NEWS HIGHLIGHT

- Indian National Super Model to help monitor the future transmission of coronavirus infection.
- Local to Global: Khadi Masks to Hit Foreign Markets.
- Government of India launches scheme to solarise entire Konark Temple, Konark town.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) Launches PAi, an AI Virtual Assistant.
- Karnataka to soon have health register of all citizens.

MISSION'S ACTIVITIES

INDIA'S LATEST NEWS

24 - 30 May 2020
Indian National Supermodel to help Monitor the Future Transmission of Coronavirus Infection

The Indian Government’s Department of Science and Technology (DST) has started working on a COVID-19 Indian National Supermodel that will help predict the spread of the Coronavirus and also monitor the future transmission of infection with the aim to assist governments in decisions involving readiness of the national health systems and other mitigation measures. The model will entirely rely only on the data that is relevant to Covid-19, and also have an adaptive built-in component to learn from the newer data trends. It will aggregate successful evidence-based mathematical and statistical forecasting models and include the best predictive analytic for robust forecasting of infectious disease spread. The new supermodel could be useful not only for policymakers in India, but also around the world, for the purpose of overcoming difficulties in predicting the rate of spread of infection and the likely burden it will put on the healthcare sector, which in turn will help governments to curb the epidemic successfully.

Source: Hindustan Times

Local to Global: Khadi Masks to Hit Foreign Markets

The widely popular Khadi face mask is set to go “Global”. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will now explore the possibility of exporting Khadi cotton and silk face masks to other countries after the Ministry of Commerce and Industries lifted the ban on export of non-medical/ non-surgical masks of all types. The move comes days after the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s “Local to Global” call in wake of the “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”. KVIC is specifically using Double Twisted Khadi fabric for manufacturing of these masks as it helps retains moisture content inside, while providing an easy passage for the air to pass through. What makes these masks more special is the hand-spun and hand-woven cotton and Silk fabrics. Cotton acts as a mechanical barrier while Silk is an Electrostatic barrier. The KVIC has so far received orders to supply 8 lakh masks and has already supplied more than 6 lakh masks during the lockdown period. The KVIC plans to supply khadi face masks to countries like Dubai, USA, Mauritius and several European and Middle East countries where Khadi’s popularity has significantly grown over the last few years. KVIC plans to sell Khadi masks in these countries through the Indian Embassies.

Source: PIB
National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) Launches PAi, an AI Virtual Assistant

In another initiative to improve digital financial inclusion in India, the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched an artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbot, PAi, to create awareness around its products like FASTag, RuPay, UPI, AePS on a real-time basis. The AI virtual assistant, PAi is available round the clock, helping users access to accurate information on NPCI products. Customers can ask their queries in English and Hindi, via text or voice on the websites of NPCI, RuPay, and UPI Chalega. Through PAi, users get verified automated responses to their queries on all NPCI’s products. PAi would also be accessible to global RuPay Cardholders as well. PAi will soon be available in several regional languages of India to help increase the adoption of digital payments among Indian citizens. PAi has been developed by Bengaluru-based startup CoRover Private Limited whose AI/ML powered NLP chatbot technology has been accessed by 20 Crore+ consumers.

Source: Financial Express

Karnataka to soon have Health Register of All Citizens

The Karnataka government would soon launch a project to maintain the health database of all its citizens by having a "State Health Register." A first of its kind initiative, the State Health Register will be a robust and standardized health repository of all the citizens. This project will be implemented first in Chikkaballapur district on an experimental basis. The government will undertake a survey of all 6.5 crore people in the state using a team of Primary Health Centre officials, revenue officials, education department staff and ASHA (Accredited Social Heath Activist) karyakartas. They will visit each household and collect health data of all members of the family. This would not only help the government provide better health care, but also help efficient resource allocation, management and better implementation of various citizen-centric schemes in the state. The project will include 50 per cent partnership of private hospitals.

Source: Deccan Herald

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has announced that the Central Government has launched a scheme for 100 percent solarisation of the Konark Sun Temple and Konark Town in Odisha. The scheme envisages setting up of the 10-MW grid connected solar project and various solar off-grid applications such as solar trees, solar drinking water kiosks and off-grid solar power plants with battery storage, with a 100 per cent central financial assistance (CFA) support of around Rs. 25 crore from the Government of India through the MNRE. The Government of India launched the scheme with an objective to take forward Prime Minister’s vision to develop the historical Sun temple town of Konark in Odisha as ‘Surya Nagri’, to convey a message of synergy between the modern use of solar energy and the ancient Sun Temple and the importance of promoting solar energy.” Implementation of this project will be done by the Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA). The scheme will meet all the energy requirements of Konark town with solar energy.

Source: Indian Express
Mission Vande Bharat –

The largest Evacuation Operation for Stranded Indians Abroad to bring them home

Mission Vande Bharat, the Indian Government’s initiative to bring Indian nationals, who are stranded abroad due to the Corona virus pandemic, back to the country commenced early this month. A total of over 25 thousands stranded Indian nationals have been brought to India in 134 flights across the globe till May 22, 2020 and many more flights are being planned. In addition, as a part of this mission, the Indian Navy also launched 'Operation Samudra Setu’ to send out its naval ships in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to bring back stranded Indians. So far, INS Jalashwa - Landing Platform Dock (LPD) class and INS Magar - Landing ShipTank-Large (LST-L) class have ferried 1488 Indians from Male, Maldives to Kochi, India. Under the ongoing Mission Vande Bharat, the national carrier - Air India scheduled four flights from May 19-22, 2020 from Jakarta to different cities in India. About 900 Indian Nationals, including several stranded Indian tourists in Bali, some pregnant mothers and critical care patients and one Nepalese student utilized these flights from Jakarta to return to India. Two flights went to the capital city of New Delhi, while one each went to financial capital city of Mumbai & onwards to Ahmedabad and silicone valley of India, Bengaluru.
Roughly crush the vermicelli.
Cut the almonds into thick slices. Soak the sultana/kismis in hot water and set aside.
Heat the ghee and fry the almonds. Drain and keep aside.
Lightly fry the cloves and the cardamom and add the vermicelli. Allow to brown lightly.
Add the milk and bring to a boil. Simmer on a slow fire till the milk thickens.
Add sugar and sultanas. Remove from the fire.
Allow to cool completely.

How to make Seviyan Kheer:

1. Roughly crush the vermicelli.
2. Cut the almonds into thick slices. Soak the sultana/kismis in hot water and set aside.
3. Heat the ghee and fry the almonds. Drain and keep aside.
4. Lightly fry the cloves and the cardamom and add the vermicelli. Allow to brown lightly.
5. Add the milk and bring to a boil. Simmer on a slow fire till the milk thickens.
6. Add sugar and sultanas. Remove from the fire.
7. Allow to cool completely.

To Serve:
1. Adjust the consistency to a kheer.
2. Transfer a portion to a serving bowl and garnish with the fried almonds. Can be served warm, at room temperature or cold.

About Seviyan Kheer:
With a festive vibe around, there is no better way to celebrate it by indulging into mouthwatering delicacies like Seviyan. Vermicelli or seviyan cooked with milk, cardamom, nuts and sugar to make a thick and delicious Kheer. An easy recipe to prepare at home and serve at the dinner party.

Source: food.ndtv
KERALA - BEACHES (1)

Bekal Fort in Kasaragod: Around 16 km to the south of northernmost district in Kerala, Kasaragod, lies the massive Bekal Fort. It is among the biggest forts in Kerala and has been impeccably maintained throughout the years. It rises to 130 feet above sea level and is situated on a headland spanning 35km. Much effort has been put to develop a beautiful beach here called the Bekal Fort Beach. People flock to these spots in great numbers. Situated comfortably on steep hills by the sea, the fort provides for an imposing view from the beach. Built using laterite slabs and with a polygonal shape, it is amongst the most visited sites in Kerala. There are many factors that have added to the popularity of the site. An observation tower fitted with beautiful peepholes, the Anjaneya Temple with its famous masonry and two Theyyam sculptures built from laterite are among the primary attractions. An ancient mosque built by Tipu Sultan and various underground passageways are also important places in the area. A rock garden was built using laterite in the parking area and is an architectural marvel in itself. Trees have been planted on the beach along with the construction of a splendid walkway which makes it easier to traverse the beach and enjoy its sights. At night, the entire place is lit up with special lights that add a whole new dimension to its beauty.

Source: https://www.keralatourism.org/
Cherai Beach, Kochi: Around two dozen kilometres from the industrial district of Ernakulam and to the side of the Vypeen Island lies every swimmer’s paradise, Cherai Beach. It is a favourite haunt of those looking for a relaxing swim with the backdrop of coconut groves being the added incentive. It provides a wonderful view of the famous Chinese Fishing Nets or Cheena Vala well. The nearby shacks provide you with fresh cuisine that fills you up perfectly after a delightful swim. The seashells found here are unique and one often runs into dolphins in this area. It is the ideal blend of both the backwaters and the sea. The area itself has seen many new resorts and hotels crop up, which have facilitated the increase in tourist activity. Today it is amongst the most visited beaches in Kerala with a view that make it near impossible to tear yourself away once you get there.

Source: https://www.keralatourism.org/

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