar provides necessary functionalities which can provide adequate breathing support necessary to save the life of a critically ill COVID-19 patient.

Read More:

<https://www.ndtv.com/education/team-led-by-iit-bombay-student-develops-low-cost-mechanical-ventilator-ruhdaar-2218662>

### SCTIMST ties up with Wipro 3D to manufacture automated ventilators to meet COVID 19 related crisis



Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), a medical institution under the Department of Science and Technology, has tied up with Bengaluru-based Wipro to jointly build up on a prototype of an emergency ventilator system based on Artificial Manual Breathing Unit (AMBU), developed by the former followed by its clinical trial and manufacture.

Read More:

<https://government.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/news/technology/coronavirus-impact-sctimst-ties-up-with-wipro-3d-to-manufacture-automated-ventilators/74960206>

### COVID-19: DST Supported Startup to Make Alcohol Free Sanitizer

A startup funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) will manufacture natural, alcohol-free sanitizer for hands and surfaces which would have long-lasting antibacterial and antiviral effect. It has been tested against a wide array of pathogenic bacteria, fungi, and yeast. The active pharmaceutical ingredient used in the sanitizer, which is a biosurfactant, would also be useful to clean the wounds and prevents dryness and skin irritation. Besides, the product whose technology concept and applications have been formulated is harmless to the skin.

Read More:

<https://www.ndtv.com/education/covid-19-dst-supported-startup-to-make-alcohol-free-sanitizer-2210141>

## Aviation:

**Lifeline Udan flights support covid-19 fight by delivering over 541 tons of medical cargo across the country**



Lifeline Udan' flights are being operated by MoCA to transport essential medical cargo to remote parts of the country to support India's war against COVID-19. 316 flights have been operated under Lifeline Udan by Air India, Alliance Air, IAF and private carriers during Covid-19 lockdown. 196 of these flights have been operated by Air India and Alliance Air. Cargo transported till date is around 541.33 tons. Aerial distance covered by Lifeline Udan flights till date is over 3,14,965 km.

Read More:

<https://thenewsstrike.com/lifeline-udan-flights-support-covid-19-fight-by-delivering-over-541-tons-of-medical-cargo-across-the-country/>

## Space:

**IIA scientists connect Lithium abundance in interstellar space to new Lithium rich red giants**

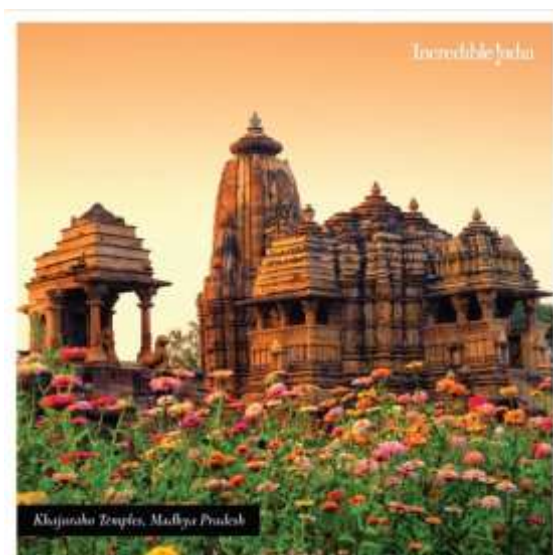
Researchers at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, have discovered hundreds of Li-rich giant stars indicating that Li is being produced in the stars. They have also associated such Li enhancement with central He-burning stars, also known as red clump giants, thereby opening new vistas in the evolution of the red giant stars.

Read More:

<https://www.ibef.org/news/iaa-scientists-connect-lithium-abundance-in-interstellar-space-to-new-lithium-rich-red-giants>

## Tourism:

**Ministry of Tourism launches "DekhoApnaDesh" webinar series**



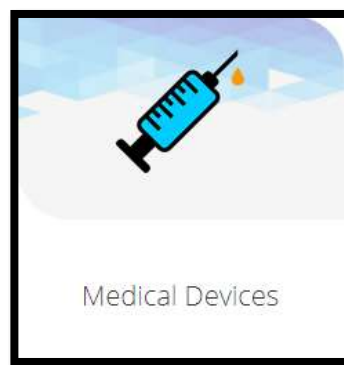
It is aimed at providing information on the many destinations and the sheer depth and expanse of the culture and heritage of Incredible India. Watch it from the comfort of your home.

To see:

<https://twitter.com/incredibleindia>

## Pharma:

**EEPC India e-catalogue on Medical devices**



Read More:

<http://engineering-brands.com>

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