

# Headlines at a Glance - 17th October 2020

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## **Israeli parliament formally approves UAE normalisation deal**

Israel's parliament on Thursday voted overwhelmingly in favor of formally ratifying the country's historic agreement normalising diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates. Israel and the UAE announced the U.S.-brokered agreement in August, and signed a deal in a White House ceremony last month. Thursday's approval by the 120-seat Knesset, or parliament, which passed in a 80-13 vote, was largely a formality. The UAE has become just the third Arab country to establish official ties with Israel, after Egypt and Jordan, and the first to do so in a quarter century. Bahrain is also in the process of formalizing ties with Israel, and the White House has suggested that other Arab countries will follow suit. The deals reflect a shift in the Middle East as Arab countries' shared concerns with Israel about Iran outweigh their traditional support for the Palestinians. The Palestinians, who have long relied on unified Arab support to boost them against Israel, have condemned the deal and accused the UAE of betrayal.

The Joint List, the main Arab-dominated faction in parliament, cast the lone opposing votes Thursday in solidarity with their Palestinian brethren.

**SOURCE:** *The New Indian Express*

## India to hand over INS Sindhuvir, a Kilo class submarine to the Myanmar Navy

India will soon be delivering a kilo class submarine INS Sindhuvir to the Myanmar Navy, thus managing to checkmate CCP by not only giving a submarine but also training their sailors. Both India and Myanmar (which is one of the strategic neighbours) share a 1,640-km border with the north-eastern states, including Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram, and also share 725 km India-Myanmar maritime boundary. As was reported earlier by Financial Express Online, this submarine which has the capability of staying underwater for almost 45 days will be used for training purposes by the Myanmar Navy.

This diesel-electric Kilo Class submarine is being given through the Line of Credit (LOC), India has extended to help in enhancing the military capability of Myanmar.

The sailors of the Myanmar Navy have been trained in underwater combat operations onboard INS Sindhuvir with the help of Indian Navy. This is a Russian refitted submarine and is known for its noiseless operational capability. It had joined the Indian Navy in the 1980s and has been modernized since then by the Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) in Vizag.

**SOURCE:** *Business Standard*

## India gained decade of life expectancy since 1990: Lancet study

India has gained more than a decade of life expectancy since 1990, but there are wide inequalities between states, according to a new study which assessed more than 286 causes of death and 369 diseases and injuries in more than 200 countries and territories across the world. The study, published in the Lancet journal, noted that life expectancy in India has risen from 59.6 years in 1990 to 70.8 years in 2019, ranging from 77.3 years in Kerala to 66.9 years in Uttar Pradesh. However, the researchers, including Srinivas Goli from the Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar, said the increase in 'healthy life expectancy' in India has not been as dramatic as the growth of life expectancy since "people are living more years with illness and disability. According to the international team of scientists, the current global crisis of chronic diseases and failure of public health to stem the rise in highly preventable risk factors such as high blood pressure, tobacco use, and air pollution have left populations vulnerable to acute health emergencies such as Covid19.

**SOURCE:** *Hindustan Times*

## Govt bans import of air conditioners with refrigerants

In a bid to promote domestic manufacturing, the government has banned the import of completely built units of air-conditioners with refrigerants. Air-conditioner imports have been on the radar of the government for some time and had been identified as among the priority sectors for reduction of imports in-line with the government's Self-Reliant India initiative. The government's move is also expected to give a boost to capacities dedicated to third-party manufacturing in the country. However, experts pointed out that most companies that make ACs in India are heavily reliant on imports for critical components such as compressors from markets such as China. The AC segment in the country has a large number of players and several brands rely on AC imports not only from China but also from FTA countries such as Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. According to a DGFT notification, import of all types of split air-conditioners and window air-conditioners with "refrigerants" have been now put in the 'prohibited' category from the "free" category. As per industry estimates, completely built units of imported ACs currently account for about 28-30 percent of the air-conditioners segment. The total annual market size of air-conditioners sold in India is pegged at over 65 lakh units.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*

## Govt issues notices to Amazon, Flipkart for not showing mandatory information

The government on Friday issued notices to Amazon, Flipkart and other e-commerce firms for not mandatorily displaying information, including country of origin, on products sold on their platforms in India. The development comes at a time when Amazon and Flipkart are hosting their biggest festive sale events 'Great Indian Festival' and 'Big Billion Days' this week and are expecting a massive surge in demand for products across the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The notice dated October 16, 2020, has been sent by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. The firms have been asked to reply to the notices and explain the reasons for non-compliance within 15 days. The letter said that it has come to the notice of the Department of Consumer Affairs that some of the e-commerce entities are not displaying the mandatory declarations as required under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules of 2011. It said registration of manufacturers, packers and importers of pre-packaged commodities is mandatory. Thus every individual who does this for sale is required to be registered with the director or controller of Legal Metrology.

**SOURCE:** *Business Standard*